Juneberries – *Amelanchier alnifolia*

Juneberries are well loved on the Prairies but are known worldwide. They have long been a part of human history and are known by many names: Saskatoons in Canada, and Juneberries, serviceberries and shadbush in America. North American native people made Juneberries an important part of their diets. On the Plains, it was an important ingredient in pemmican, a blend of berries, dried meat and fat. Explorers, missionaries and settlers who had collected and eaten woodland varieties in the East, made Juneberries a part of their diet on the Plains.

Commercially available Juneberries most are just selections made from wild plants or from sports that developed in Juneberry orchards. Juneberries are difficult to propagate. As a result, nurseries in the US rarely carry the better cultivars. The Prairie Provinces of Canada have been developing their Saskatoon orchards and markets for many years and propagators from the region carry the most successful varieties such as: ‘Honeywood’, ‘JB30’, ‘Lee 3’ ‘Lee 8’, ‘Martin’, ‘Northline’, ‘Parkhill’, ‘Smoky’ and ‘Thiessen’. There are about 30 cultivars but many have fallen out of favor.

**Growing Juneberry**: Juneberries are members of the Rosaceae (Rose) family as are apples and aronia. While aronia are quite resistant to pests and diseases, Juneberries, like apples, can be bothered by a number of insects and diseases. Diseases of importance are: *Entomosporium* leaf and berry spot, juniper-apple rust, fireblight, brown fruit rot, *Cytospora* canker, powdery mildew and blackleaf. Insect problems include: wooly elm aphids, thrips, mites, bud moths, Saskatoon sawflies that burrow into the fruit and pear slug sawflies that eat leaf surfaces. A comment from a University of Saskatchewan researcher indicated that, at least in their area, Juneberries couldn’t be grown organically.

At CREC, our primary problems have been wooly elm aphids feeding on root hairs of young plants, *Entomosporium* leaf and berry spot, and flower thrips. Tom Nowatzki, whose family has a Juneberry orchard near Langdon, ND, indicates that flower thrips, *Entomosporium* leaf and berry spot, juniper-apple rust, powdery mildew and stem cankers are their primary problems. *Entomosporium* leaf and berry spot will be a problem if your planting is in an area that stays wet or damp.

Birds are the primary animal pests of Juneberries, but raccoons, deer and even your dog will love them. Birds can be kept away with netting that is placed over the plants just after the berries start to swell. Large plantings may have enough fruit to share with the birds –100 plants is not large enough.

**US Plant source:**
Saskatoon Michigan – larger quantities www.saskatoonmichigan.com
HoneyberryUSA.com – import plants and reship to you www.HoneyberryUSA.com

**Canadian Plant Source:**
Prairie Tech Propagation www.prairietechpropagation.com
Select Seedling Nursery www.selectseedlingnursery.com

**Growing Resources:**

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