



## *Rare Berries*

# Mulberry

*The "Silkworm" Fruit*



*Morus spp.*

Red, black or white mulberry

## *Review of Rare Berries*

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## *Mulberry Facts*

- a tree fruit, mulberries grow wild in temperate regions around the world
- *Morus alba* is the white mulberry (mainly from Asia); *Morus rubra* is red (mainly in Canada and the United States); *Morus nigra* is black (Asia)
- trees are extensively grown (e.g. southern Europe, India) for their leaves as food for [silkworms](#), and so lends the mulberry as a valued resource in [sericulture](#) (silkworm farming)
- [multiple fruit](#) is the berry anatomy, meaning numerous individual fruits form in a small, compact space to give the appearance of a [berry](#). Pineapple and fig are also multiple fruits
- mulberry fruits are sweet and delicious when mature; a popular wine is made from mulberries
- the mature plant contains significant amounts of [resveratrol](#), particularly in stem bark
- mulberry leaves are sometimes eaten as a vegetable and are useful as a cattle fodder. Being nutritious and palatable, they are said to improve milk yield of dairy animals
- tree trunk wood is valued for sporting goods due to its elasticity and flexibility when steamed, being considered as good as ash. It is moderately durable under cover, easy to work and finish, used mainly for hockey sticks, tennis and badminton rackets and racket presses, cricket bats, house building materials, agricultural implements, and furniture
- stem bark is fibrous and used in China and Europe for paper making
- trees are often used as ornamentals, roadsides or boundary markers. In eastern Canada and the United States during the 19th century, mulberry trees were planted extensively for borders, now forming large fruit-bearing windbreaks 10-20 meters tall



mulberry tree



Red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) fruits in different stages of maturity.  
Although black when ripe, these fruits are red mulberries.  
The fully ripe fruit is a delicious treat!

## **Anthocyanins**

The red and black mulberries are notably rich in **anthocyanins**, the pigment subgroup of natural plant **polyphenols having potential health benefits** ([click for an excellent review](#)).

Anthocyanin density depends on climate, area of cultivation and is particularly higher in sunny climates.

This finding holds promise for **subtropical sericulture countries to profit from industrial anthocyanin production from mulberry through anthocyanin recovery.**

## *Mulberries in Recent Science*

**Peroxy radical scavenging capacity, polyphenolics, and lipophilic antioxidant profiles of mulberry fruits cultivated in southern China.** *click for complete abstract*

Feature finding: Mulberry fruits were found to contain low amounts of proanthocyanidins. The high total phenolic content of mulberry fruits were mainly contributed by anthocyanins, rutin, and chlorogenic acids.

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**Antioxidant activities of nonanthocyanin phenolics in Chinese white mulberry (*Morus alba* L.).** *click for complete abstract*

Feature finding: Mulberry fruit studies were relevant to not only the control of color stability and taste characteristics of mulberry juice and wine but also the exploitation of potential **functional foods** made from mulberry.

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**Mulberry anthocyanins demonstrate anti-cancer activity (melanoma) in vitro.** *click for complete abstract*

Feature finding: Mulberry fruit anthocyanins had inhibitory effects on the growth and metastasis of experimental melanoma cells. These results indicated that mulberry anthocyanins might be offered for future application as an anti-cancer agent.

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