

Chokecherry

Prunus virginiana

Chokecherry, also known as bitterberry, is a small fruiting shrub or tree. The small fruits are high in healthy antioxidants and make great jams and pies. They're also good food for a variety of birds, rabbits, rodents, and bears. Pollinators are also attracted to the white springtime blossoms. A row of chokecherries creates a small windbreak, or can be incorporated into a larger windbreak.

Height: up to 20' to 30', but can grow in dense thickets

Chokecherry grows slowly. Note that chokecherries usually grow shorter and wider in dry, sandy soils.

Planting environment:

Soil: Prefers loam, will grow in clay or sandy loam

Moisture: Moist to dry soils

Sunlight: Full sun (>6 hours/day) to partial shade (4-6 hours/day)

Plant chokecherries with 5'-10' spacing.

Maintenance:

You can prune chokecherries in late winter or early spring to prevent black knot, a fatal disease. Pruning lower branches will make the plant grow tall, while more aggressive pruning will make it shrubbier.

Top diseases/pests:

1. Black knot
2. Bears
3. Winter/ice damage

