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The 'Napoleon' Sweet Cherry

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Published reports of this white sweet cherry cultivar are filled with praise befitting its royal name. It has been described as attractive, productive, of good size, excellent quality and possessing admirable processing characteristics (1, 3).

'Napoleon' is of unknown origin. However, Hedrick cites reports of its culture as early as 1667, and notes its fine reputation in many European countries by the early eighteenth century. 'Napoleon' has many synonyms in other languages, but Hedricks believed that a Belgian by the name of Parmentier gave it the name of the famous emperor in 1820. The name 'Wellington' was substituted in England during the time Napoleon was not in favor, but the name was never widely used (3).

In local regions of America the 'Napoleon' cherry is often called the Oxheart, but its most common synonym is 'Royal Ann.' This name was given to 'Napoleon' by Seth Lewelling, who had brought the cultivar across the country to Oregon, but lost the label along the way. The name 'Royal Ann' is commonplace on the West Coast.

'Napoleon' was placed on the American Pomological Society's Fruit List in 1862, after at least forty years of performance in American orchards (3). It still represents a major cultivar, because of the ease with which it can be bleached for maraschino cherry production, and due to the fine quality of its canned products.

Acreage of 'Napoleon' is decreasing in certain areas of this country, often in association with a reduction in that region's brining industry. However, it still represents 8% of the sweet cherry acreage in California (5), and 2.6% of all sweet cherry trees 11 years and older in Ontario, Canada (6), to cite just a few statistics. In Europe it is a major cultivar in Czechoslovakia, Greece and West Germany. It is also important in Japan, South Africa and Australia. Ten European countries list 'Napoleon' their most important cultivars for young orchards; this rating is second only to 'Van' (12 countries), and far exceeds the rating for 'Bing' which only 6 countries list (2).

Although 'Napoleon' is a fine cultivar, certain attributes could be improved. Greater resistance to rain-induced fruit cracking, brown rot, bacterial canker, silver leaf infection and western X-disease would be desirable. Fortunately, 'Napoleon' has been widely used as a parent in most sweet cherry cultivar improvement programs. The New York State Agricultural Experiment Station released two selections, 'Gil Peck' and 'Sodus,' both of which resulted from the cross of 'Napoleon' by 'Giant.' Matthews stated that 'Napoleon,' 'Noble' and 'Schrecken' were among the most successful parents in his breeding program, producing high percentages of useful offspring. 'Napoleon' was the male parent of both 'Merton Bigarreau' and 'Merton Late,' and the female parent of 'Merton Crane.' 'Merton Bigarreau' is now an important cultivar in England (4). 'Napoleon' is found in the pedigree records of many other cultivars, including the commercially important 'Lambert' (1). Unfortunately, 'Lambert' has the same susceptibility to rain-induced fruit crack-

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ing as 'Napoleon.' If this problem could be reduced, or eliminated in present or future 'Napoleon' offspring, then the prospect for a new "royal" leader in the cherry industry of the future would be very bright.

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Thornless Blackberry 'Perron's Black'

TONY HUBER[1]

Origin

W. H. Perron & Co. Ltd., Laval, Que. Canada. Selection derived from Rubus canadensis, wild growing nearly thornless and thornless Colonies collected on the Appalachian plateau of Southern Quebec. Later clone selection has given birth to a new vigorous, thornless Canadian blackberry. 'Perron Black' adapts well to various soils but prefers neutral to acid soil.

Hardiness

'Perron Black' has been selected for its hardiness.

Growth

Vigorous and no suckering. Shoots of 1 year may reach 12 feet (350 cm) in good and heavy garden soil. Plants are less vigorous in sandy soil, branches reach 5 feet (150 cm). Plant needs trellising to control growth.

Flowers & Fruits

Inflorescences are white in clusters of 30 and more from June till September. Fruits are ripening from mid-July till late October. Berries are first green turning red and are mature when black with a real blackberry aroma. Fruits are slightly conical, 30 mm long± by 20 mm large± with high sugar content.

Uses

Blackberry should be trellised or fixed on wire supports. Variety is good for pick your owns, home gardens and roadside markets.

Release

Tissue cultured plants are available for distribution to Experimental farm and University trial gardens in U.S.A. Test has to be made with other thornless blackberry cultivars. Plants may be obtained from:

Congdon and Weller
Wholesale Nursery Inc.
Mile Block Road
North Collins, N.Y. 14111
U.S.A.

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