Planting Problems with Pecans

MILLIKAN, D. F., A. D. HIBBARD, and H. W. GUENGERICH*

The planting of pecans within the northern parts of its natural range is restricted by failure of trees during the first dormant period. Nursery trees, when planted at the usual depths, generally become established during the summer and enter the dormant condition in apparently good condition. Shortly following leaf fall, and with the first hard freeze, cracks develop in the scion tissue just above the ground line. The resulting separation of the cambial tissue from the wood is followed by rapid dessication and subsequent death. This problem has become so serious in certain sections that the planting of improved pecans has not been encouraged.

Factors responsible for this disorder were generally attributed to the use of rootstocks that had been grown from seed of southern varieties. An experiment using a northern variety budded on seedlings that had been grown from both northern and southern seed sources and planted in three different locations within Missouri eliminated this possibility. All had been planted at the same depth that they had been dug at the nursery, with only the scion variety exposed. All were cracked when examined in late November, in spite of heavy protection in one of the locations.

In 1965, some casual observations indicated that trees inadvertantly planted at shallow depths showed no cracking and had excellent survival through the critical first year. Consequently, trees budded to both northern and southern understocks were planted in three locations during the spring of 1966. These trees were planted in duplicate at shallow and normal planting depths for both stocks. Those planted shallow, with about six inches of seedling exposed, showed no cracking and, without exception, survived the 1966-67 dormant season. Conversely, all of those planted at normal recommended depths, irrespective of understock, cracked and were dead in late November. Factors responsible for this phenomenon are unknown but appear to be associated with the maturation of the seedling tissue which does not develop during the initial year in the scion variety.

*Dept. of Horticulture, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.

The New Blushing Golden Apple

Stark Bros. Nurseries have announced the introduction of a new apple which they have named Blushing Golden, a seedling selection believed to be a cross of Golden Delicious and Jonathan. The rights to propagate this new variety were purchased from Ralph B. Griffith, of Cobden, Illinois.

The fruit of Blushing Golden resembles Golden Delicious in shape, but has a deeper yellow color, usually with a red blush, a more waxey skin, a smooth finish, and a distinctive, rich flavor of its own. It is harvest mature ten days to two weeks after Golden Delicious, and is reported to keep in cold storage until early summer.

According to Ralph Griffeth, the discoverer, Blushing Golden first fruited at four years of age, has bloomed heavily and borne crops annually, has excellent cooking qualities and makes excellent pies.

R. V. Lott, of University of Illinois, is quoted by Stark Bros. as having given fruit of Blushing Golden a quality rating of very good, on the basis of texture, flavor, high soluble solids and acid content.