

Popular Fruit Varieties, 2015

The following list was originally compiled by Bob Bors (U of S), Rick Sawatzky (U of S) and Clarence Peters (SAFRR). These varieties are widely grown in Saskatchewan, mostly in backyards and gardens. Not all crops on this list are intended for commercial growers. Commercial growers should investigate these and other varieties more thoroughly and make test plantings of several varieties to determine suitability for your operation. Keep in mind that Saskatchewan spans 3 hardiness zones and has multiple soil types. Some exceptional varieties have been underlined. Underlined varieties are especially favoured. For more info visit: www.fruit.usask.ca

Ripening season estimates are based on Saskatoon conditions but can vary from year to year. Crops are loosely arranged by time of harvest. Harvest dates are estimated on the upper right for each crop.

Haskap/Blue Honeysuckle:

June & July

Aurora is a newer variety released to propagators in 2012 which has larger fruit and sweeter taste. It also can pollinize Tundra, Borealis and the Indigos. The plant is faster growing, more upright and larger than our Tundra or Indigo series. It became somewhat available in 2013 and more available in 2014. As it becomes available it will likely be the main variety for early production, with lesser numbers of Indigo Gem or Tundra being used as pollinizers. It can be mechanically harvested. With larger plants and larger fruit we expect this variety to beat Tundra and Indigos for yield.

Indigo Gem: This is the most popular of our first varieties, being much more widely planted than Tundra or other Indigo series. It is proving to be more productive and taller than 'Tundra' in most trials but is much shorter than 'Aurora' or the future 'Boreal Blizzard'. While it can be mechanically harvested, berries are soft so there is bleeding so fruit needs to be processed quickly.

Tundra: This was the favourite at the time of its release because of larger fruit size and the fruits are firm enough with little damage from harvesting machinery. However, it is slower to propagate, the plant is more spreading instead of upright, It was higher yielding in an Ontario test, but most growers including the U of SK find Indigo Gem more productive. Fruit of this variety can a very long time on the bush.

Borealis: definitely only for home gardeners, the thick branching habit hides fruit and bushes look beautifully symmetrical and rounded. But fruit holds on so tight that they tear when picked and need to be used right away. Tundra and Indigo Gem have more durable fruits more suited for commercial growers.

'Honey Bee' is a proven pollinizer for the above that holds onto its long thin fruit. Some nursery growers are really liking this one thinking it may be good for home gardeners.

Indigo Treat and Yum: these are similar to Indigo Gem and Tundra but we have not looked at them much. Yum was very hard to propagate so many companies dropped it. Growers in Eastern Canada are preferring Indigo Treat.

Boreal Blizzard and Boreal Beauty: These should be available in 2016 and 2017 respectively. They are major breakthroughs in the mid and late ripening categories. Their fruit weight is 50% more than Aurora and more than double the weight of Tundra or Indigo series. Yet they have great flavour and are vigorous, good producer.

Strawberry

Early July

June Bearers: Early: Annapolis
Mid: Cavendish, Kent
Late: Bounty
Dayneutrals: Tristar, Seascape (one season only?), Fern
Everbearers: (home gardens only) Ogallalla, Fort Laramie

Saskatoon

Mid to late July

Early Mid Season: Northline, Smoky
Mid Season: Honeywood, Parkhill (most disease resistant)
Mid Late Season: Thiessen, Martin, Nelson

Raspberry *summerbearers: late July – early Aug, fallbearers: Sept to frost*

Early: Boyne; (industry standard across Canada)
Midseason: Festival, Steadfast (doesn't sucker much)
Late: Red Mammoth (U of S), K81-6 (zone 3 only)
Purple: Royalty (zone 3)
Black: (none fully hardy)
Yellow: Honeyqueen (for home gardens only)
Primocanes also called Fall Bearers: Autumn Bliss (too late in season, except Maple Creek)

Dwarf Sour Cherry

August, but Carmine Jewel may be late July

Carmine Jewel (U of S) earliest to ripen, black fruit. Most dependable variety over many years although some years Juliet and Valentine did better. Not as sweet as the Romance series but has good character and flavour. Sugar is often added to sour cherries anyway

Romance series (U of S): most are dark fruit and very tasty:

Juliet (formerly 7-21-31.0): Best combination of hardiness and great flavour.

Valentine (formerly 7-19-27.6 only red one. Hardy and productive

Cupid (formerly 7-32-19.1) late bloom with very large fruit but doesn't produce as well as others. Fruit is sometimes so large it won't fit the pitting machine

These two had hardiness problems in Saskatchewan when temperatures dropped below -50C. :

Crimson Passion (formerly 7-21-16.3) Crimson Passion is the smallest bush with the firmest fruit mistaken by some to be a sweet cherry

Romeo (formerly 7-7-5.8) Many believe Romeo is the best tasting, and I (Bob) agree. It can start producing at a younger age than the others.

Currants & Gooseberry

Aug

European Black Currants: **'Ben' series** (flavour & mildew resistant)
Buffalo Currant: Black Giant, Black Albol
Red Currants: Red Lake, Honey Red
Gooseberry: Pixwell, Hinnonmaeki Red, Welcome, Jahn's Prairie

Choke Cherry

mid to late Aug

Garrington
Pickup's Pride (large fruit, good flavour for a cc)
Shubert

Plums

mid Aug

P. nigra x salicina hybrids that need wild plum pollinizers:

Patterson Pride (top flavour)
Prairie
Pembina
Perfection/Superb

P. salicina types that need another compatible *P. salicina* pollinizer:

Brookgold (super productive, dependable)
Green Elf
Ivanovka
Ptitsin #3
Ptitsin #5
Fofonoff (Homesteader)
Brook Red

Cherry Plums:

mid Aug

Red-Fleshed: Dura, Manor, Sapa, New Oka, Kappa and Zeta
Green-Fleshed: Opata, Beta

Apple

late Aug to Oct

Early: Adanac, Norland (more hardy and dependable),
Midseason: Fall Red, September Ruby, **Norkent** (durable), Goodland (not as hardy but sweet), Battleford, Carlos Queen, Westland
Late Season: Minnesota #447, Haralson (also called HaralRed),
Crabapples: Early: Rescue, Mid: Dolgo,
After frost: **Kerr** (intense flavour, add to cider)
U of S varieties: Prairie Sun (early, good for drying)
(these 3 are very tasty and firm) **Autumn Delight ;Prairie Sensation**
Misty Rose
Cider apples: Minn447, Brightness, Kerr, Prolific
U of SK Cider Apples: Granny Annie, Autumn Delight, Patience, Prairie Rose

Grapes

early Sept

Valiant, Beta: The U of SK is breeding grapes but more time is needed to develop hardy varieties.

Pears

Sept

John (quite good and good size if heavily pruned and thinned)
Thomas (best quality, low availability)
Ure (only zone 3)

Seabuckthorn

Sept

New from PFRA: **Harvest Moon** (needs a male tree to set fruit)

Most of the above crops can be of good quality. But prairie plums, grapes, pears, and cherry plums are often of lower quality than you might expect in a grocery store. While prairie plums are good eaten fresh, the other 3 are usually processed. Plums usually taste good but are rather small and can have tough skins. We are breeding these crops at the U of S but it may be several years before we have improved high quality cultivars of these.

For more info visit:

U of Sk fruit website: www.fruit.usask.ca

To search for research reports funded by Saskatchewan Agriculture:

<http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/ADF/search>

Haskap day, Plant Sale, Propagation Workshops and other events are posted at:

<http://www.fruit.usask.ca/extension.html>

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