

# Introducing Four New Pears from Tennessee

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Quality pears came to us from Belgium and France, from a climate similar to that of our South and certain locations on the Pacific Coast. The early settlers of eastern United States found that their pears soon died. We now know that the failure of those trees was due to bacterial fire blight. Our western settlers, however, had better luck with the European pear, and our markets have long been supplied with quality pears from the west coast.

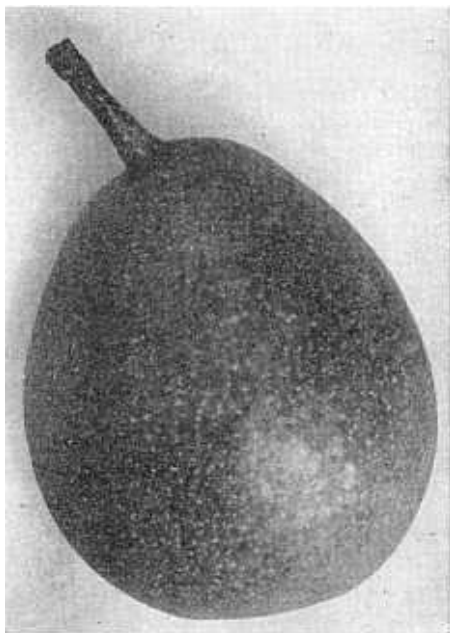
When these European pears were accidentally crossed with an ornamental type from Asia, the Chinese Sand pear, blight resistant varieties were obtained which bear gritty textured, low-quality fruits. These are commonly found over much of eastern and southern United States.

For more than a quarter of a century, the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station has been trying to breed better quality into these gritty pears, and at the same time retain or even improve on their disease resistance. The Station finally introduced the variety Orient in 1946, which growers report to be practically immune to fire blight. We are now naming and releasing four new varieties, namely, Dabney, Ayres, Mooers and Hoskins.

It has been a common practice to use blossom sprays as a precaution against fire blight, but plantings of these new blight-resistant varieties of pears on farms in various parts of Tennessee have developed very little fire blight without any spray during the first four years. Mother trees of the new varieties described are now twelve to sixteen years old and have developed very little blight although surrounded with blight infected trees.

The older plantings of pears in Tennessee consist mostly of the Kieffer and Garber varieties. These two varieties and Orient blossom at about the same time and are cross-compatible. The four new varieties mentioned above, blossom late, after the blossoms of Kieffer and Garber are gone. Mooers and Ayres have sterile pollen and require other varieties for cross-pollination.

The Dabney ripens during the last week of July and early August. The fruit is medium-sized and sweet-subacid in flavor. This is a dessert summer pear that anyone would enjoy eating fresh.



A Specimen of Ayres Pear

Fig. 1. The fruit of this variety is light yellow blushed and mottled with golden russet and rose.

We have no other good varieties of that season. The mother tree at Clarkville, Tennessee, is now 15 years old and has an excellent production record.

The Ayres pear was given its name in honor of Brown Ayres, an early president of the University. The fruit is very attractive, golden russet with a rose blush. It ripens in late August and early September. Persons tasting the fruit say that it is the best pear they have ever tasted. The tree of Ayres has been very healthy and vigorous.

The Mooers was named after C. A. Mooers, Director Emeritus of this Station. It can be ripened from late October

into December, and has rated especially high for canning, although it is also good eaten fresh. The trees have been among the healthiest in the University orchard. This golden russeted pear has crisp subacid flesh.

The Hoskins pear was named in honor of President Emeritus James D. Hoskins. It is a winter variety and is picked about October 1. We have long needed a winter pear, since pears are scarce and expensive at this time of the year. The golden russet fruit of Hoskins has melting subacid flesh, and is rated good for both dessert and canning. The mother tree of this variety is now 15 years old.

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## Report of the Wilder Medal Committee

Indianapolis, Indiana—January 14, 1954

The Wilder Medal was established by the American Pomological Society and presented at the thirteenth session of the Society in Boston, 1873. It was named after the illustrious president of that organization, Marshall Pinckney Wilder of Dorchester, Massachusetts.

The medal is given for:

1. Promising new fruits.
2. Collections of fruits illustrating horticultural advantages of a given situation.
3. Seedling fruits showing promise for hardiness, quality, and promise in breeding.
4. Individuals who have distinguished themselves by work in some line of horticulture.

During the history of the medal there have been awarded 220 silver medals and 66 bronze medals. This year the Wilder Medal Committee of the American Pomological Society is recommend-

ing the awarding of three silver medals, as follows:

To the California Agricultural Experiment Station, through whose leadership and scientific skill, varieties of strawberries have been produced which are the basis for a significant strawberry industry in California—for the origination of meritorious varieties of strawberries.

To Paul H. Shepard, who has devoted a life to the fruit problems of the Ozark Region, especially to the varietal problems and the origination of improved sorts—for fruit breeding and varietal studies in the Ozark Region.

To Richard Wellington, who has devoted a life to the study of fruit varieties, and to their improvement—for the improvement of fruits through breeding.

### WILDER COMMITTEE:

|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| J. T. Brøgger                | R. A. VanMeter |
| A. S. Colby                  | R. W. Hodgson  |
| Leon Havis                   | W. P. Tufts    |
| H. B. TUKEY, <i>Chairman</i> |                |