Two New Early Cherry Varieties, Early Burlat and Moreau

L. E. JOLEY*
Chico, California

Two outstanding early sweet cherry varieties new to this country, Early Burlat and Moreau, have been released to growers by the United States Department of Agriculture. Early Burlat first fruited at the U. S. Plant Introduction Station, Chico, California, in 1948, and Moreau, in 1949. Both varieties were cooperatively tested in California by the Plant Introduction Station at Chico, by the California Agricultural Experiment Station at Davis, and in Oregon by the Agricultural Experiment Station at Corvallis(2).

Early Burlat is the commercial synonym established for a variety introduced from Morocco in 1936 as P.I. 125106 Bigarreau Hatif de Burlat, from France in 1938 as P.I. 127378 Hatif Burlat, and in 1949 as P.I. 162449 Bigarreau Precoce de Burlat.

Moreau is the commercial synonym for a cherry introduced from Germany in 1937 as P.I. 125697 Bigarreau de St. Charmez, and sometimes called Souvenir des Charmes or Bigarreau Sandrin.

Outstanding characteristics of Early Burlat and Moreau are their early maturity, large size, and suitability for shipping. The first commercial shipments were made May 12, 1958, May 7, 1959, and May 12, 1960, four to seven days before Black Tartarian, from Stockton, California to Chicago, with excellent market acceptance. In Oregon, however, Early Burlat ripened May 30, too late to compete on the early market.

Fruit of Early Burlat and Moreau are similar in some respects. The skin of both varieties is red to dark, purplish-red, becoming dark red when shipping-ripe. Flesh is semi-freestone, and medium-firm, being firmer than Black Tartarian and Chapman, but not as firm as Bing. Stems are of medium length, thick and green. Both are eminently suitable for shipping long distances. Moreau usually ripens only two days before Early Burlat at Stockton, California. Both are susceptible to cracking after rain. Neither variety has been tested for canning or brining characteristics.

There are also distinct differences between the two varieties. Moreau fruit have a slight ridge or hump on the ventral suture, which is not present on Early Burlat. Early Burlat has a smoother shape. The fruit of Moreau is also thicker in transverse section than Early Burlat. Flesh of Early Burlat is slightly softer, finer in texture and less acid than Moreau.

Fruit of both varieties are larger than those of other varieties maturing in the same season, and range in row-count from 11 to 12½, with an average of 11½. Fruit from Black Tartarian trees in the same orchard range from 13½ to 16, with an average of about 14½.

Pollination trials in France(1) show that Early Burlat and Moreau are both intercompatible with Napoleon (Royal Ann), and preliminary tests at Chico, indicate that Moreau is intercompatible with Bing.

Doubling of fruit is generally low in both varieties, with Moreau least affected. In 1961, a year of much doubling, this difference between the

*Crop Research Division, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

two was significant, with approximately 40 percent double fruit on Early Burlat, and 8 percent on Moreau at time of flowering. Doubling of fruit on Bing was estimated to be substantially higher.

Both varieties are moderately vigorous. Trees of Early Burlat are rather upright when young, becoming upright-spreading as they mature. Trees of Moreau are more spreading than upright, becoming quite roundish. Leaves of both varieties are medium-large, with rather long leaf serrations that are fine on Moreau, but rather coarse on Early Burlat.

Literature Cited

Remy, P., Remarques sur la pollinisation chez les essences fruitieres a noyau. Journees Fruitieres et Maraicheres d'Avignon. (Conf.) 1955:27–31.

2. Zielinski, Quentin B., W. A. Sistrunk and W. W. Mellenthin. 1959. Sweet Cherries for Oregon. Ore. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 570.

W. Lee Allen

On November 11, 1961 W. Lee Allen, 67, passed away in Salisbury, Maryland after a long illness. Mr. Allen was an authority on strawberry varieties, culture and improvement. He headed a nationally-known strawberry nursery firm founded by his father, W. F. Allen in 1885. In association with his brothers, Mr. Allen had conducted the nursery and extensive orchard plantings since 1914. He served on several state and national horticultural committees and his counsel will be sorely missed. The W. F. Allen Company will continue under the management of Fulton W. Allen with Albert N. Allen and son, Richard.—*A. F. Vierheller, College Park, Md.*

Fruit Breeding Symposium in August at Corvallis, Oregon

A fine symposium on fruit breeding has been planned by the Fruit Breeding Special Committee of the American Society for Horticultural Science for August 25 and 26, 1962, preceding the regular meetings of that Society. It will be held on the campus of Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon.

Among the participants will be William Watkins, of King's College, England, who will introduce the topic "Modern Concepts of Fruit Breeding", on August 25; Jerome P. Miksche, of Brookhaven National Laboratory—"Review of Radiation Research on Horticultural Crops", August 25; Harold W. Fogle, of the Irrigation Experiment Station, Prosser, Wash.—"Current Problems in Cherry Breeding", August 26; R. S. Bringhurst, of University of California, Davis—"Recent Advances in Strawberry Breeding."

Other notables will introduce equally interesting subjects. In addition, a tour of breeding plots and facilities at Corvallis has been arranged for August 26.