

## Rogue Red—a New Winter Pear Variety<sup>1</sup>

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A promising pear variety, 'Rogue Red,' was released March 28, 1969, by Oregon State University. The variety originated from an original cross by F. C. Reimer and a second cross in 1947 by E. Degman and V. Quackenbush, of the Southern Oregon Experiment Station in Medford, Oregon. 'Rogue Red' [Comice x (Seckel x Farmindale seedling #122)], was first harvested and evaluated in 1955. This selection has been tested each subsequent year with respect to harvest date, storage and shelf life, color, and dessert quality.

This high quality, attractive red pear appears promising for the late

winter market. Also, 'Rogue Red' could be used to extend the gift box market after Comice season. Although this new variety cannot be expected to replace any existing variety, it could supplement the varieties now grown in Oregon.

### General Description of 'Rogue Red' Pear

Trees of 'Rogue River' are vigorous, upright in growth, with foliage light green and rolled. Bark is red on year-old shoots, but brown-gray on older wood. Trees are moderately productive and bear regularly. Fruit is large,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, 3 inches wide, obovate-acute-pyriform, with a moderately long tapering neck, uniform in shape; stem is  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long, woody and curved, fleshy at the base. Skin is thick, smooth except for russet markings, dull greenish color, becoming greenish yellow, with a conspicuous reddish blush covering 60-80 per cent of the fruit surface. Flesh is white, fine grained with some stone cells, melting, tender, very juicy under proper storage, very sweet with a distinctive flavor, and very good dessert quality.

### Cultural consideration

As a scion, 'Rogue Red' is compatible with *P. communis* and *Cydonia* (quince) rootstock. The young shoots of the variety are susceptible as Comice to fire blight. Stony pit symptoms have been found on the fruit when grafted on trees infected with stony pit virus.



Fig. 1. The new Rogue Red pear, released by Oregon State University, combines high dessert quality with a unique reddish blush that covers 60 to 80 percent of the fruit.

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The bloom period falls between that of Anjou and Bartlett, overlapping both. However, Bartlett pollen is more effective than Anjou in setting 'Rogue Red' fruit.

### Fruit Quality

'Rogue Red' is ready for harvest when a Magness-Taylor pressure tester (5/16 in. plunger) registers 13-15 lbs. on pared fruit. This harvest period coincides with that of Comice and Bosc. At maturity the juice of the 'Rogue Red' pear contains 15 to 20% soluble solids and 170-240 mg. of titratable acids per 100 ml., which is as high as other winter pear varieties.

The 'Rogue Red' pear ripens (ready to eat) after cold storage in 7 to 10 days at temperatures of 65° to 70°F. However, unlike many winter varieties, cold storage is not required preceding the ripening process. Harvested fruit take about 15 days to ripen at room temperature without previous cold storage. Storage scald, a physiological surface break-down of the fruit, has not been observed on 'Rogue Red' fruit. Almost no bruises or skin abrasions appear on the fruit after normal handling.

### History

Shortly after the variety fruited for the first time, a limited amount of scionwood was released to a few growers in the Rogue River Valley in 1957 for trial. Several Medford growers and shippers who have seen the selection fruiting have been favorably impressed.

A taste panel of consumer and industry personnel preferred 'Rogue Red' over Anjou and rated it equal to the Eldorado, two Oregon varieties competing in late season. The panel favored the skin color and the flavor of the 'Rogue Red' fruit.

Market testing is essential prior to the release of any new variety. Pears for the winter market are exclusively

for fresh use. A new variety entering this market must pack well and ship satisfactorily to the eastern markets. Subsequently, it must handle well through the jobber, auction and retail markets. Much of this fruit is sold in fresh fruit markets or incorporated with other fruits in fancy gift boxes and steamer baskets. It is imperative, therefore, that one know how a new variety may be accepted by these handlers and ultimately the consumer. Marketing the 'Rogue Red' in cooperation with Reter Fruit Company in 1966 and 1967, has shown excellent acceptance in the New York and San Francisco markets.

A limited amount of 'Rogue Red' bud wood is now available at the Southern Oregon Experiment Station.

### History of Cherries in California

In an article first published in Blue Anchor in 1938 on the history of the cherry in California, and reprinted in March, 1969, we are told that none of the three native species of cherry native to California ever amounted to anything, fruit-wise.

There is evidence that the Russians grew cherries near Ft. Ross as early as 1820. However, the California cherry industry probably began in about 1850. It is known W. H. Nash and R. L. Kilburn planted trees of Napoleon and Black Tartarian in Napa County in that year.

When Seth Lewelling came to California from Oregon in the Spring of 1851, he brought and planted trees of Napoleon. But, because the labels were lost, at least so the story goes, and because he remembered that the name had to do with royalty, he renamed the variety "Royal Anne."