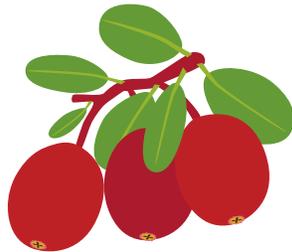


CRANBERRY BOUNCE

TALES FROM A BC CRANBERRY FARM



Fall is Pumpkins, Falling Leaves, Halloween - and Cranberries!

AFTER MONTHS OF TAKING CARE OF THE VINES, our cranberries have turned from green to pale pink to bright red. They're ready for harvesting.

ON HARVEST DAYS WE GET UP EXTRA EARLY. Our work began the night before when we flooded the fields, covering the vines in a shallow blanket of water.

CRANBERRIES DONT GROW IN WATER.

but water sure makes picking them easier. We put on waders to go into the bog. Dad drives the water reel harvester through the wet field stirring up the water and gently knocking the ripe berries off the vines. Once they're off the vines the hollow berries float to the surface.



A water reel stirs up the water like a giant egg beater!



My waders go all the way up to my arms. It's fun walking through a sea of floating red cranberries. The water is cold. I wiggle my toes to keep them warm.

THE BERRIES ARE ALL TOGETHER NOW.

We push them up conveyor belts onto trailers. Then they'll go onto trucks for transporting. These berries will be shipped to a plant where they'll be made into cranberry juice and sweetened dried cranberries. .

WE WADE THROUGH THE BOG.

Using an inflatable boom to round up the floating berries. We step carefully so we don't damage the vines growing down below the water.



Rounding up berries with a boom.



We shoot jets of water on the berries to push them up the conveyor belts.



HARVESTING THE BOUNCING BERRIES

HARVEST IS MY FAVOURITE TIME OF THE YEAR. It's fun having visitors come to our farm and showing them how we grow and harvest cranberries. My sister and I help in our store, handing out cranberry brownies and cakes we baked fresh that morning.

WE USE A SPECIAL MACHINE CALLED A 'MECHANICAL HARVESTER' TO PICK CRANBERRIES THAT WE SELL FRESH.

I push it like a lawnmower, and the moving rakes comb the berries off the vines, dropping them into the basket.

KIDS THAT GREW UP ON CRANBERRY FARMS

LONG AGO HELPED WITH THE HARVEST TOO.

They didn't have machines to harvest their cranberries like we do though. They used a special wooden scoop to scrape the fresh berries off the vine.



We don't use water when we pick berries, with the mechanical harvester. It's called 'dry harvesting'. My baskets almost full!



It must have been hard work harvesting cranberries with just a scoop and a bucket.



These cranberries passed the bounce test!

A farmer in 1880 was the first to notice that fresh cranberries bounce. One day, not wanting to carry his cranberries from the second floor of his barn, he spilled his bucket so they could roll down the stairs instead. He discovered that the firm berries bounced down to the bottom, and the soft ones stayed on the stairs.

His discovery led to the creation of a machine called a 'cranberry separator' used to sort the good (bouncy) berries from the poor ones. Farmers still use these machines to give their cranberries the fresh bounce test.

cranberries

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