

Queenston, a New Early Ripening European Plum

G. W. EATON*

Queenston, an early ripening European plum variety has been tested at the Ontario Horticultural Experiment Station, Vineland Station, Ontario. It is apparently a chance seedling, propagated by the late Charles Lowrey of Queenston, Ontario prior to his death in 1931. The original orchard has disappeared and apparently the plum attracted little commercial interest. At that time growers in Niagara were primarily interested in late-ripening plums for export to the United Kingdom.

The Horticultural Experiment Station obtained budwood for variety



Fig. 1. Fruit of the Queenston plum, an early, blue, freestone from Canada.

testing and the first trees were planted in 1939. Another plum acquired from a nurseryman in 1953, and tested under his name (Henry Epp), is now known to be identical to Queenston. Queenston ripens several days before California Blue, about with Czar, and a few days after Earliana. The trees have made strong upright growth and are productive annual bearers on Trafalgar silty clay loam. Trees of California Blue seem dwarfed and spreading in comparison, on the same site. Fruit of Queenston is blue, medium size, freestone. Quality is not outstanding, but is acceptable, especially in view of its season of ripening. The fruit split badly following 2.6" of rain in 1962.

Queenston has not been widely tested and its adaptability is not known. It merits wider evaluation where an early European type plum is of interest for the fresh market. It is not suitable for processing. Budwood is now available in limited quantities.

Blueberry Breeding in Michigan

In a recent conference, fruit breeder, Stanley Johnston told Extension Horticulturists that 36 selections resulting from Michigan crosses of the low and highbush blueberry are now under field test. Many of these show desirable drought resistance, a tendency to mature early, and to ripen during a relatively short period.

*Dr. Eaton was with the Ontario Hort. Exp. Station, Vineland Station, Ont., at the time this article was written. His present address is Division of Plant Science, Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver.