

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 over-bear 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 desert 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.

It is very fragrant and makes the most excellent, spicy plum jam and sauce. It bears well and consistently. I also have the Toka of the same pedigree, and though it makes a beautiful tree, it fruits sparingly.

My experience with sour cherries, dating back to 1918, was a total failure. Previous to that time some of my acquaintances had done very well with the Early Richmond. Mine, however, cracked and the life seemed to ooze out of them with the sap. In the light of my observations, I have concluded that, with clean cultivation such as I gave my early planting of cherries, the tender Mahaleb roots upon which they were budded, winter killed. I believe that the cracks which so frequently check our soil in the winter time are responsible for much winter killing of trees. I recall that one of my State College school mates attributed the winter killing of his young evergreens to this same cracking of the soil.

A neighbor has had excellent success with both Early Richmond and Montmorency sour cherries. He has kept the trees well mulched with straw, and they are now large trees and bearing abundantly. I am making another planting, the first since 1918, and am mulching mine also.

Apple

Our orchard set out in 1944, and later, contains thirty-four varieties of apples, and twelve varieties of crab apples.

I am well aware that this is far too many varieties of apples, and judging from the demands of an earlier generation, I would have been much wiser to have set it all out to Wealthies and Whitneys. Nevertheless most of us who are adventurous enough to plant an orchard in this un hospitable and untried region carry this same spirit of adventure into an effort to find a superior variety among the newer apples.

Individual tastes differ, but I think that I have in the Victory apple from the Minnesota station a better dessert apple than the Wealthy, and one that bears just as early and abundantly. The Victory is a McIntosh cross of about the same size as the Wealthy, but ripening a couple of weeks later, and keeping a couple of months longer. It is the juiciest apple it has ever been my privilege to eat.

The Fireside, another Minnesota introduction, though slower to come into production, is the most desirable dessert apple I have ever tasted, and keeps into the late spring. It is called the super Delicious, but has the added advantage of keeping its good quality for months, a quality in which the Delicious is very weak. If eaten too early the Delicious is not much better than a raw potato, and if eaten too late it is mealy and tasteless.

Another recent Minnesota introduction is the Prairie Spy which is also of excellent dessert quality. It has a very distinctive and pleasing

flavor, unlike anything else I have ever tasted, which has been termed the Cox Orange flavor.

So far, the Anoka has produced the most apples per tree. It is not to be recommended as a dessert apple, but makes excellent apple sauce. An Iowa cousin ranks them far above the Wealthy, but it seems to me that her preference must be based upon the sauce made from the two. The Anoka is also the first to ripen for us, and some days it takes as many as ten medium sized Anokas to satisfy my craving for fresh fruit, so for me they are not hard to eat.

The Melba, another McIntosh cross, ripens right after Anoka and is of very good dessert quality. It is more attractive in color than the Anoka, and I have trouble keeping the birds from spoiling the fruit before it ripens. I hope that with the increasing crop of the more mature trees, the birds and I will both have enough.

Another Minnesota apple, the Minjon, ripened last year for the first time. It is rather small, but of a very attractive all over red color even in the center of the tree where the sun did not strike it. It has one other excellent feature in that not one of the two dozen, or more apples dropped until fully ripe. Although so attractively colored, the fruit was so well hidden by the foliage that the birds did not trouble it. From my point of view, it is lacking in dessert quality, in spite of its other good qualities.

The Minjon, Wealthy and Beacon apples were the only ones affected by cedar rust, but even with these the rust did not seem to hurt the fruit.

One other apple, the Ericson, an early apple of Russian parentage, has borne well for me. It is the largest apple that we have, ranging up to three inches in diameter, and is of an attractive red coloring, but sometimes irregular in shape. The quality is about the same as Anoka and Duchess.

The Haralson, though not as good as a Wealthy, is a long keeper and very hardy. Though reputed to be an early and abundant bearer, it has not borne as well as the Wealthy and Victory, to say nothing of the Anoka and Duchess.

Of the twelve crab apples the Dolgo, Florence, Red River, Sugar, Joy, Whitney and Martha-Dolgo have all borne. The Red River has produced most abundantly and for us it is of the best quality. It is an introduction made by Prof. Yeager, when he was at North Dakota State College, by crossing the Dolgo crab with the Delicious apple, and appears to be a most happy addition to the crab family. Reports state that the original tree at Fargo has borne ten bushels of crabs per year for several years. We advertised it for preserving, but purchasers came back for more because they like it so well for eating out of hand. We like it much better than the Whitney for eating. It is also a much

more attractive crab, being solid red, and it keeps for a month at summer temperatures, that is if there are enough so that they do not get eaten up before the month is over.

The Dolgo also bears much better than the Whitney or Florence, and is the best jelly crab. The Sugar is a small apple, but has not borne very well so far, and has been a disappointment to me for eating. Joy is a good eating crab which bears early, but sparingly.—North and South Dakota Horticulture.

Editor's Notes: Several of the northern fruit varieties grown by Mr. Nash have received some attention farther south and appear worth growing in home fruit gardens even where hardiness is not a prime requisite.

The Minnesota and South Dakota plums have been rather less promising than the apples and crab apples, since the dwarf hybrids are as a class, quite susceptible to brown rot and the tree plums generally fall below European and Japanese plums in quality of fruit. At Urbana, Illinois, the Dura bush plum, a Canadian seedling of Sapa, is rated highest for quality among this group.

From the first few crops here, we would endorse Mr. Nash's remarks on the Victory, Prairie Spy, and Minjon apples, as to quality. Victory, however, is not as well colored as either McIntosh or Wealthy

in the red strains, Prairie Spy seems rather blight susceptible, and Minjon is a variety which declines quickly in quality after maturing.

Dolgo is a good, though small-fruited crab apple as far south as Alabama. Red River crab apple was the subject of favorable comment in a recent issue of the Iowa Fruit Growers Association Newsletter, after which Dr. J. H. Schultz, Chairman, Dept. of Horticulture, North Dakota Agricultural College, Fargo, N. D., wrote as follows: "I was very much interested in your comments on the Red River Crab apple in the November Newsletter. Red River is becoming more and more popular each year and it seems to fulfill a definite need in crab apples for this area. With us its fruit ripens in the latter part of September but the fruit does not develop its attractive flavor until a week or two after it is harvested. It becomes completely red and will store for several months if given proper conditions. The tree is completely hardy with us and is moderately resistant to fire blight. It bears annually and has the tree characteristics of a large fruited apple. The original seedling tree is still producing well and next to Dolgo has been one of the hardiest varieties grown here. I see no reason why it would not be superior in Iowa to some of the crab apple varieties commonly grown there."—J.C.McD.