

The Ozark Premier Plum

PAUL H. SHEPARD*
Mountain Grove, Missouri

The Ozark Premier, now generally called Premier, came from a cross made in 1936, at the Missouri State Fruit Experiment Station in Mountain Grove, Missouri. Its parentage is Burbank by Methley, and it is one of a great many similar crosses. No others resulted in a fruit of such size as that reached by the Premier. Many Premiers measure $2\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter. The skin is an attractive dark red covered by a blue bloom. Flesh is yellow, fine grained and sweet. Its quality is very good if eaten at the proper time. If allowed to hang on the tree too long it becomes very sweet with too little tartness to satisfy most people, especially the younger ones.

It ripens over a considerable period of time, perhaps two weeks, and needs three or four pickings. Ripening date in Missouri is about August 1st.

The tree is upright when young, and spreading after full crops. It has shown no black-knot, and has considerable resistance to bacterial spot. Most of its fruit is borne on spurs along the main larger limbs, not on the terminals. The bloom is not entirely self infertile; however, pollination by another Jap variety greatly increases production.

The fruit is firm and keeps well in transit and storage, if harvested when in its prime.

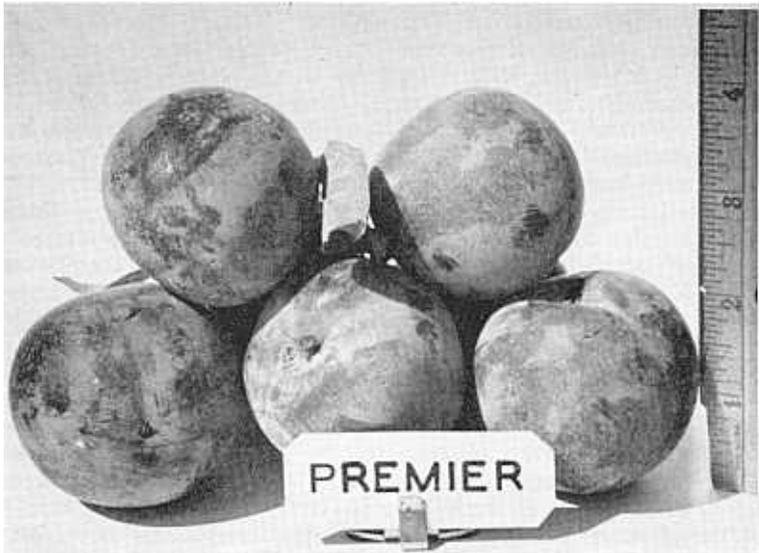


Figure 1. Fruit of the new red-skinned Ozark Premier plum.

*Director, Missouri State Fruit Experiment Station; and current, president of the American Pomological Society.