

'Mayfire' Nectarine

D. W. RAMMING¹ AND O. TANNER²

Abstract

Additional index words. *Prunus persica*, fruit breeding, embryo culture.

'Mayfire' is a very early-ripening nectarine (*Prunus persica* (L.) Batsch var. *nucipersica* Schneid), developed by the Quality Maintenance, Genetics and Transportation Research Unit of the Horticultural Crops Research Laboratory, Fresno, Calif. 'Mayfire' bears highly colored, attractive, firm, high-quality, yellow flesh fruit, and is introduced to extend the nectarine season for California and areas with a similar climate.

Origin

'Mayfire' was selected in 1979 from a progeny of 142 open pollinated seedlings of 'Armking.' These seedlings were produced by embryo culture techniques (1) in 1976 and planted in the field in 1977. 'Mayfire' was tested as P56-17 in California.

Description

'Mayfire' is one of the earliest ripening nectarine cultivars and ripens about 5 days ahead of 'Maybelle' or about

May 15 at Fresno, Calif. The fruit average 5.7 to 7.0 cm in diameter with adequate thinning, which is an accomplishment since the fruit matures in 65 days. The fruit are attractive and oval (Fig. 1). A bright red blush covers 70% to 90% of the skin surface and is superimposed on a yellow ground color at shipping maturity. The flesh is yellow, firm, and of smooth texture. The flavor is very good and superior to other cultivars in this season. The flesh adheres to the pit when fully ripe. Split pits have not been a problem. The performance of 'Mayfire' relative to 'Maybelle' and 'Armking' is presented in Table 1.

The blossoms are self-fertile with large showy petals. Leaf glands are globose. The chilling requirement to break rest appears to be about 650 hr since 'Mayfire' blooms with 'Springcrest' peach which requires approximately 650 hr chilling at Fresno, Calif. Trees of 'Mayfire' are of moderate

Table 1. Performance of 'Mayfire' in comparison with 'Maybelle' and 'Armking.'

Character	Rating ²		
	'Mayfire'	'Maybelle'	'Armking'
Chilling requirement (hr)	650	550	550
Fruit set	8	7	8
Fruit size (cm dia)	5.8	5.8	6.1
Shape	6	7	5
Percent red blush	80	40	30
Attractiveness	8	6	4
Flesh firmness	8	7	5
Flesh adherence to pit	3	3	3
Flesh texture	6	6	6
Flesh quality	7	6	6
Ripe date	15 May	20 May	28 May

¹Ratings were subjective on a scale of 1 (least desirable) to 9 (most desirable).

¹Research Horticulturist and ²Agricultural Research Technician, Horticultural Crops Research Laboratory, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, Fresno, California 93727.

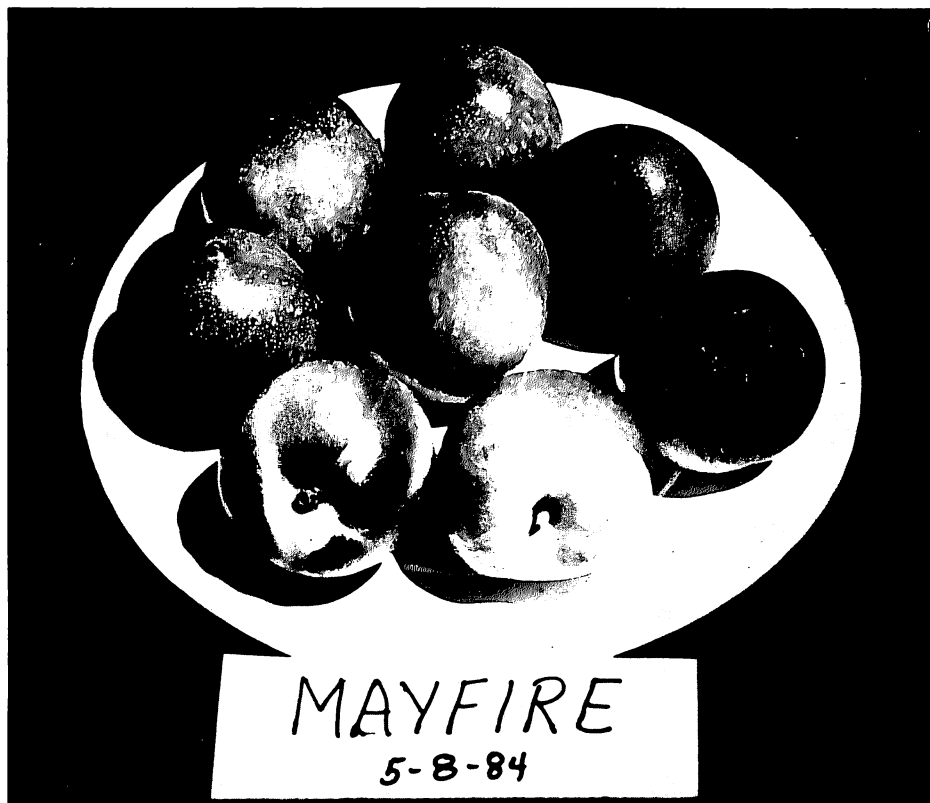


Figure 1. Fruit of 'Mayfire' nectarine harvested in Arvin, Calif.

vigor, set a large number of flower buds and fruit, requiring substantial thinning for the development of good fruit size. 'Mayfire' was found free of *Prunus* ring spot and Prune dwarf virus.

Availability

Limited quantities of budwood are available and requests should be sent

to David W. Ramming, USDA, ARS, 2021 South Peach Avenue, Fresno, CA 93727.

Literature Cited

1. Smith, C. A., C. H. Bailey, and L. F. Hough. 1969. Methods for germinating seeds of some fruit species with special reference to growing seedlings from immature embryos. New Jersey Agr. Expt. Sta. Bul. 823.