

Issue 7 – August 13, 2025

Fruit Crop Report



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Weekly Provincial Overview

Raspberry harvesting is near completion with average yields and a longer than normal harvest period. Economically damaging populations of Spotted Winged Drosophila (SWD) were found later than normal in the season, resulting in overall higher quality berries and yields, in both fields that were sprayed for SWD and non-sprayed. Early season apple cultivar harvest starting this week, in regions closer to the international border, good size and yields expected. Wild chokecherry harvesting continues with good yields. Strawberry growers have completed most renovation activities. They will continue to monitor strawberry field soil moisture levels and irrigate as needed to promote plant regrowth and development of fruit buds for next season.

Commercial Fruit Crops - Timely Topics

Updated Strawberry and Saskatoon Cost-of-Production Guides from Manitoba Agriculture

Manitoba cost of production budgets are updated for commercial strawberry and saskatoon operations. General Manitoba Agriculture recommendations are assumed for fertilizer and chemical inputs. The budgets provide an economic evaluation for each of the crops, including estimated yields needed for cost recovery. Costs include labour, investment and depreciation, but do not include management costs, nor do they necessarily represent the average cost of production in Manitoba.

Cost of Production Strawberries



Commercial strawberry production in Manitoba has been an important part of diversification in the province since the 1960-70's. The majority of the strawberry farms are on a U-Pick basis; but custom picking has increased over the past few years. Strawberries are an intensely managed crop that require precise timing. Yield and quality achieved during the short 3 - 4 week picking season, hinge on timely management practices in the previous year, as well as care and maintenance before picking.

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Growers entering the industry need these basic requirements:

1. Suitable land with adequate drainage and shelterbelts,
2. Access to an adequate quantity and quality of water for irrigation,
3. Financial resources that permit a significant level of investment in infrastructure and input costs,
4. Ability to apply intensive management skills to the crop in a precisely timed manner,
5. Ability to determine market potential, and
6. Willingness to accept risk.

Cost of Production of Saskatoons in Manitoba



Commercial saskatoon orchards started in Manitoba in the 1990's. Prior to that saskatoons were harvested from wild stands. The majority of the saskatoon orchards are harvested by hand for U-Pick sales and pre-picked direct farm sales; but some mechanical harvesting for sales into processing and pre-picked sales also occurs.

Growers entering the industry need the same basic requirements as for strawberries. Growers should assess their potential customer base and marketing opportunities prior to establishing a saskatoon orchard and should start small and expand over several years.

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Spotlight on Wild Fruit of Manitoba: The Chokecherry

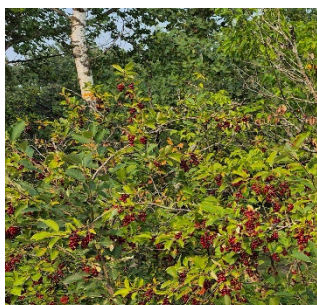


Figure 1: Wild chokecherries with

The chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*) or wild black cherry is a medium to large multi-stemmed fruiting shrub (1-7m) or a small tree (9-13m) (figure 1). Like the saskatoon, it is a member of the Rose family and is related to domestic cherries, plums, peaches and apricots. It is native to North America, with a range stretching from the Yukon to New Mexico and from B.C. to Newfoundland.

Throughout North American history, chokecherries have been a source of food (in soups, stews, pemmican, salmon dishes). Chokecherries contain high levels of functional food properties. Today, Chokecherries are commonly used in concentrates, jellies, syrups, sauces, juices, jams, and wine. As a shrub, it's developing popularity in the prairies, as part of multi-

row shelterbelts, as an ornamental and for use in wildlife habitat improvement plantings. The majority of chokecherries used for commercial products are harvested from the wild.

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