

In recent years, the early and very early cultivars have been increasing. Unfortunately these cultivars tend to become over-ripe too quickly, which greatly limits their commercial possibilities. Breeders have had difficulties in eliminating this undesirable genetic trait, and it even persists in the most recent Italian crosses.

Summer cultivars of average ripening continue to be the favourites of horticulturists and consumers. The cultivars most widely grown in the northern regions are William, Dr. Guyot and Butirra Precoce Morettini; while in the south, Coscia, Spadona estiva and Spadoncina are the most popular.

Among the autumn cultivars, Kaiser and Abate Fetel have increased much in popularity in recent years. And the winter cultivar, Passacrassana, has become especially prominent.

#### Peach

Current peach production in Italy is about 750,000 tons, and consists of even more cultivars than the apple or pear. More than 200 cultivars are being grown, of which the following are most important: J. H. Hale, 12%; Dixired, 6%; Amsden, 5%; Redhaven, 5%; S. Anna Balducci, 5%.

In the past 20 years, the yellow-fleshed cultivars have increased rapidly, and have gone from 31% to 51% of the total production. There is also evidence in the new plantings of a trend toward the earlier cultivars.

Some of early cultivars that have recently aroused special interest are Collins, Early Gold, Harm Gold, and Professor Morettini's new introductions, Favorita 1 and Favorita 2. The cultivars suitable for syrup production, mainly Vesuvio and Terzarole, are of minor importance—6.2% of the national crop.

Nectarines are not popular in Italy. The only cultivar for which production statistics are available is the Neapolitan Angelo Marzocchella.

\*Current president of APS.

On the whole, the Italian peach industry has shown noteworthy development in the past few years, with a large increment of new plantings in regions relatively new to this fruit, particularly in southern Italy.

Italian horticulturists and growers continue to follow with great interest new fruit breeding developments, especially the new selections introduced in the United States.

#### Summerland Research Station Celebrates Fiftieth Anniversary

The magazine, *British Columbia Orchardist*, dedicated its July, 1966 issue to the Summerland Research Station in British Columbia, in honor of the station's 50th anniversary.

We are told that fruit research began at Summerland in 1916. The late A. J. Mann, was appointed as the Station's first Horticulturist in 1921. D. V. Fisher,\* the present Head of the Pomology Section, joined the Staff in 1933.

Fruit breeding has been an important project since 1924, when R. C. Palmer made the first apple crosses. Since then, apricot and sweet cherry were added to the program by Mann, F. W. L. Keane and K. O. Lapins, who now directs the fruit breeding work. The most successful varieties resulting from this work are the Spartan apple, and the Van and Sam sweet cherries.

The objectives of the present breeding program are: high quality, late-keeping, McIntosh-type apples; split resistant, hardy, high quality sweet cherries; and hardy, early, dual purpose apricots.

The radiation work for inducing mutations produced the Lambert Compact sweet cherry, introduced in 1964. Other promising mutants are compact sports of apple, a partially fertile Golden Delicious type apple and Blenheim apricot, which require less thinning than the parent varieties.