

POWERED BY CHERRIES

Children's Activity Book

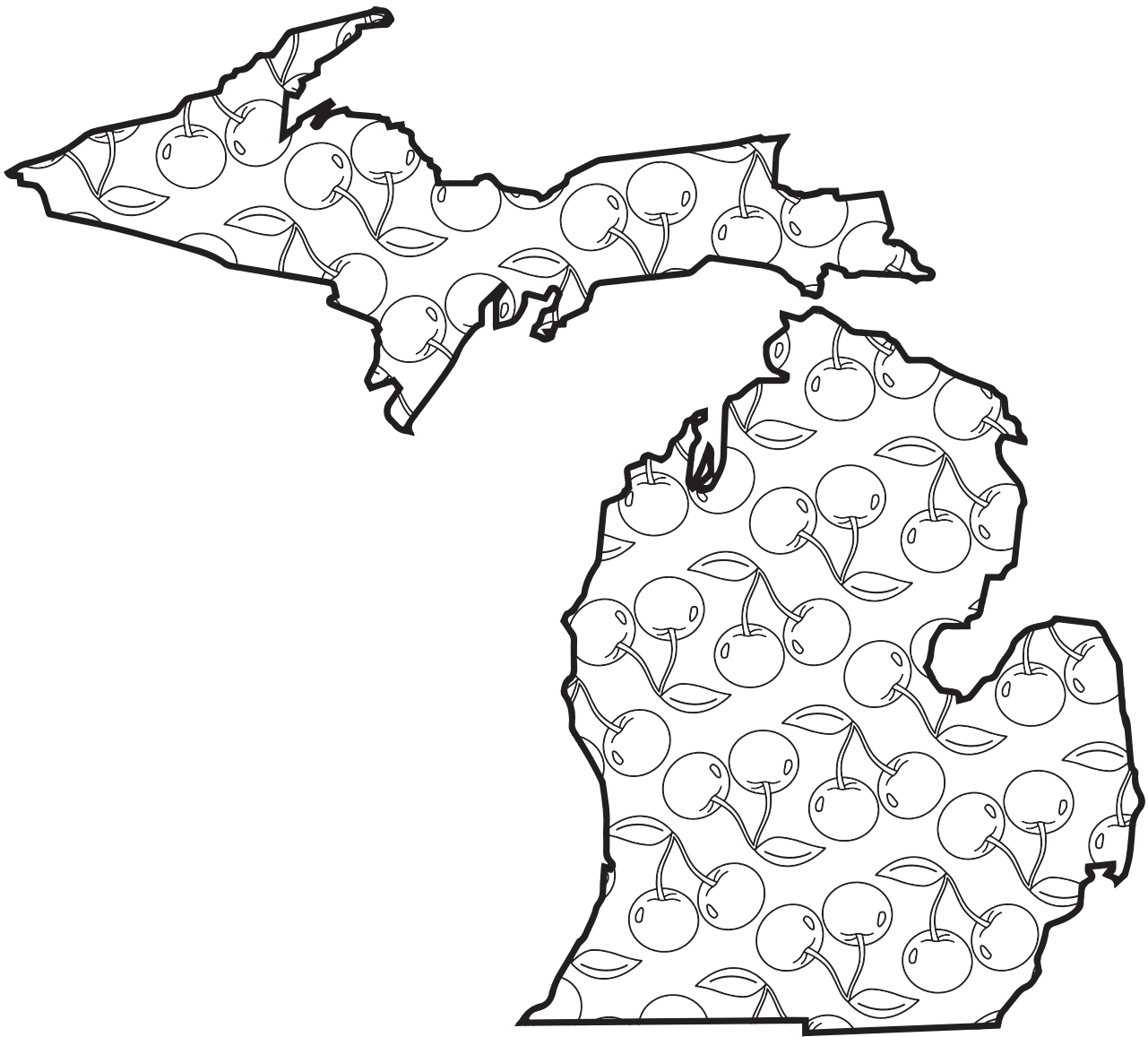




Produced by the Michigan Cherry Committee

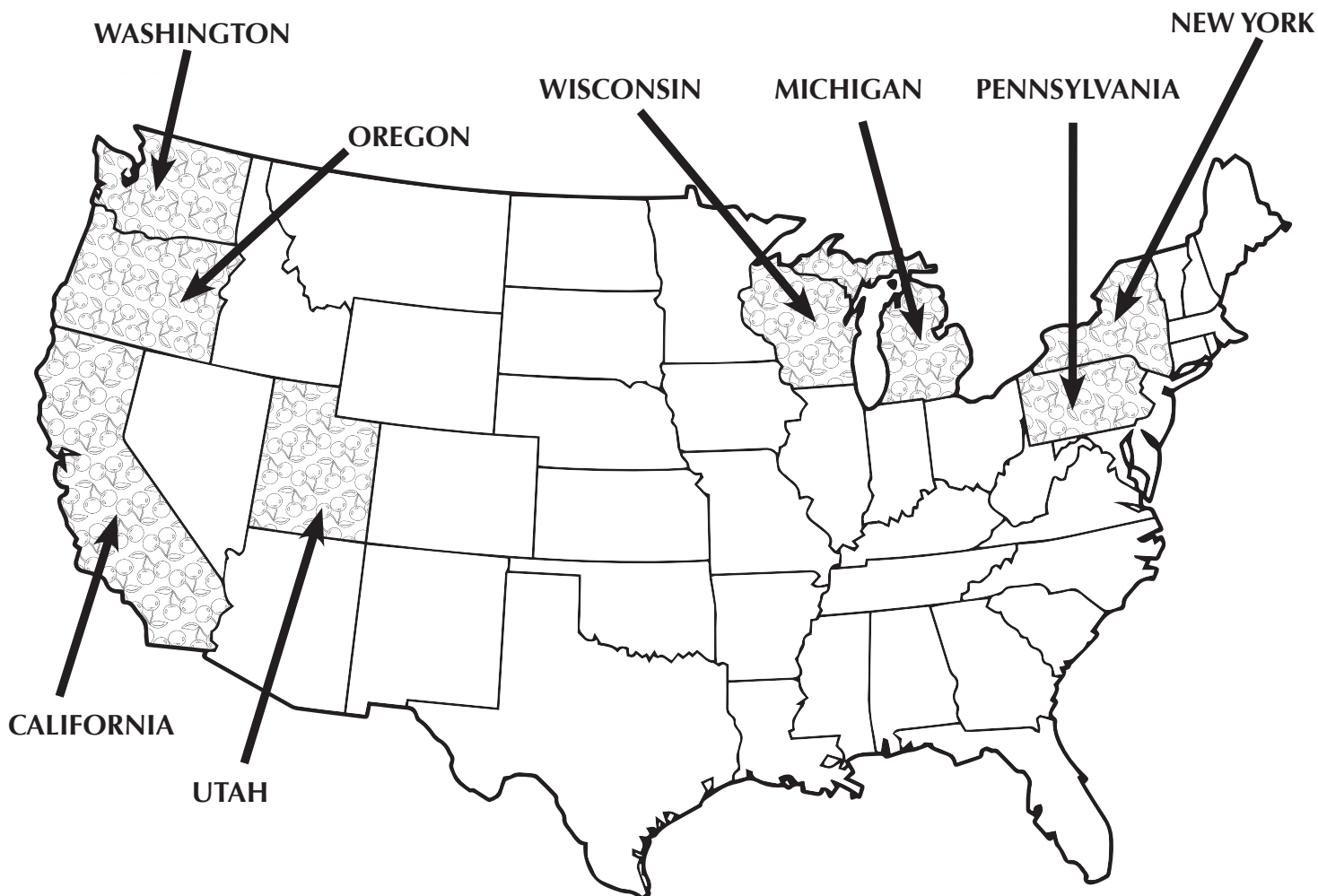
www.choosecherries.com

**Funded in part by a grant from the
Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development**

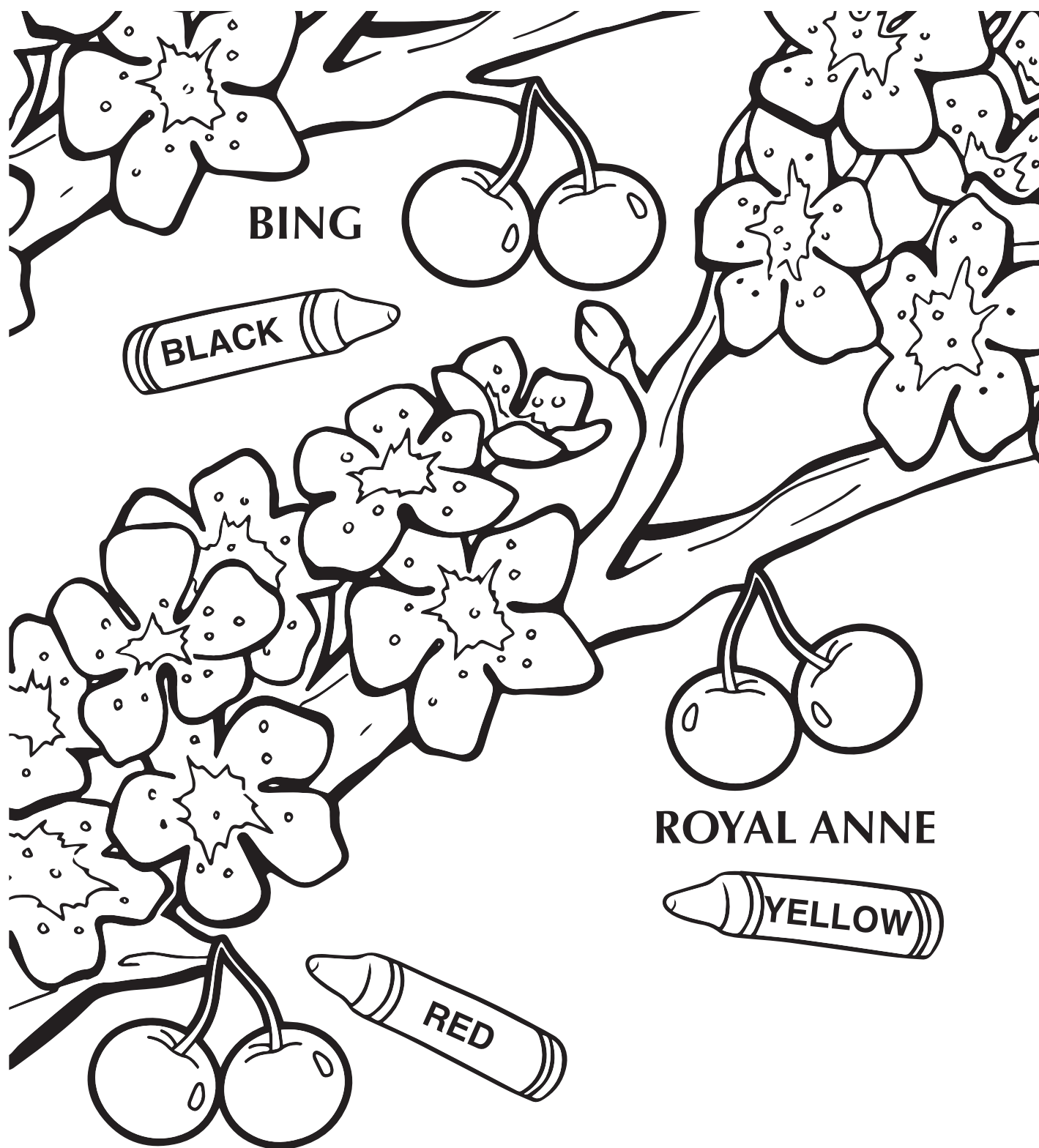


Michigan is one of the major fruit growing states in the nation.

- In Michigan there are 450 tart cherry growers, 3,660,000 trees that cover 32,000 acres.
- In Michigan there are 400 sweet cherry growers, 800,000 trees that cover 7,200 acres.
- The first tart cherry orchards in Michigan were planted in 1893.
- 75% of all tart cherries grown in the United States are produced in the State of Michigan.
- Michigan produces 20% of the sweet cherries produced in the United States.
- Sweet cherries are ready to pick in early-mid July. Tart cherries ripen about two weeks later.
- Michigan's tart cherry orchards are concentrated along Lake Michigan, where the lake tempers the winter winds and cools the orchards in the summer.



The United States cherry industry produces about 650 million pounds of cherries annually. The amount of cherries produced each year varies, depending on a number of factors, including the age of the trees and weather conditions. Michigan leads the nation in tart cherry production; Washington produces the most sweet cherries. Other cherry producing states include: Utah, New York, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Oregon and California.

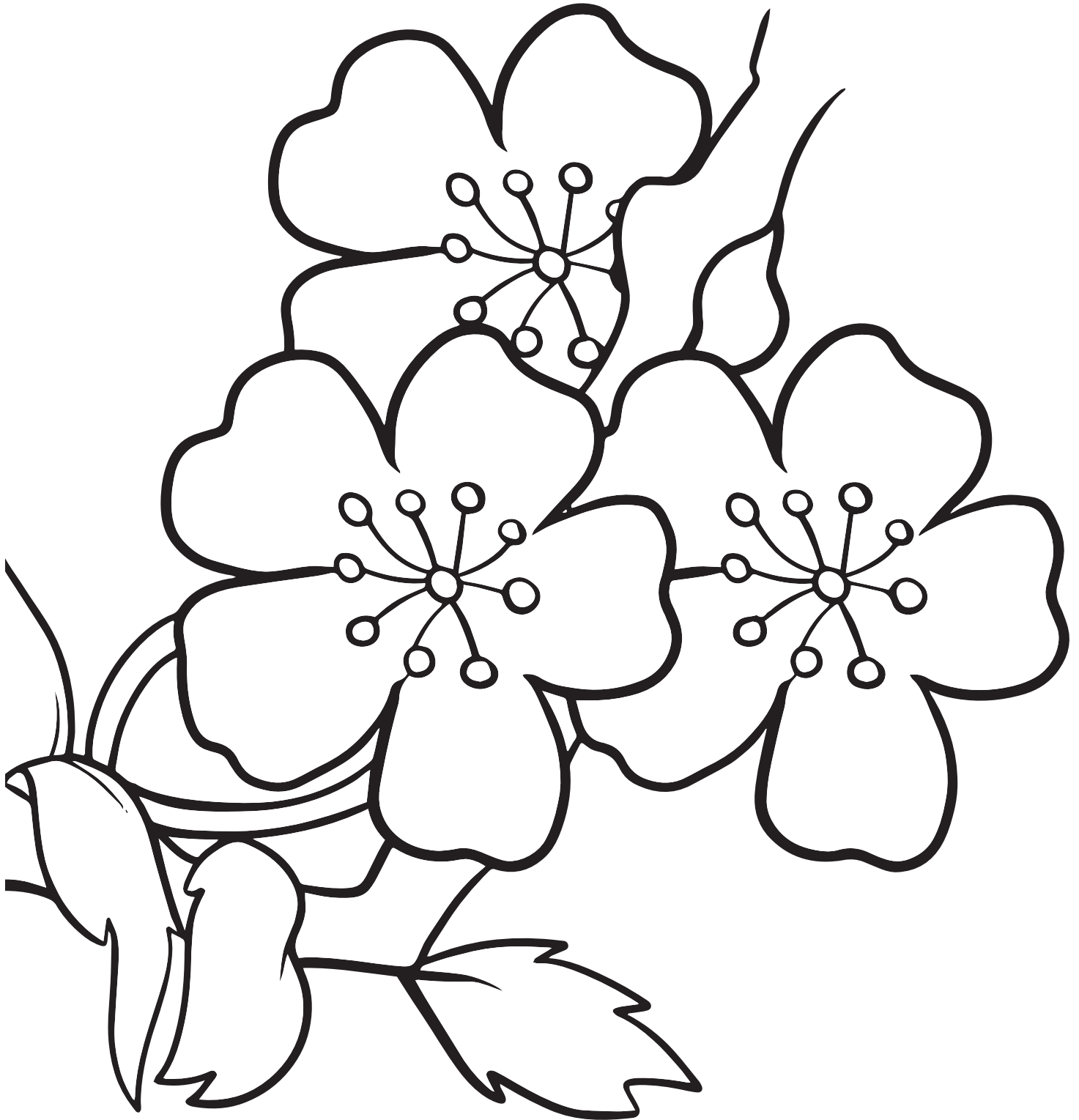


MONTMORENCY

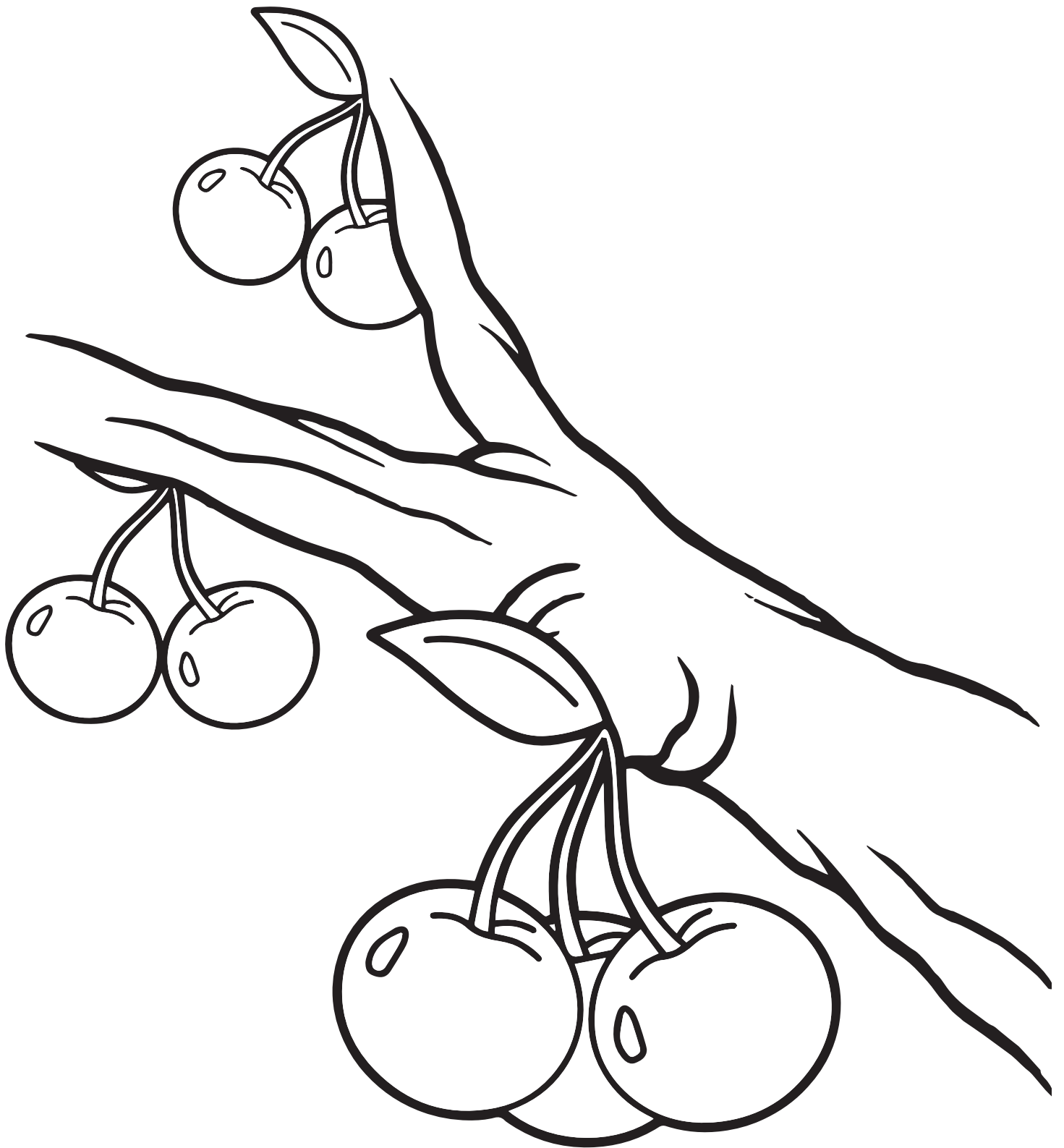
There are fresh cherries, frozen cherries, canned cherries and dried cherries... red cherries, yellow cherries and black cherries. Eating cherries is a nutritious and delicious way to add fruit to your diet.



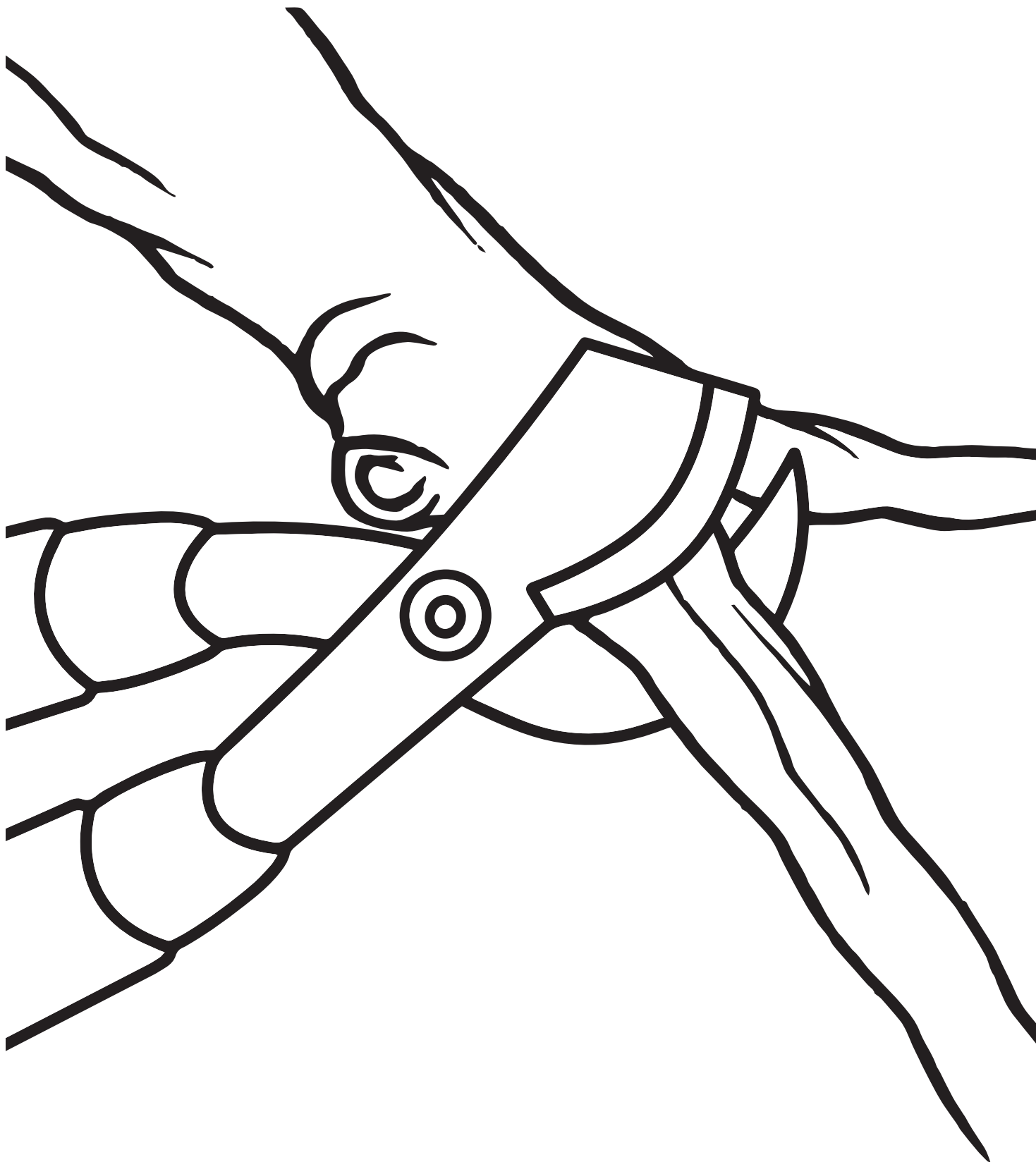
Cherry trees are very small when they are planted. Although a cherry tree can grow almost anywhere, the quality of the cherries produced depends on specific climatic conditions. Cherry trees begin to produce fruit in about seven years after they are planted in the orchard and will produce cherries for over 25 years.



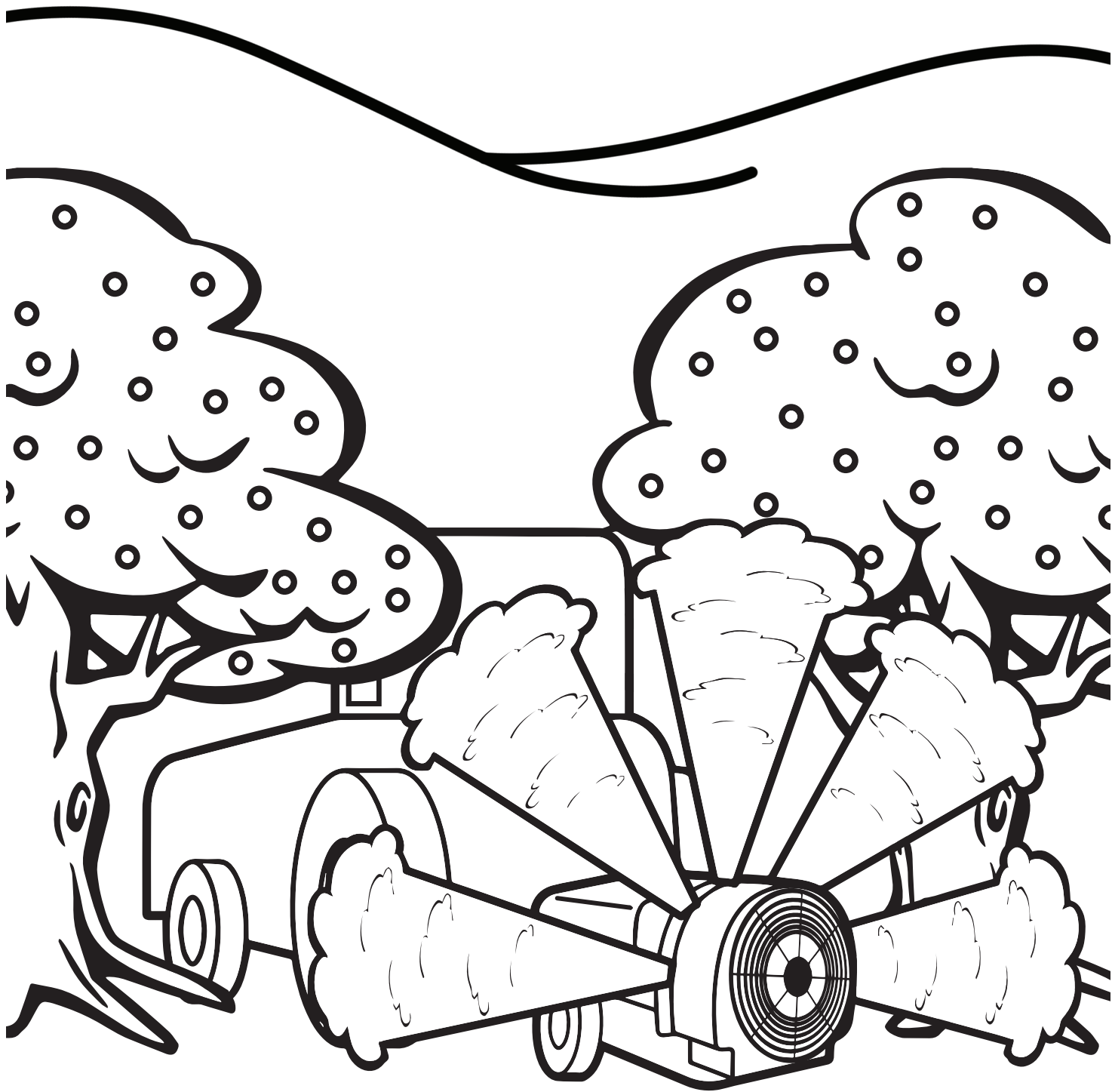
In the spring time cherry trees are full of pretty white flowers called “blossoms”.
The blossoms are in full bloom around Mother’s Day, mid May. Each blossom
could turn into a cherry.



After the flower petals fall off the trees, tiny green cherries grow where the blossoms once were. These green cherries slowly turn red as they ripen. Both tart and sweet cherries are picked or harvested about 60 days after full bloom.



Cherry farmers prune the branches off the trees to make them healthy and strong.
The average mature cherry tree has about 7,000 cherries!



Cherry trees have to be sprayed periodically between bloom and harvest times. This keeps the leaves and cherries free from diseases and pests. All cherry trees, even organic, are sprayed to keep them healthy.



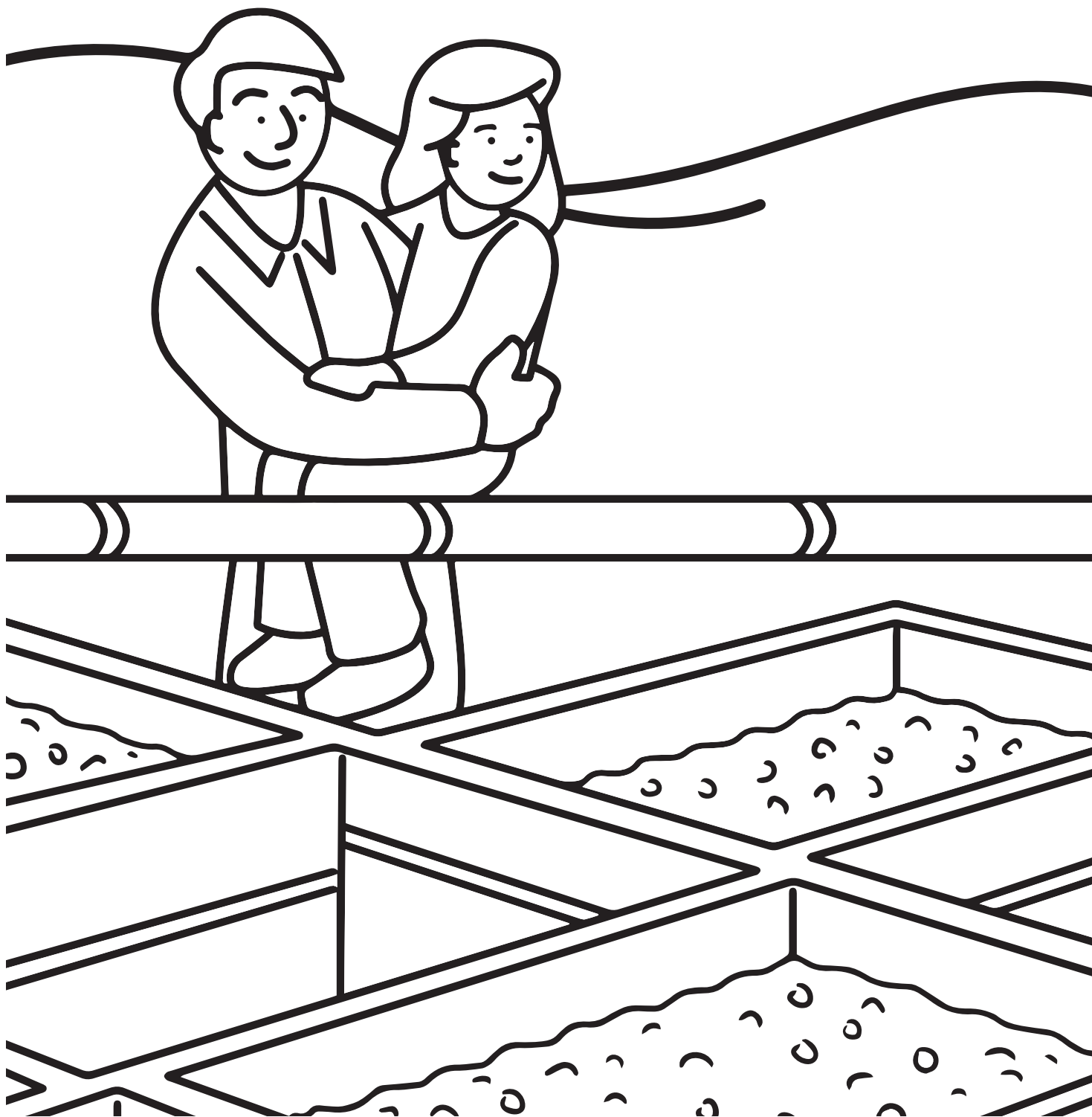
Sweet cherries are sometimes handpicked and are the kind of cherries that you find fresh in the grocery stores and farm markets. Maraschino cherries are made from the majority of the processed sweet cherries and they are used mainly used in drinks and put on top of ice cream sundaes and shakes!



Mechanical harvesters (trunk shakers) are used to harvest cherries. They shake the cherries off the tree.



The cherries fall into a tarp, which looks like an upside-down umbrella. Some trees can produce 270-290 pounds of cherries per tree.



After the cherries are shaken off the tree they are put in big tanks filled with water. The tanks are moved from the orchard to a cooling station on the farm where branches and leaves are removed. The cherries are cooled with water and ice before they are sent to the processing plant to be processed.



The cherries are then hauled in tanks to the processing plant where they are put on a moving conveyor belt. The belt carries the cherries through the processing plant where the cherries are cleaned really well, the pits are removed, and they are sorted (any bad cherries are removed).



After the final inspection is made, the cherries are then processed into canned, frozen, dried or made into juice. They are then sealed and stacked in the processing plants storage room or freezers until they shipped to stores here in the United States and to other countries all around the world!

Some other facts about Cherries:

- The early settlers brought cherries to America in the 1600's.
- Cherry trees bear fruit for about 25 years, but some trees are more than 50 years old!
- Cherries are a “stone fruit” because they have a pit. Pits are hard like a stone.
- February is National Cherry month.
- Traverse City, Michigan is called the “Cherry Capitol of the World”. The National Cherry Festival is held there each year in early July since 1926.
- There are two kinds of cherries, sweet and tart.
- “Tart” is another word for “sour”.
- The most well-known sweet cherry is the “Bing” cherry. There are more than 1,000 other varieties of sweet cherries. Other popular sweet cherry varieties include Rainier, Lambert, Windsor, Napoleon, Black Tatarian and Royal Anne.
- The most well known tart cherry is the Montmorency.
- The United States leads the world in sweet cherry production. Sweet cherries primarily are grown in Washington, Oregon and California. Michigan joins the top four producers, harvesting about 20 percent of the crop each year.
- 98% of the tart cherries grown in the United States are “Montmorency cherries”, known for many health benefits. The other major tart cherry variety grown in the U.S. is Balaton.
- Almost 85% of tart cherries are grown in the Great Lakes States.
- It takes 250 cherries to make a cherry pie; each tree potentially could produce 28 pies.
- It takes 6 to 8 pounds of tart cherries to make 1 pound of dried cherries.
- Cherries will stay fresher if you leave the stem on when picking.
- Tart cherries are among the highest levels of disease-fighting antioxidants compared to other fruits.
- Bakers all over the world prefer U.S. Montmorency tart cherries because of their bright red color and quality.

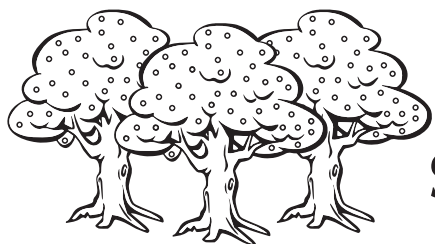
Cherry Challenge Word Find

Can you find the following words?

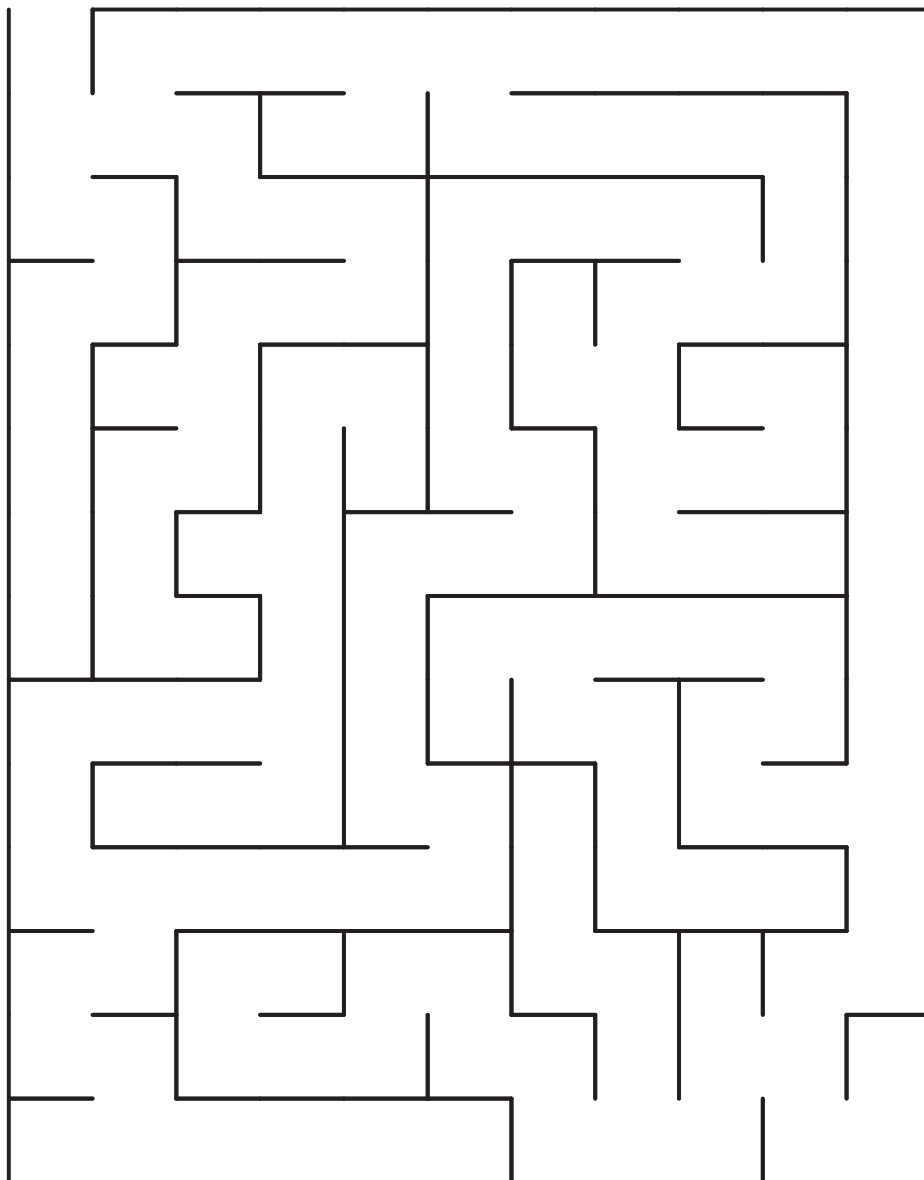
BLOSSOM TREE TART CHERRY RED
WATER JULY SWEET

A	S	W	E	E	T	T	C
B	Y	T	N	L	A	A	J
L	O	J	P	Y	R	S	U
O	S	U	C	I	T	I	L
S	E	C	H	E	R	R	Y
S	D	N	T	R	E	E	K
O	N	Y	E	U	O	K	R
M	W	A	T	E	R	L	E
P	D	B	H	K	E	R	D

Can you find your way from the cherry orchard to the cherry pie?



START!



FINISH!



Tart cherries are available year-round as dried, frozen and juice/juice concentrate. Cherries are a perfect fruit option, especially for kids. Below are ways you can include cherries into your diet to get that recommended fruit serving each day. Grab and Go – create a trail mix using dried cherries.

- A Perfect Parfait – add a few frozen cherries to your yogurt.
- Brighten up Breakfast – add dried cherries to cereal, oatmeal, yogurt or pancakes. Just a cup of dried cherries gives you one whole serving of fruit!
- Straight from the Bag – buy single-serve packages of dried cherries or portion out those bought in bulk into snack portions and send to school for lunch or an afternoon snack.
- C is for Cookie... and Cherries – enjoy a new twist on the standard oatmeal raisin cookie by using dried cherries instead of raisins.
- Greater Grains – add dried cherries to rice, grits, risotto or pasta.
- Be Smooth – blend frozen tart cherries with cherry juice concentrate and low fat yogurt or ice cream for a great smoothie!
- Mix it up – look for cherry juice blends, like cherry apple juice. Or make your own blend and combine 100% ready to drink tart cherry juice with another juice.
- Juice on the Run – mix one or two tablespoons of tart cherry juice concentrate in a bottle of water, shake and go!

Cooking/baking can be a fun family activity. Below are some tips for a successful and safe experience.

- Read the entire recipe before you begin to make sure you have all the necessary ingredients and utensils.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Prepare and measure the ingredients first, then start preparing the recipe.
- Measure the ingredients exactly to the recipe.
- Be careful using sharp knives and when cutting with knives - always use a cutting board.
- Set a timer so you know how long the food is cooking or baking.
- Use hot pads to protect your hands and countertops from hot pots and pans.
- Clean up the kitchen when you are finished.
- Enjoy your cooking experience!
- Include cherries in all your favorite recipes!

Critter Munch

Enjoy this at home or put it in small plastic bags for lunch or a snack at school.

Ingredients:

1-1/2 cups animal crackers
1-1/2 cups cheddar or original flavor goldfish crackers
1 cup dried tart cherries
1 cup M & M's plain candy
1 cup honey roasted peanuts
1 cup small pretzels

Directions:

1. Put animal crackers, goldfish crackers, dried cherries, M& M's, peanuts and pretzels in a large mixing bowl.
2. Gently stir with a spoon.
3. Store in a tightly covered container at room temperature. Makes 6 cups.

Cherry-Mallow Cake

You'll like this easy tasty cake - the marshmallows melt and rise to the top for a glaze.

Ingredients:

4 cups miniature marshmallows (about 3/4 of a 10-ounce package)
1 (18-ounce) package yellow cake mix
1 (21-ounce) can cherry pie filling

Directions:

1. Spray a 13x9x2-inch baking pan with non-stick spray.
2. Put marshmallows evenly in the bottom of the pan.
3. Prepare cake mix according to package directions.
4. Pour batter over marshmallows.
5. Spoon cherry filling evenly over cake batter.
6. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 40 to 45 minutes. The top of the cake will be bubbly and marshmallows will be sticky.
7. Carefully open oven and remove pan from oven with hot pads.
8. Set cake on hot pads to cool.
9. Let cool before serving, cut into squares. Makes about 15 servings.

Note: Cake mixes with pudding in the mix may require additional baking time.

Cherry Beary Snack Mix

This crunchy snack is easy to make and a fun alternative to cupcakes or cookies for a kids party.

Ingredients:

4 cups popped popcorn (you can purchase popped corn at the supermarket, or make your own at home)
1-1/2 cups dried tart cherries
1-1/2 cups miniature marshmallows
1-1/2 cups mini teddy graham crackers, regular or cinnamon flavored
2 tablespoons dry cocoa mix, such as Nestlé or Swiss Miss
Waffle ice cream cones (optional)

Directions:

1. Combine popcorn, cherries, marshmallows and teddy graham crackers in a large bowl.
2. Sprinkle with dry cocoa mix.
3. Toss gently.
4. Store in an airtight container at room temperature up to 5 days.
5. Serve in waffle cones, if desired. Makes 8 cups (16 servings, 1/2 cup each)

Cherry Smoothie

A refreshing pick-me-up any time of the day.

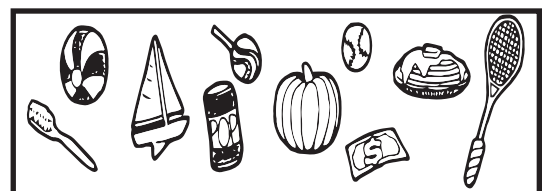
Ingredients:

2 cups frozen tart cherries
1 ripe banana, peeled
1 cup cherry juice blend (or other juice)
Maraschino cherries, for garnish

Directions:

1. Place frozen cherries, banana and cherry juice blend in electric blender or food processor.
2. Cover and blend until smooth.
3. Serve immediately. Makes 4 (8-ounce) servings.

To learn more about cherries and for more great recipes visit: www.choosecherries.com



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