

## 'Gulfrose' Plum

W. B. SHERMAN AND P. M. LYRENE

'Gulfrose' is a low-chill requirement Japanese-type plum (*Prunus salicina* Lindl.) released by the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station. It is adapted to central and north Florida where 'Gulfblaze' and 'Gulfbeauty' are adapted (2). Trees produce an attractive, aromatic and sweet tasting, blood flesh fruit with good firmness and shelf life. 'Gulfrose' originated from an open-pollination of 'Gulfruby.' Its blood flesh may trace to 'Methley,' a blood plum in the parentage of the original poly-cross and selections that followed (1, 3), or to 'Mariposa,' a blood plum in the planting with 'Gulfruby' when seed were harvested. It was selected in 1995 and tested as Fla. 95-4.

Trees of 'Gulfrose' are moderately vigorous, semi-spreading in growth, and readily spread in response to pruning and also to bending of branches by precocious fruiting on both whips and spurs. They begin cropping on second leaf trees or the year following field planting. Bloom on trees of 'Gulfrose' in central and north Florida overlaps the second half of bloom in 'Gulfblaze' and 'Gulfbeauty,' and is cross-fruitful with both. 'Gulfrose,' like its recommended pollinizers, appears to have a high heat requirement after its chilling is met for breaking dormancy in that trees bloom after standard Japanese varieties, like 'Methley' and 'Mariposa' in the panhandle area of Florida, but before these standards in north central Florida. Thus, 'Gulfrose' is adapted over a wider chilling range than peach cultivars with a similar chill requirement. Trees of 'Gulfrose' are estimated at Gainesville to require 275 chill units. Bloom begins in mid-February at Gainesville, beginning on spurs, and usually extends over 10 to 14 days finishing on long stems from past seasons growth. Trees set a high number of flower

buds and fruit set has been high, requiring fruit thinning to size fruit and reduce limb breakage.

'Gulfrose' fruit have been observed for 5 successive seasons on trees budded onto 'Flordaguard' peach seedlings and appear fully compatible. Fruit are nearly round with dark red skin over blood flesh, which is semi-freestone. Eating quality is rated excellent with a sweet, aromatic flesh and a moderately acid skin with no bitter after taste as occurs in 'Mariposa.' Fruit ripen at Gainesville about May 20, with 'Gulfblaze,' and hang on the tree for 7 to 10 days after shipping ripe. Fruit size is 70 to 80 grams or about the size of 'Gulfblaze.'

Fruit, leaves, and stems of 'Gulfrose' are resistant to bacterial spot [*Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *pruni* (Smith) Dye] and leaves are moderately resistant to leaf scald (*Xylella fastidiosa* Wells et al.). Resistance to both appear to be equal to that of 'Gulfblaze.' Concentric skin cracks, sun scald, and split stones of fruit have not been evident in 'Gulfrose' fruit.

A plant patent has been filed for 'Gulfrose' and a propagation agreement is available through the Florida Foundation Seed Producers, Inc., P. O. Box 309, Greenwood, FL 32443. Bud wood is non-indexed, but plum genotypes originating at the University of Florida breeding program have been found virus free in countries that routinely quarantine and index.

### Literature Cited

1. Sherman, W. B., and P. M. Lyrene. 1985. Progress in low-chill plum breeding. Proc. Fla. State Hort. Soc. 98:164-165.
2. Sherman, W. B., and P. M. Lyrene. 1998. 'Gulfbeauty' and 'Gulfblaze' Japanese-type plums. Fruit Var. J. 52:19.
3. Sherman, W. B., B. Topp, and P. M. Lyrene. 1992. Breeding low-chill Japanese-type plums for subtropical climates. Acta Hort. 317:149-153.