

PEACHES,

Plum and Apricot Varieties

For the Arizona Gardener

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Choosing the right variety or varieties of fruit trees is important. The home owner and the commercial orchardist in Arizona are continually looking for new varieties adapted to the irrigated areas of the desert.

At the University of Arizona orchard at the Mesa Experiment Station 150 varieties of deciduous fruits have been or are being tested. This testing program at Mesa has been under way since 1949. It is necessary because many varieties offered to growers are not adapted to Arizona. If planted either commercially or for home use they would yield only disappointment.

The Mesa test orchard consists mainly of peaches, plums and apricots — collectively known as stone fruits. On the basis of productivity, quality and ripening period, certain varieties are found to be superior. Presumably the varieties successful at Mesa would be suitable for similar climatic conditions in southern Arizona.

Early Peaches Best

The superior peach varieties are those maturing before mid-July. Springtime, a white fleshed variety, is the earliest ripening peach in the test. The Robin has shown some promise as an early ripening variety; but its delayed foliation following warm winters is objectionable. Blazing Gold is the earliest yellow-fleshed variety in the planting; but has a tendency to split pits. Starking Delicious is yellow fleshed and Redwing is white fleshed. Recently, new and attractive flowering peaches with edible fruit have been developed for the Southwest, including Daily News, Altair, and Saturn. These bloom very early.

New varieties included in the testing program are Cardinal and Coronet. Redcap and the newest variety Redwin soon will be added. In recent years varieties have been developed which require less chilling. This makes available a wider selection of adaptable varieties. Late varieties are less desirable than early-maturing varieties for producing high quality fruit. Nectarines, which are smooth-skinned peaches, have not yielded satisfactorily in the UA tests.

Several Plums Acceptable

Several varieties of plums have proven desirable. They ripen from late May through July. The Beauty plum produces large attractive fruit with amber-crimson flesh and highly colored red on yellow skin. This variety requires Santa Rosa or Climax as pollinizers.

Hollywood and Mariposa varieties require a pollinizer variety flowering at the same time for better fruit production. Hollywood is especially for home plantings, because of its attractive purple-bronze leaves, pink blossoms, and red-blood fruit. Mariposa yields delicious large purple-red fruit with juicy blood red flesh of honey-like flavor. It keeps well in storage. The trees have a marked tendency to alternate bearing.

Fruit size of the better plum varieties can be increased by proper thinning of young fruits. Santa Rosa is a desirable variety. Climax produces large fruit that tends to drop at time of ripening. The Duarte is dark red fleshed, and Kelsey is yellow fleshed with yellow skin.

Reeves, Royal Top Apricots

The better apricot varieties ripen during May and June. Some apricot varieties are not consistent bearers, in part due to blossom injury by late frost. One of the most promising varieties is Reeves, an early variety. Through proper orchard management its fruit can be developed into suitable larger size. Royal is a consistent bearer.

Plant Fruit Trees Now

Planting time for stone fruit trees is December, January and early February. The young tree from the nursery should be planted with bud-union about four inches above ground level. Irrigate immediately and at weekly intervals for the first spring and summer. Just after planting, prune the tree to 18 inches above the ground to force low branching. Paint the trunk with whitewash or equivalent to prevent sunburn.

After growth begins in the spring, apply manure mulch with light applications of commercial nitrogen fertilizer two or three times during the growing season. For apricots or plums be cautious of locations along lower portions of valleys where late spring frost is apt to damage blossoms.

Ask your local nurseryman or county agricultural agent to help you choose fruit varieties for your locality.

Superior Deciduous Fruit Varieties

(Mesa Experiment Station)

PEACHES

| Variety | Ripening Season |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Springtime | Mid-May |
| Robin | Late May |
| Meadow Lark | Early June |
| Blazing Gold | Early June |
| Starking Delicious | Mid-June |
| Redwing | Late June |
| Early Elberta | Early July |

PLUMS

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| Beauty | Late May |
| Climax | Early June |
| Hollywood | Early June |
| Santa Rosa | Mid-June |
| Mariposa | Mid-July |
| Duarte | Late July |
| Kelsey | Early August |

APRICOTS

| | |
|----------|------------|
| Reeves | Mid-May |
| Blenheim | Early June |
| Royal | Early June |

