

# Popular Fruit Varieties

The following list was originally compiled by Bob Bors (U of S), Rick Sawatzky (U of S) and Clarence Peters (SAFRR) based on personal experience and updated in 2016. A broader list of varieties with descriptions is available in the book “Growing Fruit in Northern Gardens” by Sara Williams and Bob Bors. It was updated in 2018 by Bob.

For more info visit: [www.fruit.usask.ca](http://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***

**Boreal Blizzard:** This variety has similar flavour to Aurora (its sibling) being low acid and sweet. But its fruits are possibly the largest of any variety averaging 2.8 grams but getting as heavy as 3.9 grams. The fruits are shaped like thick surfboards. It ripens midseason which is mid-July in Saskatoon. It is an upright grower similar to Aurora. Boreal Beast is recommended as a companion for pollination.

**Boreal Beauty:** This is a major breakthrough in late ripening Haskap. In Saskatoon it ripens the first week of August. It is very vigorous with strong sturdy branches. Its fruits are shaped like slightly stretched hearts that average 2.6 grams but can be 3.7 grams max. It has great flavour. Boreal Beast is recommended as a companion for pollination.

**Boreal Beast:** This variety is one of the highest rated for flavour and aroma but has fruit that look like a lumpy pear. It was named not only because it looks a little ugly but it is our only variety that bloom in sync with Boreal Beauty, thus ‘Beauty and the Beast’ belong together. But it also blooms in sync with ‘Boreal Blizzard’. Its fruit average about 2 grams. It ripens in late July in Saskatoon which is after Boreal Blizzard but before Boreal Beauty.

**Aurora:** Released to propagators in 2012 it has larger fruit, larger bushes, sweeter taste and is more productive than Tundra, Borealis and the Indigos. It will likely be a main variety for early production, with Indigo Gem or Tundra being used as pollinizers. It can be mechanically harvested. It has half the acidity of most haskap. It ripens in early July in Saskatoon.

**Honey Bee:** One of the fastest growing and highly productive at a young age, it was originally selected to be a pollinator for Tundra and the Indigo. Its flavour is good but has an unusual zing that connoisseurs suspect may contribute to ‘mouthfeel’ if used to make wine. It grows so fast that it will require pruning by year 3 while most haskap don’t need pruning until year 4 or 5. Its fruit are long thin and pointed but thicker than most Russian varieties.

**Our First Haskap Varieties:** *The following varieties were our first varieties released in 2005. As a group they are good tasting, mildew resistant and have oval-shaped fruits that average about 1.2 to 1.4 grams. All have bushes that will grow to be 1.3 meters or so which is perhaps 0.7 meters shorter than the newer varieties so they won’t be as productive. They bloom early and ripen in Late June in Saskatoon. Some of our earliest growers know them as ‘Row 9’ haskap since they were all in the same row in our first breeding field. These are not very good for pollinating each other but are better to plant with Aurora, Honey Bee or Russian varieties.*

**Indigo Gem (9-15):** This is much more widely planted than Tundra or other Indigo series. Nurseries found it easier to propagate but it is also more productive and taller than ‘Tundra’.

Plant scientists in Poland discovered that it will set fruit with its own pollen, although fruit will be only 60% normal size when this occurs. While it can be mechanically harvested, berries are soft so there some fruit crushing and bleeding when machine picked so fruit needs to be processed quickly.

**Tundra (9-84)**: 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. Firmness this firm in varieties is very rare. 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 last on the bushes into late July if the birds don't find them.

**Borealis (9-94)**: Definitely only for home gardeners, the thick branching habit and wide leaves hides fruit and bushes look beautifully symmetrical and rounded. Because the fruit is hidden from view they are harder to pick. One hand is needed to open up the bushes while the other hand can pick. With most other varieties, one can see all the fruit and use two hands for picking. For most of the season the fruits hold on tight and tear when picked so need to be used right away; late in the season they come off cleanly.

**Indigo Treat (9-91) and Indigo Yum (9-92)**: 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.

### ***Strawberry***

*Early July*

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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*

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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*

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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*

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The U of SK sour cherries are breakthroughs in the area of sour cherry breeding. They are dwarf (2 to 2.5m) and on their own roots and easily survive winter lows of -40C. They should be grown

as hedges, not as single trunk trees. Suckering should be allowed within rows to eventually replace older trunks.

**Best for commercial production (but great for gardeners too)**

**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) it is our only red fruited cherry. Hardy and productive, it and 'Cupid' have bushes a bit largert than our other cherries

**Worth trying for commercial production especially in areas warmer than Saskatoon:**

**Romeo** (formerly 7-7-5.8) Many believe Romeo is the best tasting, and I (Bob) agree. It start producing at a younger age than the others. When our -50C winter came, Romeo was already in production while the other varieties were not producing. Perhaps the

**Probably shouldn't be commercially grown but worthwhile for gardeners**

**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 commercial pitting machine

**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. The small bushes mean less yield and harder to harvest for commercial growers. It also had hardiness troubles when exposed to a -52C winter. Great flavor and texture and lees spreading than other varities

***Currants & Gooseberry***

*Aug*

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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*

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

***Plums***

*mid Aug*

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

**Patterson Pride** (top flavour)  
Prairie  
Pembina

Perfection/Superb  
Brook Red

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

**Brookgold** (super productive, dependable) *Can be on own roots*

Ivanovka

Ptitsin #3

Ptitsin #5

Fofonoff (Homesteader)

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### **Cherry Plums:**

*mid Aug*

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

Green-Fleshed: Opata, Beta

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### **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: These apples have very good juice yield, often greater than 75%, while having a good sugar/acid ratio:

Older varieties: Minn447, Brightness, Kerr, Prolific

Newer U of SK varieties: Granny Annie, Autumn Delight, Patience, Prairie Rose

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### **Grapes**

*early Sept*

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

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### **Pears**

*Sept*

John (quite good and good size if heavily pruned and thinned)

Thomas (best quality, low availability, Hardier)

Ure (only zone 3)

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### **Seabuckthorn**

*Sept*

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