Southland Red Raspberry—A New Fruit Crop for the South

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The Crops Research Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station recently announced the naming and release for propagation, of a new cultivar of red raspberry adapted to the upper- and mid-southern regions of the United States.

SOUTHLAND, formerly tested as NC 223, is a complex hybrid involving several raspberry species including **Rubus parvifolius,** the Asiatic trailing raspberry. The cross of NC 237 x Md S 420-5 was made in 1950, and the seedling was selected in 1953 at Raleigh, North Carolina, by Carlos F. Williams. SOUTHLAND subsequently has been tested from eastern Oklahoma and Texas to North Carolina and Maryland, but most intensively in Arkansas and Illinois. Its best performance has been west of the Applachian Mountains, but its southern and western limits of adaptation are not yet determined. It has been vigorous and productive in the Coastal Plains region of southern Arkansas where no other variety has survived. The cultivar has compared favorably with others as far north as Champaign, Illinois, and has been superior in quality and yield at Carbondale, Ill., and Fayetteville, Ark.

The spring crop of Southland ripens early, usually two or three days after Sunrise. When vegetative growth is vigorous, the substantial fall crop (mid-August to frost) does not seriously reduce the following spring crop. The berries are medium in size, light red, and do not darken upon maturity. They are very symmetrical and cone-shaped, very firm, and do not crumble. They have good dessert quality although slightly acid. The frozen pack may have somewhat light color for acceptable appearance.

Plants of Southland are moderately to very vigorous, multiply freely, and thrive when given high soil fertility and good drainage. Under these optimum conditions, plants need to be maintained in a thinned, narrow row or grown in the hill system. The plants are highly resistant to leaf spot, mildew, and anthracnose. They are winter hardy under the fluctuating winter temperatures characteristic of the upper- and mid-South.

Southland was introduced for home garden and commercial use in the upper- and mid-South where red raspberry varieties have been unadapted. Southland's disease resistance, hardiness, vigor, productivity, and tolerance of fluctuating winter temperatures may extend red raspberry-growing much further southward and southwestward than at present. Plants will be available to growers for the first time in the winter of 1969 from commercial nurserymen. Neither the Crops Research Division nor the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station has plants for distribution.

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