

## BLACK CHERRY TREE aka PRUNUS SEROTINA



### IDENTIFICATION

The black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) is a native North American fruit tree. It can reach 60 to 90 feet in height, and it has low branches that droop to the ground. Its dark green, shiny leaves turn a yellow, orange or red in the fall. There are fragrant white blossoms in the spring. become 1/2-inch, bitter, purple fruit used for jams, jellies and liqueurs.

It will grow in most soils, alkaline or acidic, as long as the soil is well-drained. The black cherry has a high drought tolerance.

### POISONOUS TO LIVESTOCK

Farmers should be aware that the tree's twigs and leaves contain hydrocyanic acid, which can poison livestock if consumed in large quantities.

### PREPARATION

The tree yields 1/2-inch, bitter, purple fruit. The fruit of *Prunus serotina* is suitable for making jam and cherry pies, and has some use in flavoring liqueurs; they are also a popular flavoring for sodas and ice creams. The black cherry is commonly used instead of sweet cherries to achieve a sharper taste.