



## Recommendations from the Carrington REC Fruit Project

NDSU Carrington Research Extension Center has been evaluating northern-hardy fruit varieties since 2006. The following varieties are hardy, have done the best or have the most useful fruits. For a full list of cultivars, contact the fruit project manager.

**Apples:** CREC has five varieties of apples easily grown in central North Dakota: ‘Haralred’, ‘Hazen’, ‘Sweet Sixteen’, ‘Honey Crisp’ and ‘Zestar’. Our selection of ‘Haralred’ does not mature well and ‘Sweet Sixteen’ takes a very long time to fruit – though it is delicious.

**Varieties:** ‘Hazen’, ‘Honey Crisp’, ‘Zestar’.

**Plums:** Plums have been spottily productive at CREC. Try a wild plum as a pollinizer.

**Varieties:** (recommended with reservations) ‘Pembina’, ‘Pipestone’, ‘Toka’ and ‘Waneta’.

**Grapes:** Eighteen varieties are being evaluated for winter hardiness, ability to ripen and other qualities. The easiest-to-grow, most hardy grape for North Dakota is ‘Valiant’. ‘Somerset Seedless’ has done well.

**Aronia:** (*Aronia melanocarpa*) Or, Black Chokeberry, is a partly-native North American plant developed into a commercial fruit in Eastern Europe. The fruit requires processing as it is quite astringent right off the bush but is very nutritious and high in anthocyanins. High interest in Central Plains.

**Varieties:** ‘Viking’, ‘Nero’, ‘Raintree Select’, ‘McKenzie’, ‘Galicjanca’.

**Cherries:** (*Prunus x kerrasis*) These dwarf, zone-2 hardy pie cherries grow on a 5’x 7’ high bush that can produce 20 to 30 lbs of fruit per plant. They are just becoming readily available in the US. Fruit is dark red throughout and has high sugar content. Subject to Spotted Wing Drosophila fruit fly damage.

**Varieties:** ‘Carmine Jewel’, ‘Romeo’, ‘Juliet’. **Tree:** ‘Evans’ aka ‘Bali’.

**Currants:** (*Ribes nigrum* and *rubrum*) Black currants have 5 times the amount of vitamin C in oranges and are loaded with antioxidants and anthocyanins. They are super-popular in Europe as juice, syrups and spreads. Jam, juice, wine and cordials are delicious. Flowers are susceptible to late-season freezes. Powdery mildew may be a problem. Near white pine trees, plant rust-resistant cultivars.

**Varieties: Black:** ‘Titania’, ‘Minaj Smyriou’, ‘Ben Lomand’, ‘Champion’. Also, McGinnis Berry Crop plants.

**Red:** ‘Red Lake’, ‘Rovada’ or any. **White:** ‘Swedish White’.

**Honeyberry aka Haskap:** (*Lonicera caerulea* var. *edulis* or *emphylocalyx*) A very hardy small shrub with unique, tasty, early-ripening fruit. No special soil conditions are needed. A circumpolar native, CREC has 7 Russian, 18 Japanese and 6 Canadian cultivars. Production has been underwhelming at CREC.

**Varieties: Haskap:** ‘Indigo Gem’, ‘Tundra’, ‘Borealis’. **Pollenizers:** ‘Berry Blue’, ‘Blue Belle’, ‘Aurora’.

**Juneberry:** (*Amelanchier alnifolia*) Juneberries are native to the northern Great Plains; the fruits are delicious fresh, frozen or processed. Bird damage can be a problem and there is disease pressure.

**Varieties:** ‘Martin’, ‘Thiessen’, ‘JB30’, ‘Honeywood’. Good u-pick potential.

**Gooseberries:** (*Ribes uva-crispa* L.) Many varieties are susceptible to leaf diseases. Plants have thorns but the fruit is tasty and sweet-tart. Use like fresh grapes or make pies and jam.

**Varieties:** ‘Hinnomaki Red’, ‘Captivator’, ‘Jewel’, ‘Red George’, ‘Black Velvet’, ‘Lepaa Red’.

**Sea Buckthorn or Sea Berry:** (*Hippophae rhamnoides*) Not recommended – Potentially invasive.

**Elderberries:** (*Sambucus canadensis*) Commercial varieties don’t ripen at CREC and are not winter hardy. We are searching for hardier selections that we have heard about.

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