

New Apples Promising for Processing

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A recent survey of New York State canners indicated that new and better processing varieties are needed to replace older varieties which are either not being planted because of horticultural weaknesses or because they are not suitable for processing.

The situation in Orleans and Wayne Counties, two of New York State's most important apple producing counties, is a good indication of the variety trend. In these counties which produce a good portion of New York State's processing apples, Baldwin, Rhode Island Greening, Wealthy, Ben Davis and Northern Spy are not being replanted in sufficient quantities to maintain production. In the case of Baldwin and Ben Davis, practically no new plantings have been made for over ten years and a good proportion of the trees of these varieties are over 30 years of age.

In response to requests from the Canners' Association and also from growers, the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station has been running processing tests on both new and standard varieties for the past three years in an effort to find varieties which approach the ideal as set up by the New York State Canners' Association.

The ideal processing apple, according to our survey of New York State apple processors, should possess the following characteristics:

Flavor—As good or better than Northern Spy.

Texture—As good or better than Rhode Island Greening or Northern Spy.

Shape—As good as Greening or Rome.

Peeling qualities—As good as Greening.

Flesh color—As good as Greening.

Size—A large percentage of the fruit should size between 2½ and 3 inches,

for most purposes. Apples for sauce, however, should be somewhat larger.

Storage life—Winter apples should hold up at least 18 weeks in cold storage.

Bearing habits—Annual croppers are preferred, to insure a steady supply year after year.

From the grower's point of view, certain other requisites must also be kept in mind. The variety should have a precocious, high yielding, healthy tree, and attractive fruit which doesn't bruise easily so that it can be disposed of readily on the fresh market if necessary.

With the foregoing points in mind, three new varieties have appeared which seem to show a lot of promise.

MONROE, resulting from a cross between Jonathan and Rome Beauty, was introduced in 1949 by the New York Experiment Station. This variety appears to have no major faults and we are recommending it as a replacement for Baldwin. It is an annual bearer, producing good crops of good sized fruits (2½-

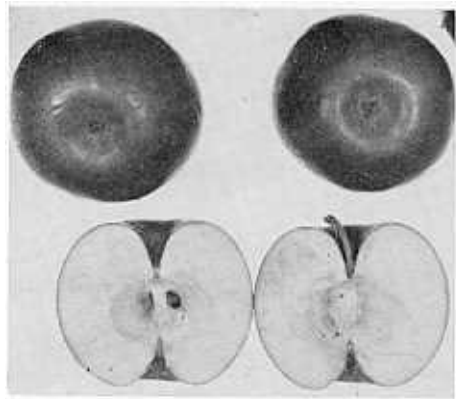


Photo by R. A. Wesselman

Fig. 1. Idared, a late keeping general purpose apple, acceptable for processing.

3½ inches). The fruit matures after Baldwin and before Rome Beauty, keeps well, responds well to chemical thinning, hangs well and is not subject to bruising.

In quality, Monroe is about as good as Baldwin for processing and also has acceptable dessert quality. In appearance, Monroe resembles Jonathan or a well-colored Baldwin. The tree is of medium size, somewhat similar to that of Rome Beauty. Monroe has produced annually for over 20 years at Geneva.

The flesh color is light yellow or amber, which apparently is the desired color for processing, and it rates near the top for flesh texture.

Because of our lengthy experience with Monroe we have no hesitancy in recommending it for at least trial planting throughout the Northeast. Its parentage would also suggest that it may do well in the more southern apple areas.

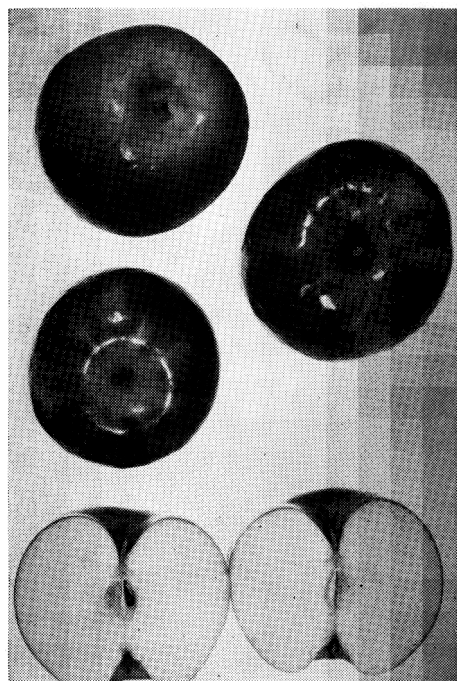


Photo by R. A. Wesselman

Fig. 2. Webster, a fall variety outstanding for processing.

WEBSTER, resulting from a second generation cross between seedlings of Ben Davis and Jonathan, seems to fill a real need, particularly in New York State, where there is a distinct need for early processing varieties.

Webster is a big handsome red streaked variety, maturing just ahead of McIntosh, and is in season from October through November. As we now have few, if any, good processors of this season, the canners have requested that some attention be given to developing apples to fill this need.

In our processing tests Webster has rated very high and it appears to be the best processing variety of its season. It is, however, only recommended for culinary purposes, as its large size and acid flavor precludes dessert adaptability.

From the growers point of view, Webster appears to be satisfactory. It produces good crops annually and, as it may be picked before McIntosh, doesn't offer any harvesting problems. The large handsome fruit may have some fresh sales appeal, although, it is emphasized again that Webster should be sold only for culinary purposes. Webster is a triploid and hence is of no value as a pollinator.

IDARED, a comparatively new introduction from the Idaho Experiment Station looks very promising in the Northeast. It resulted from a cross between Jonathan and Wagner and seems to fill a need for a late-keeping dessert or general purpose apple.

It is a handsome red apple, sprightly in flavor, maturing at Geneva about 10 days after McIntosh. Our processing tests with Idared have been very limited, but this limited experience indicates that Idared will at least be acceptable for processing. Where a handsome, late-keeping dessert or general purpose apple is wanted, Idared looks very promising and well worthy of trial plantings.