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Cold Hardiness

Posted by [Todd Parlo](#)

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[Todd Parlo](#)

[Cold Hardiness](#)

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Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 301

Cold hardiness is just one place that growers can offer insight to on this forum. We may not call it hardcore research but keeping careful notes and tossing the reliability results to the viewership can be handy. We are a geographically varied bunch and the environmental influence on our fruits should be observed and ideally, shared. I got a letter from a colleague today about his cold hardy pears. These have survived down to 44 degree F.

Bernai Nicolai is a name most of you know if you have dabbled in online fruit blogs (like the old nafex threads) and has always been a good voice for the forgotten fruit growing wilderness of interior Alaska. More interesting were some tidbits he sent me in 2016, as follows :

"Hi Todd,

Here's a photo from last September of me at my hobby orchard. The trees are on Ottawa 3 rootstock which is fully hardy it appears for me. Mind you I have never had -40F with no snow. There are always a few inches of snow when we get the real cold, and I have not had any death of any apple rootstock. They are hardier if grown in sod as the grass acts as an insulator. I'm sure Ottawa 3 or the V series from the University of Guelph in Ontario would be hardy enough for you.

Re pear rootstock, I'm guessing seeds from the Russian pears would make excellent rootstock. Part Ussurienses, part European, very hardy, fireblight immune or at least very resistant. The bottom photo is 4 or 5 year grafted pear on cotoneaster at a friend's orchard this spring. Sadly we had -7C or about 18F after the very early bloom due to El Nino and the tree did not set fruit. Next year...

Plums, I'd recommend Petite Soeur de la Mount Royal (little sister of Mount Royal). It is a seedling of Mount Royal, almost identical in taste, and took -41.3C without tip damage from the cold. It is at least 5C hardier than Mount Royal that often freezes to the snow line in a cold winter here. As it is a European plum it doesn't have the "bitter skin" the others seem to often have.

Best regards,

Bernie"

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