Fruit Demonstration

Established: May 2009
Objectives: To demonstrate varieties of fruits being developed by the University of Saskatchewan
Collaborator: PCDF

Background
Dwarf sour cherries are not a native crop to the Canadian Prairies. They are the product of a number of crosses were initially begun by Dr. Les Kerr of the University of Saskatchewan by crossing a cold hardy cherry from Siberia, *Prunus fruiticosa,* with a sour cherry originating in Europe (brought over by settlers) by the name of *Prunus cerasus.* Since then the development has continued by incorporations of other cherries and by the use of dwarfing root stalks. The advantage of the dwarfing root stalk is that it forces earlier fruiting from the plant and it also creates a more workable tree when harvesting, for both manual and mechanical pickers. Dwarf sour cherries constitute a very typical "cherry pie filling" cherry.


Figure 1: a) dwarf sour cherries (photo credit); b) haskap berries (photo credit).

The haskap berry was introduced to Canada around 1967 and now grows across the country, thanks to new varieties developed by the University of Saskatchewan Fruit Program. The berries are similar in tast and texture blueberry, with a tartness closer to raspberry. The tartness makes them excellent for baking. Haskap plants attract fewer pests than many other prairie fruit crops and require little maintenance. Further, the crop thrives in cold climates, making it a natural fit for the Canadian prairies. Haskap is one of the first berries to ripen, and pickers can enjoy the berry beginning in the mid-June.

Birds are a problem for both fruits and appropriate measures must be taken to prevent the loss of berries.

Results
A bird net was erected over the sour cherry and haskap plants in late 2019, resulting in much higher yield results for haskaps in 2020. Sour cherries tend to yield more biennially (that is, yield are higher every other year), so 2020 was a lower year than 2019. A comparative chart below shows successive yields since 2016.

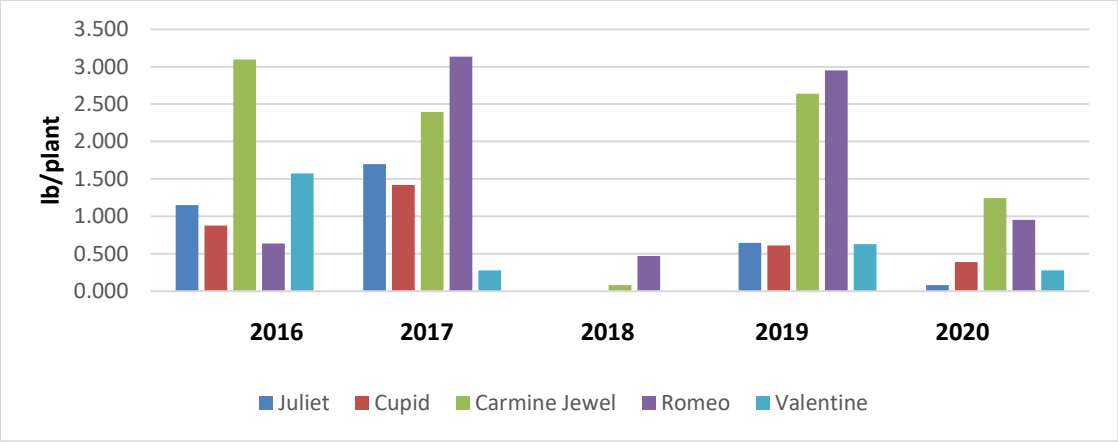

Figure 1: Roblin Sour Cherry Performance 2016-2020 (lb/plant)

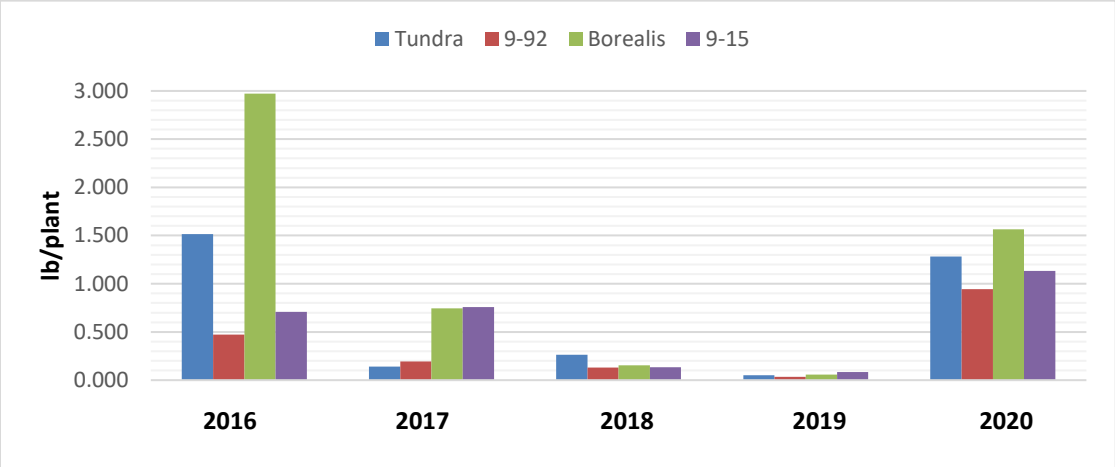

Figure 2: Roblin Haskap Performance 2016-2020 (lb/plant)

Materials and methods

Entries:	4 Haskap varieties; 5 Dwarf Sour Cherry varieties
Agronomic info	
Soil Type:	Erickson Loam Clay
Landscape:	Rolling with trees to the east
Planted:	Jun 2009
Fertilized:	Spring 2020
Pruned:	Spring 2019

Table 1: Dwarf Sour Cherry and Haskap Varieties

Haskap	Cherry
Borealis	Valentine
Tundra	Romeo
9-92	Juliet
9-15	Carmine Jewel
	Cupid