

# Popular Fruit Varieties, 2016

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](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.

**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 larger than our other cherries

**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 varieties 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 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

***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

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## ***Choke Cherry***

*mid to late Aug*

Garrington

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

Shubert

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## ***Plums***

*mid Aug*

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

**Patterson Pride** (top flavour)

Prairie

Pembina

Perfection/Superb

Brook Red

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

**Brookgold** (super productive, dependable)

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Can be on own roots

Ivanovka

Ptitsin #3

Ptitsin #5

Fofonoff (Homesteader)

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## ***Cherry Plums:***

*mid Aug*

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

## ***Grapes***

*early Sept*

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

## ***Pears***

*Sept*

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

## ***Seabuckthorn***

*Sept*

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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](http://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>

Acknowledgement: The U of Sask Fruit program is mainly funded through grants from Saskatchewan Agriculture and royalties from the sale of our varieties. 65% of royalties go directly to the fruit program; the other 35% goes to an equipment fund which eventually benefits the program.