

## Aronia aka Black Chokeberry

*Aronia melanocarpa* and alternately classified as *Photinia melanocarpa*

4-8 foot deciduous shrub native to eastern North America; USDA hardiness zone 3; white flowers in Spring followed by black berries; reddish Fall foliage; fruits prized by animals; highly adaptable to varying moisture and soil conditions; full sun; easy to propagate and produce in nurseries

- Recent attraction as a “super fruit” due to high level of antioxidants (anthocyanins and flavonoids) has spurred interest in the possibility of its use as a commercial crop in the US
- Imported to Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and then grown as a commercial crop starting in the 1940s where it is mixed with apple juice, wine, compote, and pickles
- Fruits are not eaten raw due astringency but rather processed for their juice which is turned into jelly and other beverages and products such as food coloring
- A number of cultivars are available in the US such as 'Autum Magic' (my employer sells this!) and 'Viking'
- Local source: Bellbrook Farm in Brooklyn, WI; first commercial producers in the state; plants for sale as well as frozen berries and they list simple recipes such as the following Aronia Bars.
  - <http://www.organicaronia.com/index.html>

### *Aronia Bars*

2 eggs  
1 c. sugar  
1 c. flour  
1/3 c. butter, melted  
1 1/4 c. Aronia Berries!!  
1/2 c. chopped walnuts  
1 tsp. citrus peel

Heat oven to 350 deg. Grease an 8-inch baking pan. Beat eggs in a medium mixing bowl until thick. Gradually add sugar, beating until thoroughly blended. Stir in flour and melted butter; blend well. Add Aronia Berries and walnuts, mixing gently until combined. Spread evenly in pan. Bake for 40 to 45 min, or until golden brown and a toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool and cut into bars. Yield: 16 servings

Recipes galore:

- <http://www.deerootsathome.com/aroniaberry-love-and-6-recipes/>
- <http://midwestaronia.org/recipes/>
- <http://coldbrookfarm.net/recipes.html>

Sources:

University of Maine Cooperative Extension: <http://umaine.edu/agriculture/home/aronia/>

Midwest Aronia Association: <http://www.organicaronia.com/index.html>