Elderberry
Sambucus canadensis - American
Sambucus cerulea - Blue
Sambucus nigra - European
Why grow elderberry?

- Perennial crop native to North America
- Elderberry is easily propagated
- Health properties

- Numerous processed products for both flower and berry: wine, juice, syrups, health supplements, jam, dye, tea
- $9.70/lb de-stemmed berries ($5.50/lb wholesale)
Elderflower potential

- $14-$18/ lb elderflower (fresh or dried)
- Many opportunities for value-added products
Elderberry Industry Growing

The American elderberry (Sambucus canadensis, also known as Sambucus nigra subsp. canadensis) is native to much of eastern and midwestern North America. The plant is a medium to large multiple-stemmed shrub, bush or small tree (Fig. 1). Elderberry is commonly found growing in a range of habitats throughout Missouri, but it prefers moist, well-drained areas elsewhere. The American elderberry is a better candidate for commercial production in Missouri. This guide outlines market information for American elderberries and growers’ experiences.

A comparison of fruit characteristics among diverse elderberry genotypes grown in Missouri and Oregon

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Elderberry Industry Growing

Membership available to any grower in the U.S.
https://www.midwest-elderberry.coop/
Best Cultivars: Ranch, Adams, and Bob Gordon

Table 1. Performance of eight elderberry varieties during establishment (four years after planting) in trials conducted at MSU-WARC, Corvallis, MT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Yields (lbs/plant)</th>
<th>Berry Weight (mg)</th>
<th>Sugar (°Bx)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samyl</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>&lt;0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samdal</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>&lt;0.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johns</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyldewood</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranch</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Gordon</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Management

• Plants are usually spaced 6 ft apart, with plants spaced 10 ft apart in the planting row (726 plants/acre)

• Cross-pollination is required, need more than one cultivar

• Pruned completely to the ground in the winter- Fewer but larger cymes, more uniform ripening, and a narrowing of the harvest window

• Irrigation required (1-2 inches of water per week)

• Few pest & disease issues in MT (aphids noted at the Western Ag Research Station)
Elderberry Financial Support Tools

University of Missouri
http://www.centerforagroforestry.org/profit/elderberryfinance.php

University of Vermont
https://www.uvm.edu/extension/sustainableagriculture/elderberry-production-vermont
Questions & comments?