

Comments on Some Nectarines for the Home Garden

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Several years ago the author planted six nectarine varieties widely recommended for the home garden, and has now had enough experience to compare results. The six tested were Surecrop, Hunter, Fuzzless Berta, River's Orange, Early Flame and Flaming Gold. Of these, only Surecrop has been outstanding in flavor and successful from a cultural standpoint.

The trees are planted on a foothill site, generally unfavorable for peaches and nectarines, with dry shale soil and severe winter winds, with the result that only early ripening nectarines develop good flavor. With nectarines, both curculio and brown rot are problems.

Since the author considers white peaches to have the same high flavor found in the best nectarines, the standard used for appraising the six nectarines in the test on the order of a scale of ten would check out something as follows: Belle of Georgia—2 to 3; the best white peaches—6 to 7; Surecrop—9.

Following are some notes on the performance and quality of the six varieties:

Surecrop: This variety ripens about with Hale Haven, and almost always has a good crop. It always has juicy sweet fruit, with white flesh, and a faint haunting aftertaste of almond, which is to me characteristic of the finest peach or nectarine flavor. Surecrop gets some brown rot if not sprayed.

Hunter: A yellow-fleshed nectarine, which in four bearing years has never properly ripened its fruit. Just as the fruit appears to be ripe, the skin starts

to shrivel and the flesh turns to leather.

Fuzzless Berta: Yellow-fleshed, a shy bearer ripening too late, with few edible fruits, and generally just a tasteless, fuzzless peach, apparently of predominantly peach blood.

River's Orange: Deep yellow flesh, sweet when ripe, but not with a truly superb or high flavor. The fruits develop some fuzz which is less prominent at ripening time.

Early Flame: An early white-fleshed nectarine; one of Luther Burbank's creations. The flavor was rather good, but the tree was lost to virus after several years.

Flaming Gold: A midseason, white-fleshed nectarine similar to Early Flame, less productive; and also lost to virus.

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