

New Fruit Varieties in Iowa

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When a new and superior fruit variety is introduced, the whole of the fruit growing industry may be profoundly influenced. Remember when Delicious was introduced, and how it took the apple banner to town? Now about 15 percent of the apples produced in this country are Delicious or its red-skinned sports.

Since 1920 more than one thousand new apples have been named and introduced. None of these new apples has risen to fame as rapidly as did Delicious, but testing is still going on. Needless to say when a superior sort has proved its right to be considered for commercial growing it won't be long before it will be recognized and exploited.

Here in Iowa hundreds of new apples have been tested. Only a few have made the grade. To succeed in Iowa, an apple must first of all be hardy in tree and fruit bud.

The following are some orchard observations on new varieties originated in Iowa:

Sharon (McIntosh x Longfield). The trees are hardy, exceedingly productive and tend to become biennial bearers. Sharon is a medium-sized, brightly colored, red-striped apple with white tender flesh which is mild, aromatic and very good. Growers who have it have found Sharon to be an easy apple to sell. It ripens on the tree a few days ahead of Jonathan and should be used by December 1, or a month later from cold storage. During the years when blight became epidemic, growers reported that had it not been for Sharon that they would have had no apples.

Secor (Salome x Jonathon). The chief fault in Secor is that the tree is very susceptible to fire blight. On the loess soils of Western Iowa and Eastern Nebraska Secor grows to perfection. When well grown the fruit is 3 inches, oblate, red striped and attractive. The flesh is firm, crisp, tender, very juicy and ranks among the top apples in quality. The fruit hangs on the tree a week or more longer than Jonathon. It keeps well in storage until May, and is free of Jonathon spot.

Joan (Auisim x Jonathán). This large, beautiful, full-red apple "hangs on" in spite of its only fair quality. Its size and beauty make it easy to dispose of at roadside markets. The tree is not fully hardy, and is susceptible to fire blight. Because of its fair quality and defects in the tree, we have not recommended Joan; but those growers who have it feel very kindly toward it.

Joan bakes well and is a good culinary sort; but its season ends in November unless it is held in cold storage. One of the most commendable features about Joan is that the tree produces abundantly every year.

Jonadel (Jonathan x Delicious). Preliminary announcements as to the formal introduction of Jonadel were made a year ago. A plan has been developed to make available through Iowa nurseries some thousands of trees of Jonadel during the winter of 1957-58.

Jonadel, in the second test-orchard at Ames, came into bearing the fifth year after planting. The trees proved to be markedly resistant to fire blight

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from 1950 to 1956, although trees of some of the other "second test" seedlings in adjacent rows blighted to death.

The trees of Jonadel are spreading in habit. The fruit is larger than Jonathan, resembles Jonathan in form and in color. The flesh is firm, juicy, is less acid than Jonathan and more acid than Delicious. Quality is very good. In storage the fruit is free of Jonathan spot, soft scald and internal browning and retains a goodly amount of juice to the end of its season, which is March or April.

Jonadel has shown a lot of promise but it will remain for growers to determine whether it has a "place in the sun".

In Northern Iowa there is growing evidence that Haralson, of Minnesota origin, has a place, although it tends to overload every other year. Thinning is essential to produce desirable sized fruit. Fireside, another Minnesota apple, has done well enough.

None of the new apples of New York origin have caught fire in Iowa. The freeze of November of 1940 found most of these varieties lacking in winter hardiness. Cortland is grown along the river areas on the east and west boundaries, but no one is particularly enthusiastic. For a time Newfane and Medina looked rather promising. Milton is hardy but the fruit ripens too unevenly. Early McIntosh overloads tremendously every other year and is very susceptible to scab.

Among the early apples, Beacon appears to be one of considerable promise. Melba is hardy, but tends to ripen unevenly and drops freely. Oriole and Melba are still in the early trial stages.

Plum

I feel that two plums are well worth further planting in Iowa both for

home use and local markets. These are Stanley and Mount Royal. Both are reasonably hardy and are good producers of fruit that is good to eat out of hand and good as canned products. Since both are *domesticas*, we feel that they will rapidly replace the less palatable Japanese-American hybrids. Both are markedly less susceptible to brown rot than are the Japanese-American hybrids.

Grapes

We have a variety trial vineyard at the Bluffs Experimental Fruit Farm. Of two dozen or more grape varieties, none are better than Concord. Sheridan produces well but tends to ripen too late for best results.

The French hybrids are apparently not at home on the high lime soils of southwest Iowa. The vines have not grown well, and they have not produced well.

Raspberry

Blackhawk is a new variety of black raspberry that was introduced by Iowa State College two years ago (See Fr. Var. Hort. Dig. Vol. 9 No. 4). It seems to be making excellent progress. We have gotten many letters praising the performance of Blackhawk. It has proved to be very productive and has pleased growers with its general behavior.



Sparkle Rates High

The strawberry variety Sparkle is rated by horticulturists of the University of Wisconsin as tops for all-around performance as a commercial berry for Wisconsin except in the more northerly area, where Robinson appears to perform better.