

Issue 7 – July 22, 2026

Fruit Crop Report



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Provincial Overview

For most strawberry fields, this is the final week of harvesting. Strawberry yields were quite variable depending on how long excess moisture conditions occurred before and during harvest. Fields in regions with saturated field conditions and/or continuous wet foliage (rain, dew) reported higher fruit rot (*Botrytis* spp. and *anthracnose*) issues, reducing yields. Repeated iron foliar sprays have been applied in strawberry and raspberry fields showing iron chlorosis symptoms (yellow leaves with green veins). Saskatoon, raspberry and sour cherry harvesting continues this week. Some sour cherry orchards and raspberry fields, with minimal or no control sprays for spotted wing drosophila (SWD), are experiencing very high infestations reducing marketable yields. SWD traps and berry salt tests in the south central region have indicated high SWD populations at economically damaging levels.

2026 Horticulture School – Save the Date

[Horticulture School 2026](#) will be held Thursday July 30, 2026 at Assiniboine College Brandon campus. Manitoba Agriculture and Assiniboine College staff will present hands-on training sessions in the field for vegetable and fruit crop production. Sessions include Insect Pests & Diseases of Apples, Apple Pruning/Production, High Tunnel Fertility and Field Scouting for Insects. To register, please email carmela.samaniego@gov.mb.ca

Commercial Fruit Crops - Timely Topics

Saskatoons

Juniper Rust



Photo: Susan Gering usask.ca

Figure 1: Juniper rust on saskatoon berry.

Saskatoon-Juniper Rust is a disease infecting berries and leaves. It occurs with a cool, moist spring/early summer and when saskatoon growth is delayed. The fungus requires two hosts to complete its life cycle – saskatoons and junipers.

Symptoms

Very distinct yellowish-orange spiky projections on leaves and berries (Figures 1,2).

Control

The obvious solution is to remove all junipers within a two kilometer radius but this is impractical and ineffective most of the time. The best method of control is to prune out rust galls from junipers and apply control fungicides on saskatoons. Most fungicides recommend a



Photo: A. Mintenko

Figure 2: Juniper rust on saskatoon leaves.

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control application at white tip, again at petal fall, and at green fruit stage, if conditions are still favorable for disease development. Fungicides that control Entomosporium Leaf and Berry Spot disease are typically registered to control juniper rust as well. This includes fungicides with the active ingredient propiconazole.

Strawberry

Leaf Diseases

After renovation of strawberries plants and regrowth of new leaves after mowing old leaves off, it is necessary to continue to monitor for leaf diseases. Strawberry plants form fruit buds for next year's harvest in August-September, so it is important that plants are as healthy as possible to maximize this phase of plant development. If anthracnose appears on plants, remember to avoid group 11 fungicides as there may be resistant issues. Symptoms on stems are long, sunken, dark lesions. For control strategies see [Strategies for Prevention & Control of Anthracnose in Strawberries](#) (source Fruit Crop Report Dec. 2024). For other leaf diseases see [Strawberry Leaf Diseases MB Ag](#)

Saskatoons

Opportunity to Contribute to Saskatoon Research Project

"S'2n: Innovative Saskatoon berry breeding using Manitoba's cross-compatible diploid accessions" a collaboration between Prairie Fruit Growers Association and the University of Saskatchewan's fruit program (led by Dr. Anže Švara - Fruit Genetics and Breeding), received Sustainable CAP funding. This [research](#) will focus on breeding new saskatoon berry cultivars by identifying new diverse saskatoon berry plants, testing them for production and integrating them into the breeding program. This work could set foundations for long-term streamlined breeding of saskatoons and contribute to a new boost for growers and industry.

To maximize the impacts of the project, we need your help. Select your favorite wild Saskatoon patch, that produces lots of berries and send seeds that you think are worthwhile to include in the study. Below are the instructions for material collection and shipping:

Seeds from Berries

- Collect seeds when berries are ripe in July.
- Extract seeds from the berry and pack in a paper envelope.
- Include the following information on a paper in the envelope:
 - Plant location
 - Bush or plant growth habits
 - Berry or fruit size (mm wide)
 - Flavor description
 - Any unique or noteworthy traits
- Mail to: Dr. Anže Švara, U of S, Fruit Program, Plant Science Department, 51 Campus Drive, Saskatoon, SK, S7N 5A8