Two New Peach Rootstocks

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In recent years, Rancho Fortuna, McFarland, California, has tested and selected two peach rootstocks which have outstanding value for nematode resistance. The first of these, Rancho Redleaf, was discovered as a sucker on an S-37 tree in an orchard at Bakersfield, California. Mr. T. A. Sand, President of Del Rancho Fortuna, in conjunction with Mr. Grant Merrill, a private plant breeder of Red Bluff, California, tested this variety under both nursery and field conditions. It was patented by Mr. Merrill December 20, 1955.

Realizing its potential value, not only because of its parentage but because of its distinctive red leaf characteristic, Rancho Fortuna established a planting by grafting over an old orchard using Rancho Redleaf, and by budding seedlings of Rancho Redleaf in the nursery row which were subsequently planted in an orchard.

However, over the years, it eventually became apparent that the F_1 generation of Rancho Redleaf had too many faults to become of value as a source of nematode resistant seedlings, its major fault being an erratic blossoming habit. Also, because of its double blossoms and defective stamens, its seed sets were extremely light in certain springs. However, since Rancho Redleaf had so many good points, a program of selection was started with the F_2 seedlings to evaluate the qualities of complete resistance to the nematode *Meloidogyne incognita* var. *acrita*. Furthermore, high resistence to the nematode *Meloidogyne javanica* had been revealed. This program is still in progress and promises to be most successful. The patent on the original Rancho Redleaf was bought by Del Rancho Fortuna, a wholesale nursery, and Rancho Redleaf is at present being propagated as a double flowering peach for its ornamental value.

Along with the above program, Rancho Fortuna planted some 500 open-pollinated F_1 seed of a nematode-resistant variety known as S-37. Two hundred and three seedlings of these were carried to maturity in an orchard and, of these, two seedlings showed outstanding qualities from the standpoint of bearing, germination, resistance to rootknot nematode, homogeneity, compatibility, and so on. In short, all the traits occurring in the seedlings were found to make for a stone fruit rootstock of exceptional value, both in the nursery row and in the orchard. Further evaluations proved one of the seedlings slightly superior to the other, and it was trade marked and is now being patented. It has been named Rancho Resistant. It will be available to the trade this coming year.

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Clarkrich Apple

A bud mutation of Starking discovered by E. S. Clarke in 1955 has given rise to a new variety called Clarkrich, and was released in 1958. Its bright red skin color develops early, some ten days ahead of its parent. Otherwise, it is similar to Starking. A patent has been applied for.—*R. M. Brooks.*