

The Ohlson Apple

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Puyallup, Washington

Ohlson is a new fall-ripening apple variety that has unusually large fruit with appealing appearance and flavor and usefulness for both dessert and culinary purposes. It also has good tree characters and an annual bearing habit. Its principal faults are moderately coarse and soft flesh, and light weight of the fruit. Its principal promise may be for home orchards, roadside markets and breeding.

The original tree was discovered by Mr. E. A. Ohlson about 1935, growing very close to a fir stump on his small farm about five miles southeast of the town of Puyallup. The location of the tree makes it virtually certain that it was a chance seedling.

In 1945 Mr. Ohlson brought specimens of his new apple to the Western Washington Experiment Station. He also offered scion wood, expressing a desire to make the new variety available to anyone who might be interested in it. Thereafter it was propagated on several of the Malling rootstocks. In 1953 it was included in a new variety test planting which unfortunately was killed out completely by an abnormally severe freeze in 1955, so that anticipated records of performance have not been obtained. The original tree survived the 1955 freeze with no apparent injury. It and several younger trees on various rootstocks have been under observation for various periods of time up to fifteen years. Several dwarf and semi-dwarf trees, propagated on Malling IX and VII roots respectively, have been distributed to interested growers for trial through cooperation of the Agricultural Extension Service of

Washington State University. Budwood has been supplied for commercial propagation.

Following experimental propagation, Ohlson has made straight, sturdy nursery trees on several Malling rootstocks including No. IX and No. VII. The trees often have formed some fruit buds during the second year of growth. Usually, fruit has developed from only one or two blossoms in a cluster, but cropping has been adequate and regular. Ripening season is with Gravenstein, early September at Puyallup. Ohlsons have been kept well until January in a household refrigerator.

Although not immune to scab, anthracnose and mildew, Ohlson trees have shown less susceptibility than have trees of several other varieties grown in the same environment.

Technical Description

Ohlson fruits observed at Puyallup are fairly uniform in size, measure four inches or more in diameter, and slightly more in length.

Fruit form is oblong, truncate, nearly symmetrical, slightly angular. Basin moderately wide, deep, abrupt, wrinkled and furrowed. Calyx large, tightly closed, lobes narrow, acuminate. Cavity medium in depth and width, slightly irregular, smooth. Stem medium in length, somewhat slender.

Skin thin, tender, very smooth, pale yellow, thinly striped and mottled with bright carmine. Dots small, scattered to numerous near calyx end, inconspicuous, submerged, usually pale green, occasionally russeted. Pre-

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vailing effect bright, short, thin red stripes on pale yellow.

Calyx tube large, long funnel form, with fleshy pistil extending into base. Stamens median. Core lines clasping.

Core medium or below, distant, median, axile, usually tightly closed; carpels medium size, cordate, tufted; seeds large, long, narrow, acute, dark brown.

Flesh pale-yellowish, moderately coarse but crisp, breaking and moderately juicy; spritely subacid, and good to very good. Season early September to January with refrigeration.

Tree vigorous, upright-spreading, open with rather sparse branching. Twigs semi-erect, stout, with large terminal buds; inter-nodes medium; bark dark reddish-brown irregularly overlaid with gray scarf-skin; pubescence moderately thick. Lenticels numerous, conspicuous, medium-large, roundish, raised. Buds large, broad, acute, appressed, pubescent. Leaves large, thick, broad with acuminate tip which usually is twisted to one side; folded to saucer-shaped and recurved, dark green, sparsely pubescent beneath. Petioles $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, pubescent. Stipules $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch, very slender.

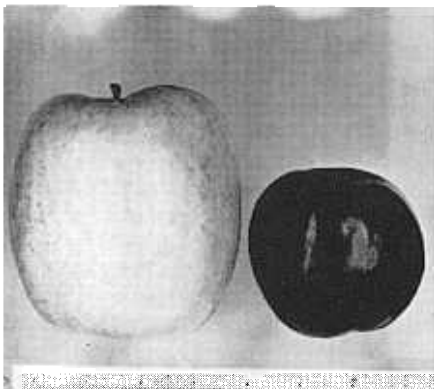


Fig. 1. Typical Ohlson (left) and Red Gravenstein apples. Ohlson often develops more red color than here depicted, sometimes with bright red stripes.

Additional Notes

The author does not know of any other extra-large apple that is equal to Ohlson in quality. Of other varieties ripening at the same time, only Gravenstein has good size and superior flavor, and only Red Gravenstein has better color. Indeed, Red Gravenstein is not likely to suffer in popularity from competition with Ohlson. But the new variety has attracted so much attention, especially as dwarf trees bearing oversize fruit, that it seems destined to command a place for itself in the Puget Sound region, perhaps second to Gravenstein in its season.

One of Gravenstein's faults is a strong tendency to biennial bearing. At least in Gravenstein's off-years, Ohlson should be a more popular variety because of its annual bearing habit.

In sauce and pies Ohlson has good flavor, and the amber slices tend to hold their shape fairly well. The ratio of edible flesh to skin and core is high.



Late Sunhaven

According to Stanley Johnston, originator of the Sunhaven peach, a variety called Late Sunhaven is now being propagated by a few nurseries. Although the fruit of Late Sunhaven is almost identical to that of Sunhaven, the former is about a week later. Fortunately, the two varieties can be distinguished from each other in the nursery by the leaf glands. The leaves of Late Sunhaven have reniform glands, whereas the leaf glands of Sunhaven are reniform.

Professor Johnston believes that Late Sunhaven arose as a bud mutation on the original tree of Sunhaven at South Haven, Michigan.