

The Sierra Pear

K. O. LAPINS*

The Sierra pear, a new introduction from the Summerland Station, has been named because of its high performance with respect to fruit quality, bearing habits and cold hardiness.

Origin

Sierra originated from the cross, Bartlett x Marguerite Marillat, made in 1947 by A. J. Mann. The seedling was selected in 1956 as 9R-1-13 by K. O. Lapins, and named in 1969.

Tree

Sierra is a fairly vigorous tree with initially upright, then spreading and even drooping branches. The tree comes into fruiting early, and bears fairly regular and heavy crops. The framework and fruit spurs are hardy, considerably more so than those of Bartlett, and slightly hardier than Anjou. Following both the winter of 1964-65 and 1968-69, Sierra, in some plantings, was the only one of the three varieties bearing fruit. At Summerland, the blossoming time of the above three varieties overlaps, and the varieties are capable of inter-fertilization. Sierra requires fairly heavy pruning to avoid development of long and drooping branches. Normally the fruit set is heavy; thus early and careful fruit thinning is necessary.

Fruit

In well-grown trees and regulated crops, the fruit of Sierra is large to very large. The shape is long-pyriform, fairly symmetrical (See cover). The skin is thin, smooth, green at picking, and turning yellow-green when fruit is eating ripe. Injury to skin by spring frosts or limb rubs at early stages of fruit development may result in russeted spots. Because the

skin is tender, the fruit requires very careful handling at harvest and in packing. The flesh is juicy, very fine, smooth, with no or very few grit cells. The flavor is sweet and outstanding in quality. In texture and flavor, Sierra has always been rated much superior to any other variety grown at Summerland. Sierra is picked in the third week of September at Summerland, coinciding with Anjou. It can be ripened to good condition soon after picking, and it keeps at 31°F until February. To reduce shrivel of skin, polyethylene liners are necessary in storage boxes. The fruit of Sierra produces a good canned product with mild flavor.

Recommendations

Sierra is recommended mainly for home gardens, to those who appreciate outstanding fruit quality. Because of the long shape and tender skin, the fruit of Sierra may not be suitable for ordinary commercial packing-house handling.

History of Red King Spur Delicious

The history of the Red King Spur Delicious is told by D. J. Burkart, Oregon County Agent in the Feb. 15, 1969 issue of *The Goodfruit Grower*. The tree was planted as a Red King Brauns Delicious in 1957 by Wilbur Blaine, of Milton-Freewater, Oregon. In 1960, Wayne Trumbull, the current owner, noted very early coloring fruit on the tree. Two years later, he observed that half of the tree was spur-type. The now patented Red King Spur Delicious has a red blush with stripes visible under the blush.

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