

Two New Peach Queens for New Jersey*

CATHERINE H. BAILEY and L. F. HOUGH

New Brunswick, New Jersey

Elberta has long been, and still is, the most widely grown peach variety in the United States as a whole. In New Jersey, though, it only makes up 3.4 percent of all the trees planted (New Jersey Crop Reporting Service, Circular 427, 1963). Every peach breeder has been trying to develop a variety for that season which will be more attractive and of better quality.

Redskin was introduced by the University of Maryland, but seems too small for many New Jersey peach growers. Jefferson, introduced a few years ago by Virginia Polytechnic Institute, ripens just after Elberta.

The New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station has been working on varieties for this same season, too, in an attempt to fill the gap between Blake and Rio Oso Gem.

Jerseyqueen, tested as NJ216, is being named by the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station for the Elberta season. The name Jerseyqueen was chosen because the peach is the queen of fruits, and because this is New Jersey's tercentenary.

The New Jersey peach breeding program has been underway for 50 years, and 74 varieties have already been named. Jerseyqueen is the first yellow, freestone peach that has been developed that we believe really has all the qualities required to replace Elberta.

Jerseyqueen

Crosses were made in 1951 to obtain

large-fruited nectarines (Hough and Bailey, 1962). In 1954, one of the peach segregates in one of the progenies was selected because it was firm-fleshed, large and attractive. This was the selection that is now being named Jerseyqueen. Trees were propagated and put on test in several growers' orchards. The New Jersey Peach Council began to propagate it in 1957.

Jerseyqueen is a cross of [67239 = Candoka \times 25032 selected nectarine] \times [NJN17 = (Garden State \times 25032 selected nectarine) open-pollinated] made in 1951. Fruits are round, large and very firm, with very good, mild flavor. Flesh is yellow with an attractive red at the pit. Skin is bright yellow, and from $\frac{1}{2}$ to all covered with a bright red. This red gets slightly dull in some seasons.

The fruits of Jerseyqueen are as firm as those of J. H. Hale, holding up very well for shipping and handling. All New Jersey growers who have seen fruits of Jerseyqueen have endorsed it very enthusiastically.

The tree is vigorous and productive, the flowers are large and showy, the leaf glands are reniform. It has fertile pollen.

Redqueen

Redqueen, tested as NJ212, ripens with Goldeneast and Loring, two weeks ahead of Jerseyqueen and Elberta. Redqueen was first selected the

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same summer Jerseyqueen was selected, and has been considered very promising each year since. After the winter of 1962-63, buds of most varieties of peaches of New Jersey received some injury; but all the bearing trees of Redqueen came through with a full set of live buds. Redqueen is being introduced as a very hardy, very productive, midseason, freestone variety.

Redqueen is a cross between (Hale x Eclipse) x Blake made in 1951. The fruit is large, well covered with red on bright yellow. The fruit is of good quality, and has as much firmness and shelf life as Elberta. When it is well grown, the fruit resembles Blake, but when a tree is overloaded, the fruit will naturally be small, and sometimes slightly dark. It has showy flowers and reniform leaf glands.

Trees are available from the New Jersey Peach Council, R. D. 3, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

Literature Cited

Hough, L. F. and Catherine H. Bailey. 1962. Ten nectarines for eastern North America. *Fr. Vars. & Hort. Dig.* 17:9-12.
New Jersey Crop Reporting Service. 1963. New Jersey apple and peach tree survey—1963. Circ. 427. 36p.

Reliance, a New, Hardy, Freestone Peach

E. M. MEADER*
Durham, New Hampshire

On July 15, 1964, the New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station introduced a hardy, yellow, freestone peach named Reliance (NH 59E). As a seedling with promising fruit characteristics, it was first tagged for further observation in August, 1959.

A cross had been made at Durham between a selection of a hardy, white-fleshed peach from Minnesota (Minn. PH-04559) and Meredith. NH 59-E came from open-pollinated (probably

selfed) seeds of a selected tree from this cross.

In the winter of 1961, the following minimum temperatures were recorded four rods from the five-year old tree of NH 59-E: Jan. 22 = 21.5°; Jan. 23 = -14°; Jan. 24 = -25°; and Feb. 2 = -15° Fahrenheit. The ground was covered with 16 inches of snow when the lowest temperature prevailed. A total crop loss of peaches was anticipated. Yet about one bushel of fruit was harvested from NH 59-E in late August, 1961, although several standard varieties in a nearby orchard were a complete failure. The rather hardy Marquette bore one peck on a large seven year old tree; Cumberland and Polly each had only one or two fruit on 15 year old trees.

Reliance fruit are nearly round, with a slightly prominent suture, are moderately fuzzy, and have a dull red color splashed over a yellow skin. The bright yellow flesh is juicy, medium firm, slightly stringy, has good flavor, and ripens evenly. The flesh has separated freely from the stone even in cool summers. When thinned properly, 2 3/4 inch fruits can be matured. It ripens with Golden Jubilee and Oriole, approximately August 22 to 25 at Durham, New Hampshire.

The flowers of Reliance are pink and showy. The leaves have stalked globose glands. The set of fruit buds per foot of length has been relatively high.

Since NH 59-E exceeds older varieties in winter hardiness, it has been released under the name Reliance for further testing in northern areas where peach culture is uncertain because of cold winters. Some trees will be available from commercial nurseries in 1965, and limited amounts of budwood can be obtained by propagators from the New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station.—E. M. Meader, *New Hampshire Agr. Exp. Sta., Durham, N. H.*