

Five New Varieties of Fruits¹

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Oriole, a new summer apple

THE staff of the University of Minnesota Fruit Breeding Farm is naming and introducing five varieties of fruits in 1949. Four of these varieties were produced and developed at the Fruit Breeding Farm near Excelsior. The fifth variety is of South Dakota origin but for more than 40 years has been tested and used in breeding work at the Minnesota station.

Oriole (Minn. No. 714)

The parentage of this summer apple is unknown but it came from seed planted in 1914. The tree is hardy and, although sometimes a little slow to come into fruiting, has a tendency to annual cropping. The fruits are very large and roundish; striped and splashed with red over orange-yellow ground. The flesh is tender, fine-grained and juicy. The flavor is sprightly aromatic, sub-acid; quality is excellent for eating fresh or for use in sauce or pies. The variety ripens from four days to a week earlier than Duchess.

Golden Spice (Minn. No. 4)

This pear was grown from seed of unknown origin planted in 1914. The tree is vigorous, very hardy and very productive. The fruit is small but is attractively colored with a clear, rich yellow often accompanied by a red blush. The flesh is light yellow, medium tender, juicy with a pleasant mildly tart spicy flavor justifying the name which was suggested by Mrs. Leon Gates of Rochester, Minnesota. The quality is fair for dessert use but very good for sauce or spiced pickles. Season of ripening is mid-September.

Orient (Minn. No. 63)

The Minnesota Fruit Breeding Farm has grown many thousands of seedlings of the Chinese Bush Cherry (*Prunus tomentosa*) more commonly known as the Nanking Cherry. In 1925 a strain of this fruit was obtained from O. M. Jensen of Albert Lea, Minnesota. This strain was unusual in that it proved to

be self-fertile. Self-pollinated seed was obtained in 1933 and in 1940 this variety was selected and given the trial number, Minn. No. 63. Orient, like its parent, is self-fertile and will set fruit without cross pollination from another variety. In spite of this it is quite possible that more satisfactory crops may be secured, when cool weather prevails at blooming time, if another variety of Nanking Cherry is planted close by to permit cross pollination.

The Orient is very vigorous and may be grown as a bush or small tree. It is productive and will often begin to fruit the second year after planting. The fruits ripen in early July and are borne on very short stems in clusters along the main branches. When the fruit is picked, the stem remains attached to the bush. The fruits are a little more than one-half inch in diameter, and are colored a bright, attractive, medium red. The flesh is meaty, juicy, and of a pleasant sub-acid cherry flavor. The stone is small, long oval and free.

This fruit is good when eaten fresh and excellent when used in jelly. It will be an interesting addition to the home garden both for its fruit and its ornamental qualities.

Redglow (Minn. No. 101)

This plum variety came from a cross of Burbank by Jewell made in 1913. It first fruited in 1919 and since that time has been widely tested. The trees are normally vigorous, productive and hardy; the foliage is good but susceptible to leaf spot which sometimes causes defoliation of weak trees. The fruit also is moderately affected by brown rot but this is easily controlled by the recommended spray applied as the fruit begins to color.

The fruits, ripening in midseason, are large; roundish oblong; attractively colored a rich dark red with heavy bloom. The skin is thick and amply protects

the juicy, tender, orange-colored flesh. The flavor is sweet and the quality good for eating fresh. The variety is excellent for jelly and medium good for jam or preserves. The stone is medium in size and clings.

South Dakota (So. Dak. No. 27)

The origin of this plum variety traces back to the early plum-breeding work of Dr. N. E. Hansen of the South Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station. In 1907 the late Charles Haralson, then an assistant of Dr. Hansen, was employed as Superintendent of the newly established Minnesota Fruit Breeding Station. Mr. Haralson brought from the South Dakota Experiment Station propagating wood of about 42 seedling plums that he thought might be of value in the Minnesota breeding program. These were identified by a series of numbers from 1 to 42 with South Dakota as a prefix, but these numbers have no relation to any South Dakota records. No. 27 is the only one of the series that proved to be of value in breeding or to have other outstanding qualities. Because it has proved to be an excellent pollenizer for other plums it now is being propagated and sold in considerable amounts by Minnesota nurseries. Since the South Dakota Station did not make use of this seedling or maintain the original stock, it was suggested that Minnesota sponsor this introduction. The name South Dakota was selected by mutual agreement.

The tree is of the native plum type and is very hardy, vigorous and productive. The fruits are of medium size, oval and somewhat flattened. The color is an attractive, bright, medium red over a yellow ground. The thin, medium tough skin covers a yellowish flesh that is tender, meaty, juicy, and pleasantly sweet. The stone is medium size and free. The quality is very good for eating fresh or for jelly but only fair to poor for jam.

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2. Since July, 1938, the United States Department of Agriculture, through its Division of Fruit and Vegetable Crops and Diseases, has been co-operating in the Minnesota fruit-breeding program to the extent of \$1,000 per year. Except during the war years this money has been used for the employment of a part-time Field Agent who has assisted in the breeding and testing of new fruits.