

# Fairfax Strawberry—Its Origin and Use in Breeding

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Fairfax originated from a cross made by the author in 1923. It was selected in 1925 and introduced in 1933. Although stated to be of unknown parentage, it has been thought to be a cross of Royal Sovereign × Howard 17. Dorsett and Narcissa, known to be of this parentage, were also introduced in 1933. The writer later raised additional seedlings of this cross, and also crossed both parents with many other varieties. Considering this later experience, I do not now think that Royal Sovereign was a parent of Fairfax.

A very large number of crosses (221) were made in 1923. When the crossed berries were harvested in

1923, many were placed at one time on a large sheet of paper on a greenhouse bench. After most of the crosses had been sown, a gust of wind mixed the remaining berries together. In 1925, Fairfax was one of 37 selected as worth further testing from the 383 resulting mixed seedlings, and was the only one named. Numbered selections for re-testing were made from 75 different labeled crosses that year. Among the parents used in crossing were many of A. F. Etter's varieties and selections. Several crosses of Etter's 445 (=E-445) (a pistillate) and Etter's 450 (=E-450) (perfect-flowered) were among the mixed seedlings. These crosses were: (See next page)

**Table 1.** Strawberry varieties having Fairfax as one parent, and the date of introduction for each.

ety	Parentage	Year Introduced
Adirondack	Fairfax x Howard 17	1948
Cheyenne 2	<i>F. ovalis</i> x Fairfax	1942
Cheyenne 3	Fairfax x (Fairfax x <i>F. ovalis</i> )	1942
Crimson Glow	Fairfax x NJ 51 (Pearl x Aberdeen)	1940
Daybreak	Missionary x Fairfax	1939
Eden	Dresden x Fairfax	1951
Eleanor Roosevelt	Bellmar x Fairfax	1939
Fairland	Aberdeen x Fairfax	1947
Fairmore	Blakemore x Fairfax	1939
Fairpeake	Chesapeake x Fairfax	1944
Grenadier	Valentine x Fairfax	1957
Lindalicious	Fairfax x seedling	1948
Maytime	Missionary x Fairfax	1940
Mildred Felten	Fairfax x 3001 (Howard 17 x Marvel)	1947
Redcrop	Aberdeen x Fairfax	1948
Red Rich	Rockhill (Wazata) x Fairfax	1949
Redstar	Chesapeake x Fairfax	1940
Redwing	NJ-46 (Pearl x Aberdeen) x Fairfax	1940
Sioux	(Fairfax x <i>F. ovalis</i> ) x Fairfax	1947
Sparkle	Fairfax x Aberdeen	1942
Sparta	Gem x Fairfax	1941
Starbright	Chesapeake x Fairfax	1940
Temple	Aberdeen x Fairfax	1943

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Table II. Strawberry varieties having Fairfax in their ancestry, and the date of introduction for each.

Variety	Parentage	Year Introduced
Arapahoe	(Chey. 1 x 430-2) x (Rockhill x Chey. 3)	1954
Arch Red	Lindalicious x Maytime	1956
Black Lee	Golden Gate x Lindalicious	1954
Blaze	(Simcoe x Catskill) x (Tupper x Fairfax)	1952
Cavalier	Valentine x Sparkle	1957
Earle Felten	No. 3001 x Mildred Felten	1950
Empire	Dresden x Sparkle	1951
Erie	Sparkle x Howard 17	1951
Frontenac	Erie x (Fairpeake x Dresden)	1959
Fulton	Starbright x Pathfinder	1959
Guardsman	Claribel x Sparkle	1957
Headliner	(Konvoy in ancestry)	1957
Jerseybelle	(Lupton x Aberdeen) x Fairfax) x (Pathfinder x Fairfax)	1955
Kasuga	Starbright x Twentieth Century	1954
Konvoy	Fairmore x Klondike	1942
Lustre	No. 3001 (Howard 17 x Marvel) x No. 3700 (3001 x Fairfax)	1949
Marion Bell	Fairmore x self	1946
Merrimack	NH-179 (Tupper x Fairfax) x Fairpeake	1957
Midway	Dixieland x Temple	1959
Ogallala	(Rockhill x Chey. 3) x Midland x Chey. 2)	1958
Ozark Beauty	Red Rich x Twentieth Century	1955
Parker	Blakemore x Sparta	1953
Parkland	Shasta x Native	1953
Phelps	King x (Tupper x Fairfax)	1954
Plentiful	Redstar x Pathfinder	1953
Puget Beauty	US-Oreg. 1765 x Sparkle	1956
Radiance	(Fairfax in ancestry)	1954
Redcoat	Sparkle x Valentine	1957
Redglow	Fairland x Tennessee Shipper	1956
Redgauntlet	NJ-1051 (Fairfax in ancestry) x Auchincruive Climax	1957
Siletz	(Fairfax in ancestry)	1955
Starkrimson	Midland x Fairpeake	1956
Stelemaster	Fairland x US-Md-683 (BK 46 x Fairfax)	1954
Surecrop	Fairland x Md-US-1972 (683 x Blakemore)	1956
Strafford	(Simcoe x Catskill) x (Tupper x Fairfax)	1954
Talisman	(Fairfax in ancestry)	1955
Utah Shipper	Lindalicious x Catskill	1950
Vermilion	Redstar x Pathfinder	1950

Parents	Pollinations
Howard 17 x E-450	3
E-450 x Howard 17	5
<i>F. virginiana</i> 27 x E-450	2
Howard Supreme x E-450	3
E-445 x Rockhill	17

It seems possible that Fairfax could have resulted from either E-450 x Howard 17 or Howard Supreme (pistillate) x E-450. Certainly its deep green, thick glossy leaves, and dark firm berries suggest such a parentage

as far more likely than that of Howard 17 x Royal Sovereign. Notes made about E-450 were: "Best plant maker, tall foliage, perfect-flowered, primary and secondary flowers set and sometimes tertiary." E-450 was notably firm-fruited. The thick, glossy leaves of E-450 suggested that it had been derived in large part from *F. chiloensis*. Etter's 445 was a similar variety but pistillate.

Fairfax is notable as one of the finest flavored of all strawberries. At its

best, it is surpassed by none. Suwannee may equal it, and is of the highest flavor under more conditions than is Fairfax. However, all stocks of Suwannee have virus, and it is becoming extinct. Fairfax is a good, but not excessive plant maker, fairly resistant to leaf diseases, susceptible to red stele root diseases, and not tolerant to some virus diseases. Its flowers produce the most pollen of any of the well known varieties. The berries are good sized, very uniform in shape, deep red in color, fairly firm, the least acid of the common varieties, and moderately productive. In excessively hot, dry weather the berries may have a bitter flavor, and when over-ripe, they may turn an objectionable purplish-red. Fairfax is severely injured by virus and infected plants are stunted and make few runners. However, since virus-free stocks have become available, good plant beds are easily obtained, and it is being grown more extensively than a few years ago.

Fairfax is subject to fasciation in the South, so that Maryland is about the southern limit of its area of adaptation. In tests of its response to photoperiod and rest period, it has responded best to a long rest period. Because of its very high flavor, it is highly prized for home garden and local market use from southern New England to Maryland and west to Illinois. It may be picked at an earlier stage of ripeness than most other sorts.

At least 23 varieties have been introduced with Fairfax as one parent (See Table I), and at least 38 others with Fairfax in their ancestry (See Table II). Sparkle, Siletz, Jerseybelle, Red Rich, Temple, Fairland, and Redstar are the better known of the descendants of Fairfax, Surecrop and Midway are new varieties of considerable promise derived in part from Fairfax.

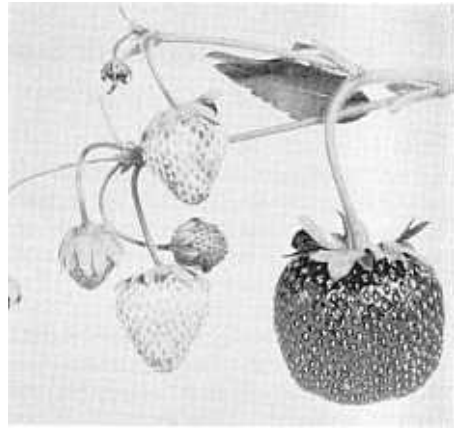


Fig. 1. Fairfax strawberry cluster, showing the light seed on dark skin.

In breeding, Fairfax has been a good parent for excellent dessert quality and freedom from leaf spot. Its excellent quality is the result of a combination of flavors inherited from both parents, and its freedom from leaf spot is derived from Howard 17. Fairfax plants have also been sold under the names Black, Grandview, and Kummerbund.



### Strawberry Varieties for Long Island

Deane D. Lewin, recently made some interesting observations on performance of strawberry varieties for Long Island, N. Y. (New Jersey Hort. News). **Midland**, now a leading variety because of high yield and quality, is susceptible to certain diseases. **Empire** is a leading midseason variety, with good size and color, although a bit soft. **Surecrop**, very attractive, yields and ships well, and may replace Empire. **Sparkle** still important—best flavored, heavy yielder. **Jerseybelle**—most promising.