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'UFSharp' Peach

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'UFSharp' peach is released for grower trials by the University of Florida Agricultural Experiment Station. It was named to honor Professor R.H. Sharpe, the pioneer of the University of Florida fruit breeding program. Professor Sharpe initiated low-chill breeding programs in blueberry, blackberry, pear and peach oriented toward the development of cultivars adapted to the Florida climate. Trees of 'UFSharp' produce an attractive, sweet-tasting, yellow and non-melting flesh fruit intended for the fresh fruit market. This cultivar is expected to produce fruit with tree-ripened aroma and taste while retaining firmness for longer shelf life than fruit from conventional melting-flesh cultivars.

'UFSharp' originated in Gainesville on the University of Florida breeding farm, from a 1995 cross (Fig. 1) and was selected and propagated in 1997 as Fl 97-52c. Standards and methods used in this program to evaluate selections have been described (1, 2). Trees of 'UFSharp' are estimated to require 325 chill units (5). This is based on full bloom occurring up to three days after 'UF2000' peach at Gainesville where full bloom occurs most seasons in mid-February (Table 1). 'UFSharp' has fruited well where the coldest month averages 14 to 15º C (4) and in colder locations in the absence of spring frosts. Thus, we expect this new peach to be adapted in areas where 'UF2000' has been grown successfully. Fruit ripen in late May at Gainesville, about 94 days after full bloom (Table 1) usually five to seven days after 'UF2000' (Table 2). Trees are vigorous, semi-spreading, productive and without alternate bearing. Trees set a high number of flower buds, have few blind nodes (3), and exhibit little bud drop prior to bloom (7). Fruit thinning is required in the absence of spring frost, to size fruit and prevent limb breakage. Leaves have globose glands. Flowers are showy and pink. Anthers are light red and pollen is bright yellow and abundant. Leaves have shown no bacterial spot [*Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *pruni* (Sm.) Dye] in test plantings where known susceptible genotypes show typical symptoms. Trees of 'UFSharp' show excellent vigor and cropping ability.

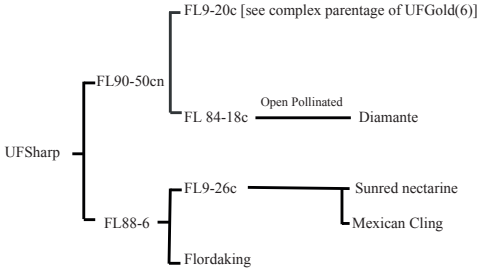

Figure 1. Parentage of 'UFSharp'.

'UFSharp' fruit have been observed on the original seedling and budded trees since 1998. Fruit are large and attractive averaging about 160 grams (70 mm diameter) when thinned to about 15 cm apart. Commercially ripe fruit exhibit 60% red over a deep yellow to orange ground color. Fruit shape is nearly round with a slight tip. There is no red in the flesh at the pit. Flesh is clingy to the pit even when fully ripe. Flesh is firm with good sweetness (12 to 14° Brix), and does not brown readily on bruised or cut surfaces. Pits are medium small and have shown no tendency to split even when crop loads are low.

'UFSharp' offers some significant advantages over 'UF2000' including superior size, shape, red blush, attractiveness, and eating quality. A plant patent has been filed for

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Table 1. Tree performance and fruit characteristics[z] of 'UFSharp' (Gainesville, Florida,2003-2005).

	Tree					Fruit					
Year	Bloom (date)	Crop (%)	Harv. (date)	FDP (days)	Wt. (gm)	Shape	Red	Attr. (%)	Taste	Pub.	Splits (%)
2003	2/18	100	5/22	91	160	8	60	8	8	8	0
2004	2/14	100	5/21	94	180	8	60	8	8	8	0
2005	2/10	100	5/20	98	140	8	60	8	8	8	0

z Subjective Shape, Attractiveness (Attr.), Taste, and Pubescence (Pub.) ratings: 1 = least desirable, 7 = commercially acceptable, 10 = most desirable. FDP is the fruit development period from 50% bloom to first commercial harvest. Percent Crop Load (Crop) is judged as percent of a full crop after thinning, i.e. fruit evenly spaced 10-15 cm apart throughout canopy.

Table 2. Tree performance and fruit characteristics[z] of 'UFSharp' and 'UF2000' (Gainesville, Florida,2003-2005).

	Tree					Fruit					
Year	Bloom (date)	Crop (%)	Harv. (date)	FDP (days)	Wt. (gm)	Shape	Red	Attr. (%)	Taste	Pub.	Splits (%)
UF Sharp	2/16	100	5/21	93	160	8	60	8	8	8	0
UF2000	2/14	100	5/15	90	130	7	30	7	7	7	10

[z] Subjective Shape, Attractiveness (Attr.), Taste, and Pubescence (Pub.) ratings: 1 = least desirable, 7 = commercially acceptable, 10 = most desirable. FDP is the fruit development period from 50% bloom to first commercial harvest. Percent Crop Load (Crop) is judged as percent of a full crop after thinning, i.e. fruit evenly spaced 10-15 cm apart throughout canopy.

'UFSharp' and a propagation agreement is available through Florida Foundation Seed Producers, Inc., P. O. Box 309, Greenwood, FL 32443. Budwood has not been indexed, but no viruses have been found in the University breeding and test plots, and budwood from these plots has been found to be virus free in countries that routinely quarantine and index.

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