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'UFGold' Peach

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'UFGold' is an attractive, high quality, yellow and nonmelting flesh peach released by the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station. 'UFGold' is expected to produce fruit with a tree ripened full flavor while retaining firmness for longer shelf life than fruit from conventional melting-flesh, fresh market varieties.

'UFGold' originated from a cross of two Florida selections with nonmelting Flesh (Figure 1). The seed parent was of Brazilian origin (Diamante open pollinated) and the pollen parent originated by open pollination of a seedling obtained by crossing a Florida selection (not carrying a nonmelting flesh allele) and a North Carolina selection (apparently heterozygous for the nonmelting allele). 'UFGold' was selected from about 100 sibs as the twenty-fourth selection in 1990 and thus designated Fla. 90-24c for testing.

The major advantages of 'UFGold' are a low chilling requirement, early ripening, a nonmelting flesh, and an attractive skin exhibiting 70-90% bright red over an orange yellow ground color. Trees are estimated to require 200 chill units, the same as 'Flordaglo' peach. 'UFGold' has fruited where the coldest month averages 16 to 17C and in colder locations in the absence of spring frosts. This corresponds to the area from Orlando to Leesburg in Florida. Full bloom generally occurs in early February, and fruit ripens in late April to early May in this area, about 80 days after full bloom and about five days before 'Flordaglo.' Trees are semi spreading and are easily pruned to a vase shape. Trees set a high number of flower buds, have few blind nodes, and

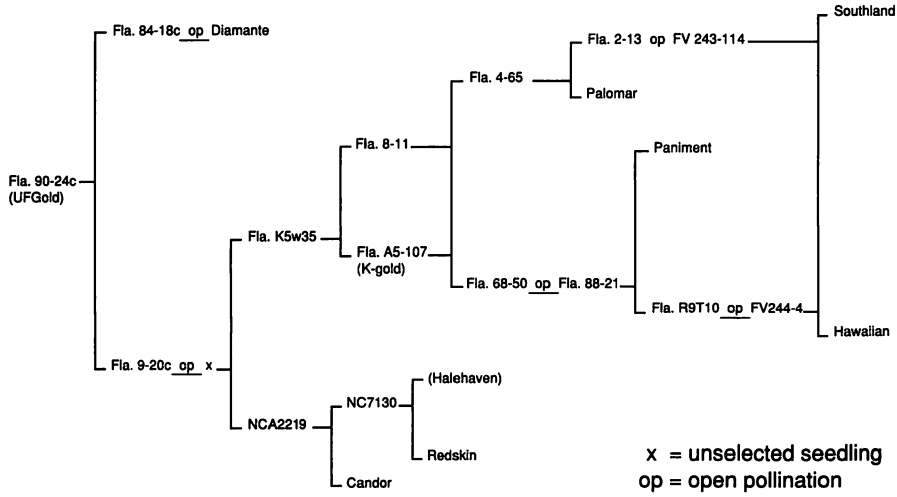

Figure 1. Parentage of 'UFGold' (Fla. 90-24c).

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exhibit little bud failure. Fruit have averaged about 110 grams and 2½ inches diameter where fruit were thinned to 6 to 8 inches apart. Fruit shape is nearly round and flesh contains little red on non-stressed trees. Flesh is nonmelting and clingy with a little separation from the stone when soft ripe. Pits have shown little tendency to split, even when crop loads were low.

Leaves have small, reniform petiolar glands. Flowers are showy and pink. Anthers are mostly yellow with little anthocyanin and pollen is bright yellow and abundant. Leaves and fruit are moderately resistant to bacterial spot.

A plant patent has been filed for 'UFGold' and a propagation agreement is available through Florida Foundation Seed Producers, Inc., P.O. Box 309, Greenwood, FL 32443. Budwood is non-indexed, but Florida stonefruit germplasm has been found to be mostly virus free in countries that routinely quarantine and index.

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'Gitit' a New Surinam Cherry Cultivar

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Origin

The Surinam cherry or Pitanga — *Eugenia uniflora* L. (E. michelii Lam.), originates in the coastal region of Brazil, South America. The fruit is being collected in forests and much appreciated. From its native home it was carried by the Portuguese to most of the tropical and subtropical countries. Pitanga is being grown in many regions in backyards and as hedges, commercial plantations exist mostly in Brazil. In the United States its culture is limited to Florida and California.

Pitanga is usually a broad compact shrub, but in Brazil it sometimes becomes a small tree up to 8m. in height. The foliage is deep green and some-what glossy, the new growth being of rich wine-color. The branchlets are thin, the leaves ovate in outline acuminate at the apex and rounded at the base. The small white flowers are in large groups. Flowering season is during all spring and summer months. The fruit is oblate in form, eight ribbed, about 25mm. in diameter and deep red color when finally ripe. The flesh is soft, juicy and with aromatic subacid flavor. Usually there is one large round seed, but sometimes two hemispherical ones. Fruit harvested unripe is not ripening well and therefore should be harvested when fully mature. Fruit reaching this stage of ripening drops almost immediately which is one of the major problems in the cultivation of this species.

The Pitanga succeeds both in tropical and subtropical climate. It is sensitive — but not extremely — to frost. The flowers are very sensitive to hot spells. During the fruit growing season the tree demands constant water supply, more than most other fruit trees. It is possible that the low fruit-set is connected to low air humidity. The Pitanga grows well in many soils especially in heavy waterlogged areas. In calcareous soils Pitanga suffers from iron chlorosis.

Pitanga fruits are rich in acids, sugars and pectin. Their uses are numerous. As a fresh fruit it is delicious. The fruits are used for alcoholic drink, for jelly with distinctive flavor and for sherbet and syrup.

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