

Grow with USask

Saskatoon berries were very important for early Native American life as well as settlers. These berries were enjoyed fresh, mashed or dried and the leaves were used to make tea. The wood was flexible, used for arrows baskets etc. The Saskatoon berry has many names including Service berries, June berries, Indian pear, Shadberries. The word Saskatoon comes from the Cree word “Mis-sask-quah-too-mina”.

■ Growth Habit

- Shrub or small tree 1-8 meters (3-26 ft) tall
- Flowers are white coloured with 3-20 flowers per cluster
- Unique leaves: oval to round and margins get toothy on the upper half of the leaf
- Berries are a pome (think a small apple) and dark purple in colour. They ripen in mid/late July and have uneven ripening. The size depends on the cultivar



■ Planting

- Plant about 1m (3ft) apart
- Best to plant in spring or fall, summer should be avoided
- Plant slightly deeper than the nursery container and water well until they get established

■ Pollination

- Saskatoons are self pollinating so only one plant is required.

■ Pruning

- When the plant is small (0-3 years) prune weak, diseased, dead/damaged shoots; keep center open; and remove low spreading branches
- 3-4 years after fruiting started, old non productive wood can be removed (selective rejuvenation)
- Complete rejuvenation which means trees can get chopped down to ground level and allowed to regrow



Harvesting

- Bird Protection is needed
- Pick when you are happy with the flavour, dark purple colour



Bird netting shown covering a large plot of haskap plants, similar netting can be used for Saskatoons.



Ready for harvest!

Pests

- **Saskatoon Juniper Rust.** This is what causes the berries to turn into little spiky balls. Similar growths can also grown on the leaves. The conditions need to be right for this rust to flourish.



Rust on Saskatoon berries looks like little spiky balls.

- **Powdery Mildew.** This cause the leaves to be covered with a white film at first, and as the infection progresses causes the leaves to brown and fall off. Treatments like sulfur powders and garlic sprays can be sprayed preventatively but will not help once the infection has happened. Powdery Mildew thrives in high humidity
- **Plenty of Insects.** Since the Saskatoon berry is native to here there are a lot of insects that prey on Saskatoon's as the pests are native too.
- **Birds.** The birds will eat your berries faster then you can so protection is needed if you want to eat any of your fruit.



Saskatoon powdery mildew