

Monroe — A Promising Late-Keeping Apple

By GEORGE H. HOWE, New York
Experiment Station, Geneva, N. Y.

The latest addition to the family of new fruits developed at the Experiment Station at Geneva is a high-quality, late-keeping apple recently named "Monroe." This variety was selected from 15 seedlings derived from a cross between Jonathan and Rome Beauty made in 1910. It has been growing and under observation as Station Seedling No. 1546. The seedling seems promising enough after many years of observation to deserve to go under a name rather than a number.

Monroe fruited for the first time in 1921, seven years after the seedling was planted from the nursery row in the orchard. The first fruit attracted attention as being much better than the average run of seedlings, and it was therefore immediately propagated for a second test. These second-test nursery trees were ready to plant in the orchard in 1924, and have been fruiting more or less since they first came into bearing in 1931. Several favorable reports have been received from growers who have topworked the tree with scions while it was still carrying a seedling number.

The New York State Fruit Testing Association began propagating the seedling under the number "1546" in 1945, and now has available several hundred trees. More trees will be

propagated as rapidly as possible so that all growers who may be interested will have an opportunity to try the new variety.

Appears to be Hardy

Monroe combines some of the good points of both parents, and has a number of the desirable characteristics of Baldwin. The trees appear to be hardy, and have produced blossoms annually since the trees first came into bloom in 1931. The best of the six trees under trial have had a good crop 7 out of 19 years. In general, the crop has been medium to good about half the time, with a light crop in between. The soil on which the trees are planted is not particularly good orchard soil, and the weather at blooming time was not always favorable for the set of fruit.

While Monroe is apparently not as large a grower as Baldwin, the tree is vigorous and forms a good-shaped tree with relatively little training. The fruit of Monroe is medium to average in size, comparing favorably with Baldwin in this respect. Fruits have held up well in size even after 19 years of production. In many cases, the size is satisfactory in young trees, but tends to become smaller as the trees mature.

The fruit is roundish conic, symmetrical, and has many of the external characters of Jonathan, particularly in the length of the stem and the shape and depth of its cavity and basin. In

color it is almost solid dark red with indistinct stripings and splashes of carmine. One of the early descriptions of the sort stated that the color was "just like a highly colored Baldwin." As a rule, however, it is duller than a bright Baldwin and more like Jonathan. Externally, Monroe is an extremely attractive apple.

The flesh is yellow like both Jonathan and Baldwin, fine-grained, firm, tender, juicy, aromatic, and pleasantly subacid to eat, and of very good quality—much better than Baldwin.

Keeps Well in Storage

The fruit hangs well to the tree; but like many varieties it should not be allowed to hang too long for best storage quality. Monroe keeps in storage as well as Baldwin and Jonathan and retains its flavor late in the season, much better than Baldwin.

So far no spotting of the skin has been detected as so often is the case with both Baldwin and Jonathan, the former having what has been called "Baldwin Spot" and the latter "Jonathan Spot."

It can be fairly stated that in appearance and quality, Monroe is a better-than-average apple selection. Growers in Ontario County and in the Hudson Valley have been enthusiastic in their praise of the new seedling. It is urged that all fruit growers who are interested try a few trees. The Station pomologists will welcome the opinion of growers concerning the merits and the faults of this new apple. Only by trial in many areas can the true value of a new variety be determined.—Reprinted from January, 1950, *Farm Research*.

(Monroe is pictured on our front cover.)



Plan to Attend the
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