

The McKay Peach — A Hardy Variety for Northern Gardens

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The McKay peach was originally discovered on the farm of a Mr. Balmer in Wisconsin, near the McKay Nursery at Waterloo, Wisconsin. This peach was a chance seedling that grew up on a knoll where it was much exposed to strong winds. It appeared perfectly hardy and fruited annually. Nursery stock was produced from this tree, originally called the Balmer. Later the name was changed to Wisconsin, but it continued to win such favorable acclaim that it is now known by the name of the Nursery that distributes it, McKay.

The McKay peach has proven hardier than Polly or Marquette where it has been grown. Andrews Nursery of Faribault, Minnesota, propagated it for many years as the only peach which had proven hardy in their area. However, it finally ran into a Minnesota winter that it couldn't handle, and the Andrews Nursery lost their trees. However, they still believe, that it is the hardiest peach in their experience.

Here in southern Michigan we seldom have winters which kill the tree. However, the winter of 1962-63 was generally very destructive to peach buds. There was no bud loss at all on McKay, although nine-tenths of the buds were killed on my Champion peach, which has been known throughout the years as a bud-hardy variety.

Apart from its hardiness, the McKay peach is a high quality peach which deserves to be grown in every north-

ern home garden for its dessert qualities alone. It is a very large peach with yellow and dark red skin, its color on the sunny side often deepening into an attractive very dark brown-red. The flesh is deep yellow or full orange, tender, juicy, very sweet, with fine flavor. It ripens in southern Michigan some time during the last two weeks in August, generally about August 22 and for a week thereafter.

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Performance of Summer Apples in New Jersey

L. F. Hough, noted New Jersey fruit breeder, speaks highly of the following summer ripening apples (Eastern Fruit Grower):

July Red—ripens with Melba; requires spot picking; best in northern New Jersey and New Hampshire.

NJ-25 (will be named in 1966)—ripens with Early McIntosh; better shelf-life than any other midsummer apple; tree close to spur type.

NJ-28 (will be named in 1966)—a Delicious type, which ripens just before red sports of Delicious develop nearly full color; like Golden Delicious in flavor, and like Delicious in shelf-life; white undercolor when ripe; never fully red; very beautiful.

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I wish to remind our readers that we welcome letters and articles on subjects related to fruit varieties for possible publication.

—G. M. Kessler, Editor

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