Reine Red, a Bud Sport of Reine Claude Plum

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The Reine Claude or Green Gage plum is regarded by many pomologists as a standard of perfection in quality. The Reine Claude group, of which Reine Claude is the prototype, includes a long list of highly esteemed varieties. Most of these, unfortunately, bear unattractive green or greenish yellow fruit.

Among the great many varieties assigned to the Reine Claude group, some of them seedlings of Reine Claude and others probably of separate origin, only a few are red or purple. Among these are Red Gage, which originated as a seedling of Reine Claude on Long Island, New York, in 1790; Purple Gage, of European origin and known on the continent as Reine Claude Violette; and Belle, also of European origin and known variously as Rote Claude, Reine Claude Rouge and Van Mons Red Gage.[2]

Unfortunately, none of these older red or purple varieties is the equal of Reine Claude in quality. Despite their more attractive appearance, none has remotely approached the popularity of Reine Claude. This plum, partly because of its excellent quality and partly because of its wide range of adaptability, lays claim to special favor as a variety for local markets and back-yard gardens. Its popularity is attested by a survey of recent catalogs of 84 American nurseries. These show a total offering of 164 varieties of plums. Of these, Reine Claude ranks third in popularity as determined by the number of nurseries listing it. This, of course, is no measure of the relative number of trees sold, but it is indicative of a popular demand for the variety.

Reine Red is a red-fruited bud sport of Reine Claude plum. It is comparable in quality to its green-fruited parent, and much more attractive. It was discovered by the author on a tree of Reine Claude growing in the University of Idaho orchard at Moscow in 1943. This sport was budded on seedling trees in 1945, and bore fruit in 1950 and 1951. Fruit of the second generation trees has retained the red color of fruit on the original sporting branch.

The fruit of Reine Red, like that of its parent, is nearly round, averaging about 1¼ inches in diameter and 1 1/3 inches in length as grown under irrigation in west-central

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[2]Hedrick, U. P. The Plums of New York. State of New York, Dept. Agri., 18th An, Rpt., 3:2. (1911).

Idaho. The overcolor is pale bluish purple; the undercolor maroon or slightly lighter. The suture is a fairly wide, distinct, grayish line. The skin is moderately thick and tough. The flesh is slightly fibrous, (scarcely detectable in the fresh fruit), exceedingly juicy, tender, sweet, and excellent in quality. The flesh color is about that of raw sienna. The pit is clinging or semi-free. The fruit adheres well to the tree even when fully ripe. The cooked fruit of Reine Red, while perhaps somewhat more fibrous than that of Reine Claude, has excellent flavor and a rich, orange color.

Editor's Note: We have the assurance of the author that budwood or scions of Reine Red will be available as long as they last, to interested experiment stations, growers, or nurseries.—Ed.

A Genetic Bud Mutation in the Pear

By F. C. REIMER, Medford, Oregon

An orchard of Bartlett pears, owned by A. D. MacKelvie of Zillah, Washington, and planted in 1913, produces typical fruit of this variety with the exception of one small branch on one tree. A bud mutation appeared in 1938 on one of these trees as a small lateral branch approximately seven feet above the base of the tree. The remainder of this large framework branch produces typical fruit above and below the mutation.

This mutation, which has been named Max-Red Bartlett, produces reddish shoots and leaves and dark red fruit. The young fruit develops this unusual color immediately after blooming and maintains it throughout the season. As the fruit ripens after picking the color changes to an attractive bright red color. In size, form, and flesh the fruit is typical of the Bartlett parent. Many trees have been propagated by budding, reproducing the mutation true to type.

The red color of the bark extends at least three cell layers deep below the epidermis.

I have used this mutation extensively in breeding work, and have found it to be genetic in character. That is, it will transmit its characteristics to a large percentage of its seedlings.

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