

# The Redhaven Peach in British Columbia

A. J. MANN and F. W. L. KEANE

Experiment Station, Summerland, B. C., Canada

Of the many peaches which are under test at this Station, Redhaven has shown exceptional promise as a firm fleshed early variety. As Redhaven is well known in eastern peach regions, it is felt that some account of its behaviour in the irrigated orchards of British Columbia may be of interest to growers elsewhere.

*Origin.* Redhaven is a cross of Halehaven x Kalhaven, originated at the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Substation, South Haven, Mich. The cross was made in 1930 and the variety was introduced in 1940. The first trees at our Station were planted in 1943.

*Tree.* So far as can be judged from these comparatively young trees, Redhaven is of normal tree structure and vigour. The trees have been healthy, and infection of foliage and fruit with mildew has been slight. The blossoms are small and red. The variety began to fruit in 1946, at four years of age, and bore consistent annual crops in 1947, 1948 and 1949. While the set has not been as heavy as with varieties of Rochester type, the trees have carried satisfactory crops and moderate thinning has been necessary. The variety showed no fruit-bud injury in the rather severe winter of 1948-49, whereas J. H. Hale showed considerable injury. In 1949-50, the severest winter on record, Redhaven, in common with other varieties, showed very severe fruit-bud and small wood injury. The trees, being young, behaved like other varieties of similar age, in that there was no very severe trunk or large wood injury. There was some injury to peach fruit buds in the winter of 1950-51 and 1951-52, and in these years Redhaven

showed at least average hardiness.

*Fruit.* The fruit has been large to medium in size. It is outstandingly attractive, having a rich orange-yellow colour, heavily blushed and mottled with light to dark red. The pubescence is moderate, and in this respect Redhaven is more attractive than peaches of Rochester type. Redhaven has an attractive yellow flesh, although the shade of yellow is paler than Rochester. It has a slight to moderate amount of red colour around the pit, extending slightly into the flesh. The flesh oxidizes less readily than most varieties under test. Redhaven is semi-free-stone but tending towards freestone at some pickings, being rather more free than Rochester. The most outstanding characteristic of Redhaven is its firmness, it being firmer than other varieties of its season and one of the firmest of all varieties under test. It matures uniformly on the tree, attaining its high colour before reaching picking maturity, and retains its firmness during a relatively long ripening period after picking. Redhaven does not peel quite so freely as Rochester, sometimes leaving a slightly roughened surface on the peeled fruit. The flavour of Redhaven is less sweet than Rochester but is sprightly and quite pleasing, the quality usually being good to fair. Limited tests indicate that the variety is reasonably satisfactory for canning purposes.

*Picking Season.* Redhaven seems to be about a week earlier than Rochester and a month earlier than Elberta.

*Commercial Status.* Redhaven appears to be a promising early variety for extended commercial trial in the peach districts of British Columbia.