

Growing Cherries on the Prairies – compliments of Over the Hill Orchards

Pros:

Cold winters = hard on insects

Low humidity = less disease

High % of sunny day's

High winds

Cons:

Cold winters = not all varieties grow here

Lower amounts of precipitation

Short growing season

Requires shelter belt

However, unlike other fruit trees, cherry trees do not require cross pollination, and therefore a single tree can produce a multitude of fruit, and even the most limited garden space can grow fresh fruit.

There are six (6) varieties of cherry trees that will grow and produce quality fruit, whether it's for the orchard or just for the everyday gardener wanting a tasty treat.

The six varieties are as follows:

SK. Carmen Jewel

- - Grows about 6' wide and over 5' high
- - Fruit ripens early August
- - Dark skinned fruit & flesh
- - Tart - 18% sugar
- - Very small pit
- - Some suckering

Crimson Passion

- - Grows about 5' wide and over 6' high
- - Fruit ripens mid August
- - Light skinned flesh
- - 22 % sugar
- - Crunchy texture, medium round pit
- - Heart shaped fruit, quality eating fresh
- - Few suckers

Valentine

- - Grows about 6' wide and over 8' high
- - Fruit ripens mid August
- - Productive
- - Light skin and flesh

- - 18% sugar
- - Medium round pit, quality processing fruit

Juliet

- - Grows over 6' wide and 8' high
- - Fruit ripens August
- - Medium productivity
- - Similar to Valentine
- - 20% sugar, very good tasting, quality pie fruit
- - Good flesh, medium acid, medium pit
- - Suckers heavily

Romeo

- - Grows over 6' wide and 8' high
- - Fruit ripens late August
- - Excellent quality eating fresh
- - Medium producer
- - Not as hardy as the other varieties

Cupid

- - Fruit ripens late August
- - Large fruit, not as good tasting
- - Few suckers
- - Questionable hardiness for Zone 3 area

Although these varieties of trees were released from the University of Saskatchewan over the past few years, and have been proven to be hardy for our climate, Dean recommended to always mulch the roots prior to winter. In doing so, the mulch should be spread the same distance around the tree perpendicular to the globe of the foliage, the larger the globe the farther away from the base the roots are.