Measuring Size of Gooseberry Fruits

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In most investigations of a practical nature involving fruit crops, measurements of fruit size are of unique importance because the ultimate aim of the fruit grower is to produce high yields of marketable fruit, an aim which usually depends heavily upon a certain minimum fruit size for achievement. The methods utilized for measurement of this important horticultural character range from detailed measurements of a relatively large numbers of individual fruits to the "weight of 100 fruits." The exacting techniques are undoubtedly of greater value but, because of labor requirements, the less exacting may be of greater general utility from a practical standpoint.

In order to determine a reasonably reliable and practical method for measuring size of gooseberries as one of the criteria to be used in the evaluation of several varieties, the following methods were tested on a single 10-pound sample from each of 5 varieties:

1. Weight of 25 fruits.
2. Number per pound.
3. Number per cup.
4. Equatorial diameters of 10 fruits.
5. Polar diameters of 10 fruits.
6. Mean of 4 and 5.

The results in Table 1 are means of three sub-samples for each method, with each sub-sample returned to the 10-pound sample after each determination.

A very brief analysis of Table 1 shows that the varieties fall into the same rank regardless of method, with the exception of number per cup, where the difference is insignificant. Thus, any of these methods based on random sampling from a 10-pound sample appear to be equally reliable. Though no time records were kept, counting the number per cup should be the least time consuming of these methods and thus the most practical.

Table 1. Comparison of methods for the determination of gooseberry fruit size (means of 3 replications).

Variety	Weight of 25 fruits gms	No. per pound	No. per cup	Equatorial dia. cm	Polar dia. cm	Mean dia. cm
Abundance	109.3	94	33	1.96	2.04	2.00
Downing	68.3	172	52	1.71	1.78	1.74
Houghton	39.0	264	90	1.40	1.39	1.39
Oregon Champion	37.0	270	89	1.32	1.32	1.32
Pixwell	30.3	272	94	1.27	1.25	1.26

An arbitrary standard for size selected by Colby† for studies of size inheritance in gooseberries was "(a) very small, below 1 cm in diameter; (b) small, 1 to 1.49 cm; (c) medium, 1.5 to 1.89 cm; and (d) large, 1.9 cm and above." Applying this standard to the five varieties, based on any of the three diameter measurements, results

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†Colby, A. S. 1933. Size inheritance in gooseberry fruits. *Proc. Amer. Soc. Hort. Sci.* 30:105-107.

in a size designation of "large" for Abundance, "medium" for Downing, and "small" for Houghton, Oregon Champion, and Pixwell. These terms correspond exactly with those entered from visual inspection on variety evaluation forms before the methods herein described were tried.

Peach Varieties in New Zealand

On the basis of results with young trees in three research orchards in New Zealand, A. Farmer reports that seven peach varieties appear especially promising. **Dixired**, earliest of the group, is outstanding for its earliness and handling quality; **Redhaven**—a beautiful peach, and productive; **Fairhaven**—has excellent handling quality, and able to set fruit under adverse pollination conditions; **Southland**—firm, attractive, with low chilling requirement; **Veteran**—excellent quality and very productive; **Redskin**—high in quality, attractive, with low chilling requirement; **Paragon II** (New Zealand selection)—a productive, high quality clingstone.

Beach Plum as Rootstock for Japanese Plum

According to A. E. Farmer, horticulturist from Auckland, New Zealand, the beach plum *(Prunus maritima)* is promising both as an ornamental and as a rootstock for Japanese plums in New Zealand.

The Japanese plum, 'Sultan,' on the beach plum rootstock, has produced a healthy, productive tree, about one-quarter to one-third as large as the same variety on the Myrobalan rootstock. Although the Sultana scion seems to overgrow the beach plum rootstock, the bud union appears mechanically strong.

National Peach Council Award to Stanley Johnston

The National Peach Council's first "Appreciation Award" was presented at the Council's recent annual convention in Grand Rapids Michigan to Stanley Johnston, father of the "Haven" family of peaches, and Superintendent of the South Haven Experiment Station in Michigan. Stanley Johnston needs no introduction to fruit growers, horticulturists or A.P.S. members. He is a past president of A.P.S. and a winner of the Wilder Medal for his outstanding contribution in the field of fruit breeding. His Redhaven peach is being planted probably more universally than any other peach variety in the world today.

Fall-bearing Blackberry, a Possibility

George Slate and John Watson, of the N. Y. Agr. Exp. Station, reported in "Farm Research" (June-Aug., 1964) that they are utilizing a wild blackberry, which produces a few berries on the tips of the new canes, in their breeding program. They hope to some day develop a useful autumn fruiting blackberry.

The following grape varieties are being recommended for home planting in the Columbia Basin of Washington: Dark colored sorts—Van Buren, Buffalo, Alden and Perlette; white varieties—Csaba, Interlaken. These recommendations are based on field tests by the Agr. Extension Service.

Four-year old trees of Vista sweet cherry trees, bearing their first fruit, looked very promising in 1965 in a trial planting in N.W. Michigan.