

## **'Big Red' Sour Cherry *By Bob Bors***

This variety is currently being marketed in the USA as 'Wowza®'.

Fifteen years ago, an American company visited us several times and took back several selections to test. After testing they decided that 'Big Red' was what they wanted to market first, but they didn't like that name so they changed it, with our permission to 'Wowza®'.

I recall 'Big Red' had unusually large red cherries that were 50% longer than wide with small lobes on the bottom. It looked like a miniature red delicious apple. I'd never seen any cherry that looked like that. It tasted good, didn't seem to have winterkill, but wasn't as productive as the other varieties. One thing I've wondered about is if the lower productive varieties are hardier.

'Big Red' should be considered highly experimental. The field that 'Big Red' was growing in was renovated in the original plant was destroyed. My fault, I forgot to tell the crew to save it is, so we haven't seen it in more than decade. I really wanted to breed with it because that shape is so unusual.

When the American I'd asked one of our tissue culture propagators to make us about 30 plants so we could grow it again. But wires got crossed and the propagator made about 300 plants instead.

For more information on the care of University of Saskatchewan cherries, download "Growing and Using University of Saskatchewan Sour Cherries" from [www.fruit.usask.ca](http://www.fruit.usask.ca).