

Issue 4 – June 25, 2025

Fruit Crop Report



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Weekly Provincial Overview

Established strawberry fields are at 80-100% bloom. Harvesting of early and mid-season strawberry cultivars will begin the last weekend in June. Expect bulk of strawberry harvesting to begin the first week of July. Saskatoons in full green fruit stage, with harvest expected to start the first and second week of July. Harvesting continues for early season Haskap cultivars. Scouting for insect pests in Saskatoon orchards continues. Raspberry flowering complete with green berries developing.

Commercial Fruit Crops - Timely Topics

Strawberry and Raspberry Pollinators

Strawberry flowers are visited by many insects and pollinators in Manitoba, including native and managed bees. Both female and male parts of the strawberry plant are on each flower of most cultivated varieties. Bees, as well as other insects, transfer the sticky pollen from the anther (male) to the stigma (female). Stigmas are often receptive before pollen of the same flower is available, which encourages cross pollination. See links below for common pollinators of Manitoba strawberries and raspberries:

[Manitoba Agriculture Strawberry-Pollinators.pdf](#)

[Manitoba Agriculture Raspberry-Pollinators.pdf](#)

Deblossoming New Strawberry Plantings Increases Future Yields

Blossoms are removed in June-bearing strawberries, in a matted row system, in the establishment (transplant) year. This removal of flowers allows plants to fully allocate plant resources into crown and runner development. Deblossoming results in earlier and increased runnering, plus a more developed root system. These early-formed runners will bear most of the fruit the following year. This will improve the yield productivity, over the life of the planting, and increase plant resources for first year winter survival. As soon as new plants begin blossoming (June-bearing strawberries), remove the flower stalk. It may be necessary to go over the field two or three times to achieve this goal.

References

[Province of Manitoba | agriculture - Strawberry Production \(gov.mb.ca\)](#)

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Apple and Saskatoon Insect Pest: Apple Curculio – *Anthonomus quadrigibbus*



Figure 1: Adult apple curculio.



Figure 2: Larval apple curculio.

Apple curculio (*Anthonomus quadrigibbus*) is a weevil that affects chokecherry, saskatoon, apple, crabapple, hawthorn, plum, and pear. This insect is found in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and the northern United States. The adult overwinters in leaf litter near the host plant and there is only one generation per year. The adults emerge in the spring, at the same time as apples, plums and saskatoons begin to flower. They migrate into orchards, when temperatures are below +20°C, by walking on the ground and up the tree trunks. When temperatures are warmer, they can also fly to an orchard.

Adults are 5-6 mm long, with a distinct curved slender snout and are reddish-brown in colour (Figure 1). Adult curculios feed on immature fruit and shoot tips resulting in puncture marks. Egg laying occurs roughly one month after peak flowering into immature fruit. The larvae, when fully grown, have a cream-coloured, C-shaped body 6-9 mm long, with a brown head, and are legless (Figure 2). For more information see:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/seasonal-reports/pubs/fruit-report-2024-09-11.pdf>

Freezing Berries - A How to Guide for U-pick and Pre-pick Customers

A quick and easy way for your customers to enjoy local Manitoba grown berries throughout the year, is to freeze them after picking. Freezing is a quick and easy method of preserving berries.

Benefits of Freezing Berries:

- Keeps the colour and flavour of berries.
- Keeps most of the original food nutrient values.
- Makes it possible to have a great variety of seasonal berries all year round.
- Ideal for smoothies and desserts.

Information on how to freeze saskatoons and strawberries from the Prairie Fruit Growers Association.

How to Freeze Saskatoons



1. Gently rinse freshly picked saskatoons in a colander.
2. Place on cookie sheet with a lip and put in freezer.
3. Label zip-lock type freezer bag with name of product and date.
4. Once berries are frozen place in freezer bag.
5. To close freezer bag suck the extra air out of bag using a straw and then seal.
6. Frozen saskatoons can be kept for 12 months at -18°C or colder.

How to Freeze Strawberries



1. Gently rinse freshly picked strawberries in a colander.
2. Remove stems and leave whole or cut in half/ quarters.
3. Place on parchment paper on a cookie sheet and put in freezer.
4. Label zip-lock type freezer bag with name of product and date.
5. Once berries are frozen place in freezer bag. To close freezer bag suck the extra air out of bag using a straw and then seal.
6. Frozen strawberries can be kept for 12 months at -18°C or colder.

High Tunnel Strawberry Trial Update

There won't be a high tunnel strawberry project for the 2025 field season but planning is underway for an early season trial in 2026.

For detailed information on building a high tunnel see [High Tunnel Design and Set up](#) or watch the following videos at [High Tunnel Design and Construction](#) [High Tunnel Preparation, Operation & Crop Production](#)