

# 'Compact Stella' Cherry

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'Compact Stella' combines two important characteristics, namely, self-compatibility and a desirable compact and semi-dwarf growth habit.

*Origin.* 'Compact Stella' originated as a mutant through irradiation of dormant scions of 'Stella' cherry with x-rays. The irradiation was done by the Brookhaven National Laboratory, Upton, Long Island, N.Y. in 1964. 'Compact Stella' was selected for a compact growth habit in nursery trees at Summerland in 1966. It was tested as 'Stella 35B-11' and named in 1973.

*Tree.* The tree of 'Compact Stella' is semi-dwarf. It can be expected that the final size of mature trees will be about half of the parent cultivar. After seven years in the orchard, trunk cross-sectional areas averaged 193 cm<sup>2</sup> for 'Compact Stella' and 298 cm<sup>2</sup> for standard 'Stella.' In older trees the size differences may increase. Vegetative shoots are moderately long and internodal distances are short in 'Compact Stella.' The length of internodes averaged 24 mm in 'Compact Stella' and 37 mm in 'Stella.' Older growth is heavily spurred (Figure 1). 'Compact Stella' comes into fruiting very early and carries heavy crops. The fruit is set in heavy clusters, spreading of branches in young trees is advisable.

*Pollination Status.* 'Compact Stella' is self-fruitful and has been successfully intercrossed with 'Chinook,' 'Lambert,' 'Van' and nine unnamed sweet cherry selections. It can be expected that 'Compact Stella' is a universal pollinizer. It produces good pollen, usually better than 'Lambert.'

*Fruit.* The fruit of 'Compact Stella' is black, large, heart-shaped, similar to that of the parent cultivar of 'Lambert' type. The fruit stem is shorter and thinner than in standard 'Stella.' The skin is black, darker than in 'Lambert' at full maturity. The flesh is



Fig. 1. Trees of 'Compact Stella' at 8 years in orchard.

moderately firm, slightly firmer than in 'Lambert.' The flavor is mildly sub-acid, good at full maturity, but slightly sharp if fruit is picked too early. 'Compact Stella' (and 'Stella') is picked with 'Van,' in the second week of July at Summerland or about 6 days before 'Lambert.' Fruit cracking in rain is light to moderate, comparable to cracking in 'Van,' but less than in 'Lambert.' The fruit of both 'Compact Stella' and 'Stella' is well suited for canning. 'Compact Stella' fruits can be picked without stems but not as easily as 'Lambert' fruits.

*Commercial Potential.* 'Compact Stella' has a promise both for commercial and home plantings. The tree size of 'Compact Stella' is much more acceptable than the size of standard sweet cherries. The fruit is large, always larger than 'Lambert' fruit. Picking maturity of both 'Stella' and 'Compact Stella' is critical; these cultivars should not be picked too early. Color standards for 'Lambert' are not suitable of 'Stella,' because 'Stella' has basically darker fruit and should be picked at darker color than 'Lambert.' The dark flesh color and a fair amount of acidity make 'Compact Stella' a good canning cherry.

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