

Cloudberry — Akagwik

AKAGWINGQ'RTUTEN-QAA? – DO YOU HAVE CLOUDBERRIES?



Photo: A cloudberry.

The cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus*), also known as the lowbush salmonberry, is an herbaceous plant that grows in Kodiak's meadows and bogs. These plants produce juicy, pale-orange berries that look like plump raspberries. Cloudberries are some of the first plants to fruit in the Kodiak region. They can often be gathered as early as late June and remain available through mid-August. Many people prefer to harvest them early in the season when they are firm and easiest to pick. These berries can over-ripen quickly and become mushy.

Cloudberries are a favorite wild food among the Alutiiq people. They are gathered in large quantities because they store well, and they were once kept in seal stomach containers filled with seal oil. These containers were hung from the ceilings of sod houses and their contents used throughout the winter. Today, cloudberries are eaten raw, stored in the freezer, or cooked into a tempting selection of jams, jellies, and desserts. This popular berry is also a favorite addition to *akutaq*, a traditional dish made by mixing berries with combinations of fat, fish eggs, mashed

potatoes, and sugar.