

Northern Hardy Fruit Evaluation Project: Highlights of the 2011 Season

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The Northern Hardy Fruit Evaluation Project continues to provide exciting information to home gardeners and fruit processors in North Dakota and the surrounding area. This year, over 600 people participated in outreach activities where information about the fruit project was presented.

Despite temperatures approaching 100 degrees and high humidity, approximately 80 people joined the fruit project tour at the annual field day event hosted by CREC on July 19. A grant from the North Dakota Grape Growers Association allowed us to invite John Thull, vineyard manager, and assistant, Jenny Bradley, from the University of Minnesota Horticultural Research Center to speak at the event.

Notable Events in the Orchard:

- ◆ Following a wet fall, snowfall was above average for the third year in a row, with 85 inches reported at our location. There was very little frost in the soil. Spring was 'late' this year, or at least quite cool, with work beginning April 25, about one month later than last year. The March 15-June 15 high temperatures were 7.9 degrees below the 30-year average. In general, the trend this year was the same as last year - cooler highs and warmer lows.
- ◆ Honeyberries (Russian origins) and haskaps (Japanese origins) continue to excite visitors with their taste and ease of growth. Fruit production was again favorable which allowed fruit to be shared and evaluated by vintners to assess suitability for winemaking.
- ◆ Juneberry harvest increased by 25 percent and reached 200 pounds of production on 100 plants. Rain just prior to harvest led to fruit cracking and spoilage and thus, some fruit loss. The first insect and disease problems occurred this year: Thrips damaged flower buds (esp. 'Smoky') and entomosporium leaf spot following 11 inches of rain July 14 to August 16.
- ◆ Damaging hail on July 24 decimated the cherry harvest and produced branch injuries on many plants. Juneberries, honeyberries and haskaps were provided some protection by netting. Apple and plum trees had 1-inch wide wounds. Green grape clusters had damage.
- ◆ Hazen apples were harvested earlier than in the past and refrigerated with great success. Flavor and texture were quite good and a great improvement over past harvests.
- ◆ Seaberries and elderberries were removed. Seaberries are reported to be invasive in Alberta, Canada, and the elderberries were not hardy here or able to ripen within our growing season.



Haskaps in the orchard.

The plan of 'studied neglect' implemented in 2010 had positive effects on the grapes. All had good bud survival on canes with moderate growth. Most vines had fruit which was employed to further utilize extra root energy on precocious plants. With the late start and cool year, most grapes did not fully ripen this season. This fall, in anticipation of high snowfall, excess growth was removed to protect the trellis.

		No. of plants	2009		2010		2011	
			Date	pounds	Date	pounds	Date	pounds
Aronia	Nero	4	15-Sep	28.5	9-Sep	37.3	9/19-23	28.1
	Raintree Seedling	4	16-Sep	26.9	10-Sep	40.3	23-Sep	20.4
	Raintree Select	4	15-Sep	16.9	8-Sep	29.8	19-Sep	22.3
	Viking	4	16-Sep	33.8	10-Sep	40.6	19-Sep	20.3
				106.1		148.0		91.1
Hardy Cherries	SK Carmine Jewel	12	28-Jul	x	28-Jul	37.4	8/2-4	34.1
	SK Crimson Passion	12	28-Jul	x	28-Jul	7.7	4-Aug	2.7
				0		45.1		36.7
	Evans / Bali	3	22-Jul	x	22-Jul	0.7	6-Aug	7.2
Black Currant Variety Trial	Ben Sarek	16	10-Aug	66.2	3-Aug	24.6		x
	Black Down	16	27-Jul	43.2	29-Jul	29.5	15-Aug	49.4
	Hilltop Baldwin	16	30-Jul	20.2	29-Jul	11.3	18-Aug	42.4
	Titania	16	30-Jul	65.9	2-Aug	10.4	8/23-25	45.7
	Swedish Black	16	27-Jul	21.8	2-Aug	2.7	8/16-22	25.2
				217.2		78.5		162.7
Black Currant	Ben Lomand	4	10-Aug	0.9	2-Aug	4.9	16-Aug	5.9
	Champion	4	29-Jul	5.2	2-Aug	4.2	16-Aug	8.6
	Consort	4	4-Aug	16.6	29-Jul	5.2	x	x
	Minaj Smyriou	4	23-Jul	0.5	29-Jul	4.4	16-Aug	8.7
			23.2		18.6		23.2	
Red Currant	Jhonkheer Van Tets	4	x	x	11-Aug	4.7	25-Aug	17.7
	Red Lake	4	31-Jul	18.4	29-Jul	21.3	9-Aug	30.3
	Redstart	4	10-Aug	9.8	9-Aug	12.3	8-Aug	24.7
	Rosetta	4	19-Aug	6.4	11-Aug	8.4	17-Aug	40.4
	Rovada	4	11-Aug	6.0	10-Aug	10.1	17-Aug	33.3
				40.6		56.8		146.4
White Currant	Blanka	4	14-Aug	9.1	10-Aug	18.9	26-Aug	23.5
	Swedish White	4	4-Aug	5.5	3-Aug	14.6	4-Aug	29.0
			14.6		33.5		52.5	
Ore. Honeyberry	22-37	3	20-Jul	0.3	6-Jul	2.3	28-Jul	2.4
	41-100	3	20-Jul	0.5	6-Jul	3.8	28-Jul	2.8
	43-87	3	20-Jul	0.1	6-Jul	1.1	21-Jul	4.4
	43-97	3	20-Jul	0.3	6-Jul	3.4	1-Aug	3.2
	45-57	3	20-Jul	0.6	6-Jul	3.3	27-Jul	4.4
	85-26	3	20-Jul	0.5	6-Jul	3.9	27-Jul	6.2
				2.3		17.8		23.4
Rus. Honeyberry	Berry Blue	4	x	x	2-Jul	9.3	12-Jul	12.6
	Blue Belle	4	x	x	15-Jun	5.6	7-Jul	6.2
	Blue Velvet	4	20-Jul	2.0	2-Jul	2.7	x	x
	Blue Moon	4	20-Jul	3.0	7-Jul	3.5	x	x
	Kamchatka	4	x	x	2-Jul	2.0	7-Jul	6.4
			5.0		23.2		25.2	
Haskaps - Canadian	Borealis	4	x	x	x	x	20-Jul	0.5
	Tundra	5	x	x	x	x	14-Jul	4.0
	Indigo Gem (9-15)	5	x	x	x	x	12-Jul	4.8
	Indigo Treat (9-91)	5	x	x	x	x	14-Jul	1.4
								10.7
Juneberry Variety Trial	JB30	20	17-Jul	3.6	7-Jul	37.5	15-Jul	51.7
	Honeywood ++	20	to	20.5	to	37.3	to	43.7
	Martin	20	24-Jul	1.6	16-Jul	13.8	25-Jul	28.1
	Smoky	20		9.4		43.2		29.1
	Thiessen	20		9.7		29.3		48.1
				44.9		161.2		200.7
++ - Juneberries are picked 3 times. Honeywood produces longer than this.								

The Project was planted in 2007, except Juneberries 2006.