

**1213
Serviceberries**

[](http://www.ext.colostate.edu/ptlk/1213f1a.html)Several species of serviceberry or *Amelanchiers* are grown for fruit production. Some serviceberries are used only as landscape plants. The Saskatoon serviceberry is considered superior for fruit production. Native American used serviceberries to make pemmican, a mainstay of their diets. Extremely cold hardy, serviceberries are drought resistant and tolerate alkaline soils, making them ideal for the Rocky Mountain and High Plains regions.

Serviceberries are shrubs that grow from six to eighteen feet high, depending on the cultivar selected. Serviceberries produce clusters of showy, white flowers similar to lilac. Their fruit is borne in clusters and can vary in color from blue-purple to black to cream, but most are dark blue. Although the plant appears to be self-fruitful, more fruit-set will occur when two or more cultivars are planted in close proximity.

[](http://www.ext.colostate.edu/ptlk/1213f2a.html)The fruit is high in potassium, iron, manganese and aluminum and can be used fresh or cooked. It often is compared to blueberries, but has a slight apple flavor.

Avoid planting serviceberries where domestic farm animals graze, because they are toxic to livestock.