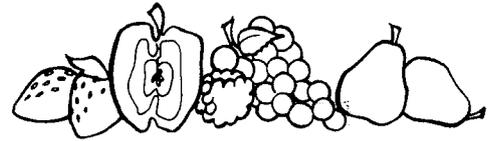


MN 2000
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FRUIT GROWERS' LETTER



November 1980

NEW STRAWBERRY VARIETY TRIALS ESTABLISHED

A new strawberry trial has been established at four experiment stations in Minnesota. These include the West-Central station at Morris, North-Central station at Grand Rapids, the Horticulture Research Station at Excelsior, and the Staples Irrigation Farm.

The purpose of establishing the trials is to find varieties that are better than the standard, Trumpeter. In addition, an improved early maturing variety is desirable.

Among the varieties and numbered selections are: Earliglow, Veestar, Scott, Holiday, Raritan, Honeoye, Redchief, Trumpeter, Redcoat, Canoga, Scarlet, Stoplight, Mickmac, Badgerbelle, Bounty, MN 1868 (soon to be released as a named variety), MDUS 4429, WI 7028, and MN 2344. Fruit yields will then be tabulated for the first time in 1981.

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STRAWBERRY VARIETIES, EVALUATED IN 1980

Several strawberry cultivars were evaluated in 1980 for yield and fruit size at the Horticulture Research Center (Eastern MN), North Central Exp. Sta. (North MN), West Central Exp. Sta. (Western MN), and Staples Irrigation Field (Central Sand Area of MN). The varieties Scarlet, Holiday, Darrow, and Badgerglo have questionable cold hardiness in several areas of Minnesota. The varieties Delite and Bounty have been high yielding and have had good fruit size. Minnesota selection 1868 continues to be high yielding. The plants of this selection (Burgundy X Premier) are vigorous, produce runners freely, and have shown moderate to light susceptibility to leaf spot. The plant's winter hardiness is very high. It ripens in mid-season, the fruit is medium-large size and medium firm and both fresh and frozen quality are good.

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WASHINGTON APPLE SPROUT

In the July 1 issue of The Goodfruit Grower, there was an article by Phil Shelton on the interesting apple sprout in the S.M. Coke orchard that seems to have a number of future possibilities. This seedling sprout from the root of a Starking tree has caught the attention of the press, if not the scientific fraternity. Phil's report was so complete that I did not make further comments in my column, even though we had visited the Coke orchard together on June 6 of this year.

Mr. Coke first noticed the seedling sprout as being delayed in foliation and blossoming. Then he noted that the growth pattern was different, which indicated it was or had some dwarfing effect. This was back in 1966 and since that time Mr. Coke has been testing the seedling in a number of ways.

-over-

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First he tested the tendency of delayed foliation on grafts when used as an interstem, as well as the dwarfing effect on the grafted top. In both cases, Coke claims to have proved that the delayed foliation and dwarfing characteristics of the seedling are transmitted to the grafted top.

One of the most interesting characteristics of the seedling is that it is compatible with both apple and pear varieties. On our visit to the Coke orchard this spring, we saw five different pear varieties growing on this stock in approximately their fourth leaf, we were told.

To the nurseryman, amateur pomologist, and commercial fruit grower, there are many angles of interest in studying the Coke seedling 2366-C67. Like many of the creations of nature in the past, we may learn that this one will make history - and as in the past, an observing grower has saved it for posterity. (From Goodfruit Grower)

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THREE NEW STRAWBERRY VARIETIES INTRODUCED BY CANADA

The bulk of the Canadian strawberry crop has traditionally been in the variety Redcoat, but three new strains were introduced in 1980 by the Institute of Ontario in Vineland, one of which is highly resistant to soil fungus disease.

The new strawberry variety, named Vantage, has a good resistance to Verticillium disease. In addition, it is resistant to the leaf diseases.

Vantage is hardy and can be grown for shipment-to-market purposes as well as for pick-your-own operations. The variety is especially good for frozen packaging. It is late blooming and has a berry that is similar in size and color to Redcoat. Two other varieties - Veeglow and Veegem - are also available this year. They are early ripening berries, with the production of Veeglow a bit higher each year than Veegem.

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INTERSTEMS FOR APPLE TREE DWARFING

The use of stem sections to reduce tree size is currently part of the dwarf tree planting program. These trees are known as "interstem trees." A stem section of a dwarf stock, usually M. 9, is either grafted or budded into the lower part of the trunk between the root system and the cultivar. The root system can vary from seedling to clonal.

Effects of interstem on the cultivar: The stem section will affect the finished tree in many ways, some of which are different from those of the one-graft union tree. The unfavorable effects that can occur when interstem trees are not propagated correctly are: increased suckering, more chance of virus complexes, variation in tree size, lack of adequate tree anchorage, confusion as to depth of planting the two graft unions, variation in precocity and tree vigor due to differences in the length of the interstem, influence of length of tree "shank" in tree stability, variation in stem rooting (shank and/or stem piece) depending on depth of planting, and variation in tree shape or form as influenced by the tree components.

Uniformity in interstem trees can be obtained by using a clone root system (such as MM 111 and MM 106), having consistent lengths of interstems and shanks, and maintaining uniform depth of planting for all trees. (From Compact Fruit Tree)

PEAR CULTIVARS ORIGINATED AS CHANCE SEEDLINGS

All of the major pear cultivars of North America originated as chance seedlings rather than from breeding programs, according to an article appearing in the October 1980 issue of Fruit Varieties Journal, published by the American Pomological Society.

All of them are more than 100 years old and some nearly 200 years old, the article states.

For example, Bartlett (Williams), Anjou, Bosc, Hardy, Comice, and Winter Nelis originated in Europe between approximately 1795 and 1850. Seckel, Kieffer, and Clapp Favorite originated in the United States between approximately, 1800 and 1860.

Besides the obvious constraints of climate, pear orchards are primarily limited to areas where fireblight can be controlled, namely the arid regions of the Pacific Slope and areas near oceans and large lakes that are too cool in spring for the disease to get started.

The dominant pear areas of the west are in California, Washington, Oregon, Chihuahua (Mexico), and British Columbia. Of the U.S. annual production of approximately 750,000 tons, more than 90% is produced in the three coastal states. Primary production in the East occurs near the lakes in Ontario, New York, and Michigan. (From the Great Lakes Fruit Growers News)

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WILL FARMING BE PHASED OUT IN SOME EASTERN SEABOARD STATES?

A National Agricultural Lands Study reveals that New England States, Maryland, West Virginia, and Florida are among states that could lose most or all of their prime farmland to creeping urbanization by the year 2000. The USDA report suggests that if agricultural land loss is allowed to continue unchecked, we may have to import most of our citrus and winter vegetables from Mexico. This will mean "an increase in food prices, and a reduction in the amount of food that is available." (From AE Update 61(6):14, June 1980)

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FUTURE FRUIT MEETINGS

- Minnesota - Wisconsin Apple Growers
Annual Meeting, Olympia Hotel, Oconomowoc, WI, Jan. 8-9, 1981.
- Horticulture Industries Conference
Earle Brown Center, St. Paul Campus, University of Minnesota, March 3-5, 1981.
- Minnesota - Wisconsin Apple School
Midway Motor Lodge, LaCrosse, WI, March 12-13, 1981.
- Minnesota Berry School
Earle Brown Center, St. Paul Campus, University of Minnesota, March 15-16, 1981.
(For additional information, contact Leonard B. Hertz, Horticulture Dept., University of Minnesota, Saint Paul, MN 55108)



PRUNING PLUM TREES

Prune in the dormant season when the leaves are off. Late winter or very early spring, before growth starts, is best for rapid healing of pruning wounds.

Young plum trees may be trained using the modified leader method. The newly planted trees should be pruned in the spring just before growth begins. If unbranched trees are planted, cut off the shoot approximately three feet above the ground. If branched trees are planted, one or two branches, with the lowest approximately two feet from the ground, are selected as the beginning of the main scaffold limbs.

The ideal European-type plum tree such as Mount Royal has a central leader (main trunk) and six to eight well spaced (5 to 10 inches) scaffold or side branches. Remove all narrow crotches and dead and diseased branches, and thin excessive growth. The hybrid plums such as Superior are usually a little more vigorous. They grow in a somewhat spreading fashion and will need some heading back as well as thinning of excessive growth. Avoid heavy pruning of plums.

Very old plum trees are difficult to renovate. If cut back severely, apple trees will readily produce new shoots, but this is not true with old plum trees. Any heading back of large branches should be done at a side branch or shoot.

Pruning scars less than 1½ inches in diameter need no dressing. Larger wounds take longer to heal and may benefit from a dressing. Many substances can be used, but the dressings with an asphalt base (often called "pruning paint") are preferred. Water base paints are also satisfactory.

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Leonard B. Hertz
Extension Horticulturist

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