

MISSISSIPPI DELTA PEACH CULTURE

By L. R. Farish, 1947

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Here is a bulletin from a region which may not be familiar to most readers.

Site

Although the author recognizes the advantages of an elevated site as a factor in frost control, this does not seem to be a problem in the open Delta area several miles from the "foot hills". In other words, trees grown in a large valley, such as the Delta region, several miles from a hill, do not seem to be affected by the settling of cold air from higher to lower elevations.

Some of the well-drained Delta soils seem to be suitable for peach production.

Choice of Varieties

Approximately three pages are devoted to a discussion of peach varieties. Early and midseason varieties are preferred and especially those which will withstand handling.

Redhaven has produced fruit of good size at the Delta Branch Experiment Station. The fruit buds and trees have not seemed very hardy.

Oriole is too small and soft for commercial use.

Golden Jubilee has been hardy and productive, but the large attractive fruits are too soft for commercial handling or for canning.

Halehaven appears to be a good var-

ietty for the Delta. The fruits develop good size.

Triogem appears promising with firm flesh and good canning quality.

Belle of Georgia is the most popular white-fleshed variety but is a little soft for the commercial trade.

Elberta is the most important variety for commercial planting.

A table is presented which contains data on yield, fruit size, flesh color, firmness, stone adherence, and fruit quality for fresh use, canning or freezing.

Cultural Practices

In addition to general information on cultural operation this bulletin contains interesting data on the disadvantages of replanting peach trees in the same spots from which trees were recently removed. The author believes that the pronounced dwarfing which occurred was caused by the toxic effect of the old peach roots on the replanted trees.

Data are presented to show the superiority of cultivation as compared to sod as a soil management system for the peach orchard.

The subjects of pruning, thinning, harvesting, and insect and disease control are also discussed. The author exhibits some characteristics of a sportsman when he suggests that peach thinning should start when the young fruits are about the size of quail eggs and finished before they are the size of bantam hen eggs.

—W.P.J.