MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

For most harvest has come and gone. Some were provided with a bountiful harvest and for others mother nature may have got the upper hand with too much rain, insects or those little white hail balls that can do so much damage. As I write this message I am thankful what has been provided. As a stewards of our farm, my wife and I can only control what we have power over. We can provide fertilizer, control weeds and insects, pray for rain, get the word out about the aronia and do our part in creating a stable market but the rest is out of our hands. The rest takes unity and a little luck from up above! As an organization and an industry, we continue to make huge strides in educating the public. Three years ago when I join this board very few people that I talked to knew anything about the aronia berry. Shoot, even as I type this, my computer underlines the word aronia and tells me that I am spelling it incorrectly. However, now, nearly everyone in my community or circle of friends, with the exception of my computer, can be heard saying, “yeah I’ve heard of that berry”. But, folks, the job doesn't end there. Those people that said they have heard of that berry need to
be saying, "Yeah, I use aronia berries all the time and I love them". That is our challenge! Continue to spread the word.

You're doing a great job. As consumers, producers and marketers we need to continue working together toward the goal of spreading the good news about our super berry!

I am looking forward to seeing all the new places that the aronia berry will show up in the next year. I have heard recently that a Division I NCCA football team in Iowa now has the berry as part of their diet. That is EXCITING! There is a direct sales company located in South Dakota selling aronia based products, there is a bunch in Nebraska creating delicious aronia mixed juice drinks throughout the midwest and on the west coast and all the while another organized processor is shipping large quantities of dried berries overseas. Not to mention the hundreds of producers that are pounding the ground with the small scale products that they are working at their local farmers markets and in their communities. With that said, keep on keeping on and I will see you at this year's conference in March! Thanks for all your work. Remember, together we can do this!

Craig Winquist, President
Midwest Aronia Association

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**2019 MAA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**Date:** March 15 & 16, 2019  
**Location:** Des Moines, IA

*SAVE THE DATE*

**10th Annual MAA Conference**

Start planning . . . the 10th Anniversary Midwest Aronia Conference is right around the corner.

As many of you already know, the fast approaching 2019 Conference will be held in Des Moines, IA. The Event’s Committee is working diligently to secure a facility that will host the 2019 Conference in grand fashion. The 2019 Conference will celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Midwest Aronia Association and is sure to be an event you will not want to miss!

What you may not realize about the upcoming Conference is that many months of planning and preparation go into the Annual Conference. Each person on the Board gives their time freely in an effort to make each Conference an event that will provide you, it’s Members, with useable information that can be taken and applied in your farms whether you have 10 plantings, 50,000 plantings, or more. It takes an army of producers to move this industry in a forward direction. From the closest estimation available the members of MAA have over 1,000,000 plantings in the ground at this time. That right - Over 1,000,000 strong!! Collectively we are an army of producers.
Planting Aronia is just like starting a family. As your family grows your needs grow in a different directions. When your children are little? Life is a little simpler. When they become toddlers? You definitely have to step up your game. When they become teenagers? Well, batten down the hatches.

It’s no different when growing Aronia. When you have just planted your bushes you are praying for the right amount on rain, the right amount of cold days, and looking forward to the bushes producing in a year or so. Three years down the road in the spring you look out and see thousands of pretty white flowers and it hits you . . those are future berries. Immediately your needs have changed. It runs through your mind, What have I gotten myself into? In August the berries are ready. Now what? You scramble to hand pick them, or find someone to pick them, then you to find a way to store them and whatever avenue to you can to sell them. You barely catch your breath and a year down the road your production doubles and then triples the next year? Yes. This is the time you would normally prepare to batten down the hatches.

From there a little bit of panic sets in. What do we do with all these berries? This seems to be a regular questions we receive from our Members.

The MAA website, midwestaronia.org, can put you in touch with other growers in your area as well as nurseries to purchase plants, companies to aid in planting and harvesting, companies to address your fertilizer needs, and much more. The Partner Section of the MAA website is a great tool available to Members of the Midwest Aronia Association. Under the Our Partner section there are MAA Partners that have extensive knowledge of the industry and hold a wealth of information on what it takes to succeed in the Aronia industry. Many of these MAA Partners, as well as others involved in the Aronia industry, will be available to help you in every aspect of your operation. Please take advantage of your free time at the 2019 Conference to visit the vendor’s booths, ask questions, and form relationships.

The MAA is working diligently to provide new and usable information at the upcoming Conference. Your participation is needed. In the upcoming weeks be looking for registration information on the 2019 Conference. The 2019 Conference is open to both MAA Members as well as non-members. Registration for this event will begin within the next few weeks! When available you can register online at https://midwestaronia.org/annual-conference.
2019 Membership Renewal Began on October 1, 2018

MAA Memberships are yearly (January 1 through December 31). The annual membership fee is $99.00 per year. Membership fees are based upon a household, one primary member and one secondary member. The MAA began accepting 2019 Membership Dues online October 1, 2018. You can register online by going to: https://midwestaronia.org/welcome-to-midwest-aronia-association/membership. If you would prefer to register by mail, contact the Membership Committee at membership@midwestaronia.org or contact any member of the Board and they can put you in touch with the Membership Committee and registration documents will be sent to you.

If you are a Member of the Midwest Aronia Association you do receive a reduced 2019 Conference registration fee, plus other perks throughout the year, including access to the Member's only portion of the MAA website.

If you know someone that would like to become a Member of the Midwest Aronia Association and enjoy the many membership benefits. Registration can be done online by going to: https://midwestaronia.org/welcome-to-midwest-aronia-association/membership.

Educational and Research organizations may qualify for free or reduced membership rate. Please contact the Membership Committee for details at membership@midwestaronia.org.

MAA 10th Anniversary Cookbook

The 10th Anniversary Edition of the Midwest Aronia Association Cookbook is underway. The new addition will include some old favorites and many new recipes that we hope will be handed down to your families for many years to come. Your recipes are needed to make this Cookbook a reality.

MAA’s new website has been customized to include a Recipe section. Simply go to https://midwestaronia.org and click on the Recipe tab at the top of the page. From the dropdown menu follow the prompts. Include your Recipe and click submit. It’s as simple as that!

If you have questions, or you would rather email your recipes, send your submission to Dennise Bowyer, publicrelations@midwestaronia.org
Field research is underway! Cooperators have been busily collecting berry samples across the United States for Dr. Xu, Dr. Bolling, and Dr. Brand. As noted in the previous newsletter, one component of this research is to better understand the environmental conditions affecting aronia berry properties. Sample collections will continue for some time to help with this and other goals. A great show of teamwork by growers and researchers.

Another set of growers have been applying fertilizer treatments and collecting data to aid our understanding on how such different soil amendments can aid in berry yields and quality. This MAA guided study will have initial results to share at the 2019 Conference. Another example of working together.

Growers with curiosities on a particular production practice are welcome to contact the MAA Education and Research Director, Dr. Tranel, at edresearch@midwestaronia.org. We can provide guidance on feasible on-farm research to produce sound and meaningful results. We may be able to coordinate efforts with other MAA members who have the same questions.

The berries are harvested. Now it's time to kick back and relax . . right? No, not for Aronia producers. The work of a producer never stops. It's time to catch your breath, inspect the fields and form a plan for next year. Even though the berries have been harvested, there is still work to be done to keep your bushes healthy and growing in the right direction.

Fall Weed Control. When heading to the field for a final check, keep in mind weeding is still important. There will always be those pesky weeds that have shot up since harvest that need your attention. Even though it's fall, weeds are still sucking the nutrients a plant needs to get it through the cold season and they do it rather effortlessly. It never hurts to get a jump on weed control. Giving each plant that one on one time gives an opportunity to inspect the health of your plants as they turn dormant for the season.

Cleanup. Just like clockwork, the plants will begin to lose their leaves in the fall. In mid to late October there are some of the opinion that you should remove leaves that have gathered at the base of the plants.
**Fertilizer.** Fertilizer is an important part in preparing plants for the coming cold weather season. A fall application of fertilizer is needed to send the plants into a peaceful sleep for the winter. Whether you apply a foliar application or granulated application, a round of fertilizer is recommended. If you need direction on the type and amount of fertilizer for your needs, check out the MAA website and connect with an MAA Partner familiar with fertilization to work you and point you in the right direction.

**Pruning.** After berries are harvested and the plants begin to go dormant for the winter it’s time to prune and shape the plants. Pruning while the plants are young will encourage branching. Pruning established plants is recommended to shape the plant as it develops and to remove any branches that may have been damaged during harvest. Pruning may not be needed every year but for the health of the plants should not be neglected. When you are surveying your field in the fall, you will notice that the plants are already beginning to form nubs that will actually be next year’s berries. The best time to prune is in the late fall, winter or early spring before new growth starts. Aronia plants are hardy and it does not seriously harm the plants to prune them. However, pruning should be done in the right manner. Pruning allows new growth that will be more than visible as the plants come to life in the spring.

On August 18 a group of aronia growers met to sharpen their focus on marketing efforts. Near Des Moines, Iowa roughly 35 growers from several states listened and conversed with presenters who provided insight into their experiences of creating markets. The event was organized by Cindy Lenz, Michael McNeill and others. The first speaker, Jimmy Story, Business Program Manager at Missouri Enterprise, reviewed grant writing possibilities. Jimmy, a fruit and livestock farmer as well, shared his experience in developing markets for his produce. Vicki Nemitz, Aronia Growers, LLC, provided background on her business, the complexities of national and international sales, current expectations of aronia purchasers, and other insights. Attendees showed interest in future meetings to help sharpen market development.
The Aronia industry is moving forward at a fast pace. The following companies are just a couple of the new and exciting companies with products hitting the market. The MAA would like to extend its congratulations to these companies and hope that you show your support for your Aronia Partners. *We are all in this together!*

**NEBRASKA ARONIA PROCESSORS**  
*Hastings, Nebraska*

Five years ago, a small group of local Nebraska farm families planted a few acres of aronia berries. They did so after discovering the amazing effects this new super fruit had on their health. Family and friends were calling the famers asking, “Where can we get more aronia?” They described how aronia helped their sore joints, lowered their blood pressure, and made their hair and skin glow.

Nebraska Aronia Processors was established in Hastings, Nebraska, by a group of farmers looking to provide healthy products to make a difference in the lives of people everywhere. The Truronia brand provides consumers with a variety of cold-pressed aronia drinks blended into four individual, delicious flavors: Aronia Coconut, Aronia Mango, Aronia Pineapple, and Aronia Original which balances out the distinct, astringent aronia flavor with a hint of sweetness.

Truronia also produces pouches of frozen berries that work well for baking and smoothies, and pure 100% aronia juice in a 24 oz. bottle, which is the perfect way to get your daily recommended dose of 2-4 oz.

The Nebraska Aronia Processors and all products are completely certified organic. These families whole-heartedly believe in taking care of the environment and making it last for generations to come. These passionate farmers have spent years detoxifying the soil and have 100 of years of combined farming experience and knowledge that has been passed down through multiple generations.

To learn more and try our products, please visit: nebraskaaroniaprocessors.com and truronia.com Follow us on: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest @truronia @napberries
TOHI
Kansas City, Missouri

Tohi is a Kansas City based healthy lifestyle brand founded by two female friends seeking new and powerful ways to help themselves, and others like them, make purposeful decisions in the pursuit of wellness. “We are advocates of a nutrition first approach to wellness,” says Shari Coulter Ford, CEO and Co-Founder. By working alongside Midwest growers to source the highest quality berries, Tohi aims to lead in the advancement of the nutritional and antioxidant benefits of the berry while bringing consumer awareness to the premium core ingredient at the heart of the brand.

Tohi beverages are the first realization of this vision: a low calorie, naturally functioning, antioxidant-rich Aronia Berry beverage that can be enjoyed anytime, anywhere. Four Flavors. Same Benefits.

Tohi beverages contain the single-strength juice of antioxidant rich Aronia Berries, the hydrating benefits of water, and the natural sweetness of monk fruit.

Non-carbonated

45 calories per serving

5 ingredients, no sugar added

Available in Original, Ginger Lime, Dragon Fruit and Blackberry Raspberry

Tohi beverages are attracting the attention of collegiate and professional sports teams, including the Iowa State football program and has received industry recognition, being named a finalist for the seventh annual SupplySide CPG Editor’s Choice Awards in the Functional Beverage category.

To learn more about Tohi, please visit www.drinktohi.com
The Aronia options are endless! Whether you use whole berries, concentrate, or powder there’s a Recipe for you. If you have something that you have tried that you would like to share, simply go to https://midwestaronia.org and click on the Recipe tab at the top of the page. From the dropdown menu follow the prompts. Include your Recipe and click submit. It’s quick and easy!

Following are a few recipes to try during those cold weather days when you stuck inside. Let us know what you think!

**SLOW COOKER ARONIA CHEX MIX**

Who doesn’t like Chex Mix! This is a must for the holidays.

**Ingredients:**
- 9 Cups Chex Cereal  
- 2 Cups Pretzels  
- 1 Cup Cheerios  
- 1 Cup Peanuts (No skins)  
- 1 Cup Dehydrated Aronia Berries  
- 1/3 Cup Butter (Melted and Hot)  
- 1 tbs. Seasoned Salt  
- 1 tbs. Worcestershire Sauce  
- 1 tbs. Garlic Powder (optional)

**Instructions:**

In a large bowl combine Cereal, Pretzels, Cheerios, Aronia Berries and Peanuts. In a medium sized bowl whisk together Butter and Seasoned Salt until the salt is dissolved. Stir in Worcestershire Sauce until thoroughly mixed. Drizzle the sauce evenly over the top of the cereal mixture. Toss until the cereal mixture is evenly coated.

Put the entire mix of goodness into your slow cooker. Cover and slow cook on LOW for approximately 3 hours. [From experience I can share that if your slow cooker doesn’t have an air vent in the top you will need to slightly off set the lid to allow the moisture to seep out. If not, it will get soggy and IT WILL BURN.] You will need to set your timer and stir every hour to make sure the mixture doesn’t stick to the bottom and burn. After the 3 hours has passed, spread the mixture onto a few baking pans or parchment paper in a single layer until it cools. Don’t forget to TURN OFF the slow cooker.

This will last about three weeks in a sealed container. However, it has never lasted three weeks around my house. :)
**ARONIA BROWN SUGAR SUBSTITUTE**
*Sugar Free - Low Carb*

*Just in time for Holiday baking!* A Sugar-Free ~ Low Carb Brown Sugar Substitute. By adding a little Aronia powder it turns out of be a beautiful color, which I loved. If you want to use it as traditional brown sugar just leave out the Aronia Powder.

**Ingredients:**
- 1 cup Erythritol (granulated)*
- 1/4 cup Aronia Powder (More or less to get the color you like.)
- 3/4 tsp Mapleine (or your favorite Maple Extract)
- 3/4 tsp Stevia Glycerite (optional but keeps it soft and increases sweetness)*

**Instructions:**
Mix the Ingredients thoroughly with a fork or a rubber spatula. Store in an airtight container.

Use as you would brown sugar. It's an awesome Sugar Free - Low Carb substitute!

*Erythritol can be purchased online or at your local health food store. Erythritol is not absorbed by the body, instead it passes through the digestive tract chemically unchanged. Erythritol is a sugar alcohol and is counted as Zero calories and Zero Carbs.

*Stevia Glycerite is a liquid that can be purchased online or through your local health food store.

**ARONIA BERRY BBQ SAUCE**

*Aronia Berry BBQ Sauce goes great with those little cocktail franks for the holidays!*

**Ingredients:**
- 2 C Frozen Aronia Berries
- ¾ C Ketchup
- ½ C Cider Vinegar
- ½ C Packed Truvia Brown Sugar
  (or Aronia Brown Sugar Substitute (sugar-free low carb - Recipe Above)
- 1 tbs. Light Molasses
- 1 tsp. Chili Powder
- 1 tsp. Ground Black Pepper
- 1/8 tsp. Pepper Flakes (optional)

**Instructions:**
Combine Aronia, ketchup, vinegar, brown sugar (or Brown Sugar Substitute), molasses, chili powder and black pepper in medium saucepan. Stir in ½ cup water. Bring the mixture to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally until sauce is slightly thickened and chunky. Cool to room temperature then refrigerate until ready to use.
**IMMUNE BOOST - ARONIA GUMMIES**

**Ingredients:**
- 1/4 Cup Cherry Concentrate, pure tart
- 1 Cup Aronia Syrup
- 1/3 Cup Gelatin
- 1/2 Cup Really Hot (not boiling) Water

**Instructions:**
You will need flexible Silicone Molds. This is very important. This recipe should make about 25-30 gummies. It’s the simplest recipe ever. Get your water really hot, mix in the Gelatin until dissolved. Mix in the remaining liquids. Yep, it’s that simple. Pour the liquid in flexible Silicone molds to gel. Your kids and grand kids will love these.

**GLUTEN FREE ~ SUGAR FREE ~ ARONIA MUFFINS**

**Ingredients:**
- 2 Very Ripe Bananas (Mashed)
- 1/3 C Soft Butter
- 1 tsp. Baking Soda
- 1 ½ C Gluten Free Flour
- 1/4 C Maple Syrup
- 2 Eggs
- 1 tsp. Vanilla Extract
- 1 C Aronia Berries
- ½ C Chocolate Chips

**Instructions:**
Preheat oven to 350. Mix dry ingredients in one bowl, and mix wet ingredients in another. Combine dry ingredients and wet ingredients. Put in muffins pan filling 3/4 to the top of the cups. Bake until edges are golden and toothpick is clean with a center poke. Bake about 12 minutes.
AN “ARONIA CHRISTMAS” FRUITCAKE

This is a moist “spice-less” fruitcake. It is not nearly as heavily flavored as dark fruitcake. There are no spices or molasses are used this cake so it relies purely on the flavor of the dried fruits.

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 c Water
- 1 1/2 c Light raisins
- 2 c Aronia Berries chopped
- 1/4 c Sugar
- 1 c Butter
- 1 c Sugar
- 4 oz. Cream cheese (1/2 cup)
- 4 Eggs
- 2 1/2 c All purpose flour
- 1 tsp. Baking powder
- 1 pd. Glazed cherries chopped
- 1 pd. Mixed dried fruit
- 1 1/2 tsp. Vanilla extract

Instructions:

In a medium saucepan combine the water, Aronia, 1/4 cup sugar and raisins and simmer slowly for 30 minutes. Set aside to cool completely to room temperature.

Cream the butter, cream cheese, vanilla extract and 1 cup of sugar until light and fluffy.
Beat in the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
Sift together the flour and baking powder.
Fold in half of the dry ingredients into the creamed mixture.
Fold in the cooled boiled Aronia mixture.
Fold in the remaining dry ingredients.
Fold in the cherries and dried fruit.
Bake in a parchment lined small loaf pans at 325 degrees for about an hour or until toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Baking will probably take about 55 minutes.
Cool in the pan(s) for at least 10 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack to cool completely.
Store in a cake tin or other airtight container. Freezes well too.
Attention all MAA Members!

In an attempt to fill an ever growing need of its members, the MAA Board has developed a section in the Quarterly Newsletter entitled “MAA Trading Post”. This is in an effort to link MMA Members looking to sell equipment, products or service centered around the Aronia industry. If you would like your items to be included, simply email your post for consideration to info@midwestaronia.org. Once approved your post will be added to the next Quarterly Newsletter in the “MAA Trading Post” section.

The Midwest Aronia Association reserves the right to rescind or reject any and all submissions to the MAA Trading Post. The MAA expects its Members to act in a ethical and reputable manner when dealing with anyone responding to a post listed in the MAA Trading Post. The MAA makes no representations about the products or services offered in the MAA Trading Post section of the Newsletter but is merely offering this section to link Members and fulfill a need within the Association.

Aronia Growers LLC is looking for quality aronia growers interested in working together. We sell Sweetened Dried Aronia Berries, 65 brix aronia concentrate and aronia pomace. We also will process aronia juice to the customer specs and have partners making aronia powder. We processed 560,000 pounds of aronia fruit this past year, and our customer base is growing.

If you are interested in learning more about Aronia Growers LLC, please email Vicki Nemitz.

vicki.nemitz@aroniagrowersllc.com  Phone # 608-387-9810. Please include you number of acres/plants, where you are located and whether you are a conventional or an organic grower.

FOR SALE: Joanna 3 pull behind half row Aronia Harvester  $35,000.00

The harvester is in great shape, equipped with side hill leveling, hydraulic drawbar, electronic over hydraulic controls, working lights, low bush attachment. Can harvest into 40 lb lugs, or large totes. Machine comes with tons of extras....10 large totes (modified to dump into small lugs if needed), Pneumatic tilt table for large totes, Tool box from manufacture with standard wearable replacement parts, PLUS Extra parts - Main gear box (new), ¾ inch chain (new), Set of gear wheels for wide and long conveyors (New), Several shaker fingers (New), Long transporter chain (New). Contact Pete (402) 305-2280

PLANT PLUGS FOR SALE: About 5,000 Viking plant plugs are available for spring planting. They are in 4 inch deep 38 cell trays. Contact Dean Trans at 515-795-2139. Dean is located in Central Iowa.
Aronia Word Find . . Give it a Try.

SUPERBERRY       RAIN       WATER       WEED       SUN
BREEZE       ARONIA       BUSH       HEALTHY       PURPLE       PRUNE

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