

ALASKA NAFEX NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALASKA CHAPTER, NORTH AMERICAN FRUIT
EXPLORERS (NAFEX)

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MEETING DATES

October 18. Thurs. 7 p.m. NBA
Lunchroom. Program TBA.

Nov. 15. Thurs. 7 p.m. NBA
lunchroom. Program TBA.

SERVICEBERRIES

The serviceberry has always been one of my favorite landscape plants. It has nice fall color, beautiful white flowers and a delicious purple/black fruit. I was completely surprised to learn that serviceberries are being grown commercially for their fruit. Lloyd Hauser with the Alberta Special Crops and Horticulture Research Center in Brooks shared slides of serviceberry orchards with participants of the 1990 Alaska Greenhouse and Nursery Conference.

You may know this fruit by a different name. It has plenty -- saskatoon, juneberry, shadblow, sarvisberry. I've started calling it Amelanchier to

try to keep things simple. There are 2 species indigenous to Alaska. Amelanchier alnifolia which extends from southeast Alaska into the Interior, and A.florida, found in Southeast and Southcentral.

A. alnifolia is the species being developed for commercial fruit production. Cathy Wright of the Alaska Plant Materials Center and Pat Holloway at the UAF Plant and Animal Science Division have several cultivars planted in trials throughout the railbelt area. There is at least 1 Alaska nursery (wholesale) which is producing potted stock for landscaping.

The first few years after Amelanchier bushes are planted, growth is slow. Plants generally do not produce until they are 3-4 years old with mature yields expected after 6-7 years. Once plants reach 8-10 years, a routine pruning program should be established to ensure continued production of young growth.

Most Amelanchiers I've seen in the Anchorage area range from 3 to 5 feet in height, but I have seen a couple of mature plants at 18-20 feet. One is located on Elmendorf AFB.

At the June NAFEX meeting in Anchorage, there were several opinions on whether Amelanchiers are tasty. I contend they make fabulous pie and wonderful jelly.

-Julie Riley

**CHARLES H. ANWAY. A
HAINES ALASKAN PIONEER,
MINER AND
HORTICULTURIST. 1857 -
1949**

In 1988, NAFEX member Robert Henderson of Haines submitted an article about Charles Anway to the Newsletter. At that time, Robert told me he was going to write a book about Anway, and he successfully completed that project in 1990. This well-researched book is filled with interesting facts about one of Alaska's earliest horticulturists. Robert compiled information about Anway from his birth in Michigan in 1857, through his early years in Colorado; his journey North with the gold seekers in 1898; and his experiences growing tree fruits and small fruits in Haines. Anway was truly a pioneer fruit explorer. He was an amateur plant breeder and developed the award-winning

'Anway' strawberry. He developed the first commercial apple orchard and sweet cherry orchard in Alaska. He won a special award in 1915 from the Skagway Horticultural Society for producing the first mature apple in Alaska. His horticultural triumphs are just part of an interesting look at life and people in Haines from the turn of the century. For fruit growers there is valuable information on fruit varieties, growing conditions, and cultural problems Anway encountered and solved over the years. It is also well-stocked with historical photos of Anway, his gardens, and other notable citizens of Haines. I found the book to be easy to read, well-researched, and very informative. I recommend it to anyone interested in learning more about early Alaska and fruit growing in the Far North. Congratulations, Robert, for an excellent book! An order form is enclosed for any NAFEX member who would like to purchase a copy of this book. - P. Holloway

**FRUIT TREE SURVIVAL
RECORD, WINTER 1989 -
1990 FAIRBANKS ALASKA**

My coldest temperature was -46 F in late November, 1990 when we had very little snow cover.

The following plant showed **no winter injury**:

Apples: Antonovka, Battleford, Centennial, Chinese Golden Early, Dawn, Dolgo, Duchess of Oldenburg, Gravenstein Red, Heyer 12, Heyer 20, Lords Seedling, Morden 363, Norcue, Norda, Noret, Norson, Norland, Orenco, Oriole, Parkland, Primate, Ranetka crab, Rescue, Rosthern 15, Rosthern 18, State Fair, Sunnybrook, Tyrstrup, Vista Bella, Viking, Wallace, Westland and Wien crab.

Stone fruits and misc: Assiniboine plum, Manchurian plum, Nanking cherry, ground cherry, pin cherry, buffalo berry, buarnut nut, butternut nut, European filbert nut, Hybrid Hazel nut and Arctic Beauty kiwi.

The following showed very **slight tip injury** (3 inches or less) **Apples:** Breakey, Discovery, Early Joe, Imperial Gala, Kerr, Lowland Raspberry, Norhey, Noran, Royal Gala, Yellow Transparent (Brewer Strain). **Stone fruit and misc.:** Americana plum, Sapa plum, Toka plum, sand cherry, nannaberry and gooseberry.

The following had **10% kill:** **Apples:** Duchess, Morden 359 **Stone fruit:** Underwood plum, Oka cherry plum

The following had **20% kill:** **Apples:** Summer Scarlet **Stone fruits:** Compass and Red Diamond Cherry plum

The following had **30% kill:** **Apples:** Early Harvest, Live-land Raspberry **Stone fruits**

and misc: Sapalta cherry plum, Ure pear, Minnesota Black walnut

The following had **40% kill:** **Apples:** Chestnut crab, Douglas Wormless, Empire, Jeffris, Liberty, Mantet, Quinte, Red June and Tydeman Red. **Stone fruits & misc.:** Pipestone plum, John pear, Nova pear, Russian mulberry.

The following had **50% kill:** **Apples:** Canada Requette, Harralred, Hiburnal, Melba Red, Red Baron, Sharon **Stone fruit:** North Star Cherry

The following had **60% kill:** **Apples:** American Summer Pearman, Early Blaze Seedling, Sweet, Trail, Wellington, Yellow Transparent

The following had **70% kill:** **Apples:** Akane, Harralson, Hazen, Irish Peach, July Red, Mandan, Puritan, Summer Rose, Whitney crab.

The following **barely made it:** **Apples:** Anoka, Atlas, Bitemac, Champlain, Crimson Beauty, Dudley, Early Cortland, Henry Clay, Goney Gold, King David, Lowell, Maidens Blush, Marlin Stephens, Milton, Niagara, Red Astrachan, St. Francis, St. Lawrence, Sunrise, Tetovsky. **Stone fruit:** Mesabi plum

The following **died:** **Apples** Autumn Delight, Fam-euse, McIntosh, New York 652, Richardson, Scott Winter, Sweet Bough. Clair Lammers
1364 Esro Road
Fairbanks, AK

SWEET CHERRY OBSERVATIONS

One June 16 I visited the IR-2 Repository at Prosser, WA Agricultural Research and Extension Center of Washington State University. The IR-2 sweet cherry collection contains 59 varieties. The fruiting season was just beginning; on many cultivars the fruit was red but not ripe. We were highly impressed with the flavor of 'Salmo', a sweet cherry introduced from British Columbia. Erik Simpson's tree of 'Salmo' on GM-61 grew about 3 ft of central leader from the scion in 1989 and survived the -28 F cold of the past winter with about 2 inches of winterkill. 'Salmo' is an early-ripening cultivar. Its color is deep purple-black with just a bit of red. By contrast, the 'Bing' cherries at Prosser were not fully ripe. I searched carefully, but even the ripest 'Bings' were only a notch below 'Salmo' in their flavor.

'Sam' which was as hardy for Erik as 'Salmo', is a crack resistant, highly productive black sweet cherry and a good pollenizer. Tree structure was good (not unduly upright). The fruits were firm, but they were a notch below 'Salmo' in flavor.

'Viva' is an early-ripening, medium-sized, semi-firm dark red sweet cherry that was fully ripe on June 16. Jo Whitney

commented that the flavor of 'Viva' had many components other than pure sweetness and liked it. The Horticultural Research Institute of Ontario introduced 'Viva' in 1973.

'Kristen' is a black sweet cherry which has performed well in Norway and Montana. Both I and Lawrence Clark found moderate to severe winter injury on our trees after the winter of 1986-87 in Anchorage. Nevertheless, 'Kristen' was fully ripe at Prosser June 16. The fruit was large, dark, glossy; the flesh was firm, meaty, juicy and very flavorful. It was introduced in 1982 at Geneva NY and is a cross of 'Emperor Francis' with 'Gil Peck'. This cherry deserves to be tried again in Anchorage. Any cherry with different parentage ('Salmo', 'Sam', 'Viva') should be cross compatible with 'Kristen'.

'Larian' is a dark red cherry which impressed me. It was fully ripe on June 16. Its hardiness is unknown. The tree in this collection was from California.

'Star', another ripe cherry, is a 1949 introduction by Ag Canada, Summerland, BC. It ripens 4 days after 'Viva' at Vineland, Ontario. The flavor of 'Star' was good, though not as good as 'Salmo' or 'Kristen', and the size was medium-large.

-R. Purvis

TO BE CONTINUED