

Any nursery offering Shipper's Late Red trees for sale will naturally insist that he has THE Shipper's Late Red. However, when one stops to consider the actual case history of this variety, it is no wonder that smart growers will hesitate to pay hard earned cash for a so-called variety that may ripen before, with or after Elberta and which may resemble

either Hale or Elberta or neither and one that may be inferior, equal to or of definitely better quality than Elberta.

In the writers experience and observations over many years there are only two strains of Shippers worthy of propagation and distribution. One might be called the Yates strain (Elberta type) and the other the Dixie strain (Hale type).



Cultivated Blueberries for New England

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Most of New England is natural blueberry country. Therefore, it is not surprising that the cultivated blueberry should be at home in southern New England where the climate is suitable for this species. Although it has not been planted so extensively as in some other sections, such as New Jersey and Michigan, the industry is making a slow, steady, and sound growth.

Since New England has its own peculiar conditions, its variety requirements are different from those of other sections. Early ripening varieties are not favored because they compete with berries from New Jersey. As a general rule, the later a variety ripens the more profitable it is.

Also, some varieties are not well adapted to the soil or climate, and do not thrive here as in other sections.

Early Varieties

Although early varieties are not recommended for general planting, occasionally some are needed to supply a roadside stand trade. For this purpose Cabot, with all its faults, is still the best of its season. The bush is medium high, spreading, fairly vigorous and fairly productive. Unfortunately, it is more susceptible to Phomopsis gall and blueberry stunt than other varieties. It is also slightly more susceptible to winter injury than most others. The fruit is not of the best blue color, lacks flavor, cracks badly after rains, and does not hang to the bush well. Earliness is its only advantage.

June has never been satisfactory where it has been tried. The bush is a decidedly weak grower and shy producer.

Weymouth has had only limited trial but the bush has made too weak a growth to excite any interest.

Midseason Varieties

Of the midseason varieties Pioneer and Concord have found most favor. The Pioneer bush is medium high, rather spreading, fairly vigorous and productive on the sandy soils such as are found in the Cape Cod region. It has not been so productive on the slightly heavier upland soils. Pioneer is rather difficult to propagate and requires a detailed type of pruning. The fruit is large, fine flavored, attractive, and keeps well.

In contrast to Pioneer, Concord has performed better on the upland soils where it is tall, upright, vigorous and very productive. The berries are very



Concord, a dependable blueberry on upland soils in Massachusetts.

large, fine flavored, and attractive. The clusters are small to medium size and very compact. The berries of Concord hang tightly to the stem, which, together with the compactness of the cluster, makes the first picking a bit difficult. It is rather susceptible to mummy berry.

Rancocas has never done well in New England. Although the bush is tall, upright and fairly vigorous, it has usually failed to produce well. The fruit is medium sized or a little better at the start of the season but the size does not hold up. The color is not the best and the flavor is mediocre. The fruit clusters are small and compact.

Stanley is another midseason variety which has never been at home in New England. The bush is tall and upright but very open. It is lacking in vigor and



Pioneer, a productive blueberry on sandy soils.

productiveness. The berries are large, handsome and fine flavored. Stanley is rather susceptible to mummy berry.

Late Varieties

Among the late varieties Rubel and Jersey are the favorites. Rubel has been the most popular of all blueberry varieties. There are more bushes of Rubel planted than of any other variety. The bush is tall, upright, vigorous and productive and one of the easiest to propagate. It is also quite winter hardy. On upland soils it withstands adverse conditions better than other varieties. On the sandier soils of the Cape Cod section its reputation is not quite so good in this respect. The berries are medium or a little better in size, good in quality, fairly attractive, and ship well but are rather subject to mummy berry.

Jersey is not planted extensively yet but is gaining in popularity. The bush is tall, upright, vigorous, productive, and easy to propagate and prune. The berries are large, round, very attractive, very fine flavored when fully ripe, and keep well. However, since they color up several days before they are ready to pick, especial care must be taken not to pick them too soon or they will be very sour and not at all to the consumer's taste. Long stems and large, open clusters make picking easy. Also, this variety ripens over a shorter period than most so that three or four pickings will generally clean up the crop.

The Wareham bush is tall, vigorous, somewhat drooping and very productive. The berries are large, dark in color and have a wild flavor that many people like. Wareham berries are too soft to ship well



Jersey, a late ripening blueberry which is rapidly gaining in popularity.

and crack badly after rains. Also, they are somewhat susceptible to mummy berry.

Pemberton has never been thoroughly tried in New England. The bush is tall, upright, vigorous, productive and winter hardy. The berries are very large but the size does not always hold up through the season. The flavor and appearance are excellent. Unfortunately the scar is large and the skin is apt to be torn in picking.

Scammell has several very serious faults. The bush lacks vigor and productiveness and is very susceptible to winter injury. The berries are large, attractive and good in quality but mummy berry is apt to take a heavy toll.

Atlantic, Burlington and Dixi, all late varieties, are so new to New England that little is known about them. The first

two may be said to look promising but the few Dixi plants set have lacked vigor.

There is a group of old varieties, including Adams, Sam, Harding, Grover, Dunfee and Katherine, which have practically disappeared. In some of the older plantings one occasionally finds Adams, Harding and Grover, but these are no longer being set in new plantings.

The variety picture for the present looks thus: Early varieties are not generally recommended but it's Cabot where one is wanted. For midseason, Pioneer or Concord is recommended, depending on soil type. For late varieties, Rubel and Jersey are best. And for trial, set a few Atlantic, Burlington, Pemberton or Dixi.



Rubel, the most widely planted blueberry in Massachusetts.



The Grape Varieties of California

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In California grapes are grown under a wider range of climatic and soil conditions than any other cultivated crop. On one extreme are the plantings of Thompson Seedless in the desert area of southern California, where the harvest for shipment to eastern markets begins in early June. Here the elevation is from 50 to 200 feet below sea level, the average precipitation is less than 4 inches per year, and searing temperatures during the summer have been recorded above 122° F. On the other extreme, small wine-grape plantings are isolated in the Sierra

foothills of northern California up to 2,600 feet, where snow is present during a part of the winter and the summer climate is cool enough so that the same variety, Thompson Seedless, does not ripen until November, and then not always completely.

Important Table Grapes

Largely by trial and error, certain of the many hundreds of varieties of grapes introduced from Europe and North Africa intermittently since about 1835 have found a commercial outlet. Plantings of some of the table varieties are now localized in areas where a good balance