

Lakeland Apple and Northstar Cherry

Two New Fruits from Minnesota Fruit Breeding Farms

By T. S. WEIR
Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station

In 1920 the Fruit Breeding Farm introduced its first apple. Doubtless this new variety was hailed with much enthusiasm, as would be the first child in any family. Now, thirty years and sixty-one varieties of fruit later, another apple is introduced without any extravagant claims as to its merits but with considerable confidence in its ability to consistently produce crops of highly satisfactory fruit.

It might be added that it is becoming increasingly difficult to select varieties superior to those already being grown. In short, we are much more discriminating than we were thirty years ago. Now, a new variety, to merit introduction, must possess certain features that existing varieties do not have.

Lakeland Apple (Minn. No. 978)

Lakeland combines in one variety four characteristics which are highly important in a commercial apple. These are: annual bearing, attractive all over red color, a non-clustering fruit habit, and the ability to hang to the tree at harvest time.

The fruit is medium in size, roundish to slightly flattened. The color is a bright attractive medium dark red, $\frac{3}{4}$ to solid color. The

stem is short, medium thick; cavity medium deep, flaring, medium in depth and width, furrowed. The calyx is closed, tube urn shaped; core is closed. The skin is medium tender; flesh light creamy yellow, sometimes lightly tinged with red; texture is fine grained, medium tender and juicy; flavor is a pleasantly mild acid changing to sub-acid in storage. The quality is good for dessert and very good for sauce and pies. Season is late fall or shortly after that of Wealthy—until about December 15.

The trees, although moderately vigorous while young, develop strong well shaped trunks and branches in the orchard. The crotches are wide-angled and strong and the trees are hardy, at least throughout the southern half of Minnesota. Fire blight and apple scab have not been serious on this variety but it does take cedar rust. Mature trees flower profusely on spurs but seldom set more than one fruit to a cluster. This avoids overloading and makes fruit thinning unnecessary. This habit also results in fruit of uniform size and color.

Lakeland presumably is derived from Malinda seed collected in 1907. The long period of time from seed to introduction is partly the result

of errors in propagation and testing during the early years of the Minnesota Fruit Breeding Farm and partly due to the nature of the variety. Its record indicates a habit of slow plodding dependability rather than spectacular performances.

Northstar Cherry
(Minn. No. 58)

The first true sour cherry to be introduced from the Minnesota Fruit Breeding Farm has been named Northstar. The name seems appropriate since Minnesota is the North Star State and this new variety probably will succeed farther north than any previous true cherry variety of comparable size and quality.

For many years the Fruit Breeding Farm has attempted to grow cherries. Seed from various sources and varieties was tested—with indifferent results. In 1918 Professor C. P. Bull of the University visited Serbia (now Jugoslavia) during his European travels. There he saw cherries growing on the Monastir Plains where the winter climate is severe. Some seeds of these cherries were brought to Minnesota with the hope that they would produce trees in this climate.

The resulting trees were reasonably hardy but the trees and fruit both were smaller than standard varieties of cherries. One of the seedlings from this group was designated Serbian Pie No. 1 and pollen from it was used to pollinate an

English Morello cherry. In 1942 the two surviving trees from this cross bore fruit. One was discarded as of no value; the other was selected for propagation and further testing as Minnesota No. 58.

Since that time the original No. 58 tree has been consistent in blossoming and in producing good crops of fruit. It is believed that the variety is sufficiently winter hardy to succeed in the southern half of Minnesota and it may do well even farther north. It is being introduced after limited observation because there are no competing varieties of sour cherries grown in Minnesota.

The Northstar is a Morello type sour or pie cherry. The fruits are about three quarters of an inch in diameter, roundish heart shaped with the apex slightly depressed. The cavity is medium deep and medium wide; the suture is an indistinct slightly depressed line; the stem is slender, about an inch in length.

The color is, at first, a bright red but at full maturity it changes to a dark glistening mahogany red; the skin is medium tender and the flesh is juicy tender and meaty; the flavor is pleasantly acid and the quality good. The stone is small roundish with a slight ridge and is easily removed.

The ripening season begins very early; about July 5 to 10 at the Fruit Breeding Farm. The fruit will remain on the tree in good condition for about two weeks.

The tree is small but productive and self fertile, so that a companion pollenizer variety is not necessary. It is resistant to leaf spot and apparently to brown rot diseases. It should be a valuable addition to the

home garden for its beauty as well as its fruit. There are good possibilities of its succeeding as a commercial variety.—Minnesota Horticulturist.



A South Dakota Grower's Experiences with Fruit Varieties

By C. A. NASH, Platte, South Dakota

Stone Fruits

The Opata plum is the most prolific of any of the varieties that I have tried, but I find that most people do not like it as well as they do the better sorts of wild plums. The purple-fleshed Sapa is in much greater demand but has not borne very consistently for me. The dark red-fleshed Oka bears much better than the Sapa. Both Sapa and Oka make excellent jam and jelly, and the jelly reminds me very much of Concord grape jelly.

Minnesota's Pipestone is a fine large plum of excellent quality which has borne every year for me. The Superior is almost as large and bears even better, but I do not like

the quality as well. It tends to overbear here, and almost bore itself to death in 1949, but appears to have fully recovered this year. Underwood and Redcoat do not bear much for me. The former is of good quality. Redcoat is too dry for dessert and does not make as good a sauce as some of the others.

I tried one other Minnesota plum, the Ember, a very late-ripening plum, but it kills back badly every winter, and the result is that the fruits are so few and so late that the birds never permit them to ripen.

My wife's favorite among the plums is the Kaga, one of Dr. Hansen's crosses between our native plum and the Chinese apricot-plum.