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OREGON STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE  
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THE NARCISSA STRAWBERRY

by

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The Narcissa (U.S.D.A. No. 520) strawberry, which is being named for Narcissa, the wife of Marcus Whitman, pioneer missionary in the Pacific Northwest, is introduced jointly by the Oregon State College and the United States Department of Agriculture. It is being introduced primarily because of its high dessert quality, being superior in this respect to the Marshall (Oregon), long the standard of quality in the United States. It is also slightly earlier and more vigorous and disease resistant than Marshall and is very uniform in shape. It is recommended for trial in western Oregon and Washington. Sources of plants of this variety can be obtained by writing to the Oregon State Agricultural College, Corvallis, Oregon.

The Narcissa originated from a cross of Royal Sovereign x Howard 17 (Premier) made in 1923 at the United States Plant Field Station near Glenn Dale, Md. The seedlings of this cross were set in the fall of 1923 and the selection was made in 1925. Because of its exceptional dessert quality it was propagated, and sufficient plants were available to send out for trial in 1927. In 1928 and 1929 it impressed C. E. Schuster at Corvallis, Oregon, as a very vigorous, productive, fairly firm, solid red sort for early market use. In a test of berries frozen for dessert purposes in 1929 it was one of the best for this purpose, but in later tests it has not been as outstanding, although of fair quality. It has been considered promising for local market at Glenn Dale, Md. ever since its first selection.

In 1931, G. G. Brown at the Hood River Branch Experiment Station, Oregon, reported a yield at the rate of 19,488 pounds per acre as compared with 15,088 for Redheart and 3,081 to 5,724 for the best yields of the Clark. In 1932 it was superior to the Marshall (Oregon) in flavor, yield, and vigor and slightly earlier in season. At Corvallis it ripens with Gold Dollar but gives a higher yield. It ripens its fruit more evenly than does the Marshall. Though of good size, the fruit does not average quite so large as does that of the Marshall and is about the same in color. The Narcissa is compared chiefly with Marshall and Clark in this circular.

The plants are far more vigorous than those of the Clerk and somewhat more so than those of the Marshall. The foliage is resistant to leaf spots in the Northwest and the plants much more resistant than those of the Clark and somewhat more resistant than those of the Marshall to the Rhizoctonia root rot. Observations thus far indicate that Narcissa is more resistant to virus diseases than Marshall. It has been one of the most resistant to drought in both Maryland and Oregon. A distinctive characteristic is the frequent appearance of four leaflets per leaf. Runners are produced more freely than by either the Marshall or Clark. The blossoms are perfect, the stamens containing abundant pollen.

At Corvallis, Oregon, the variety is slightly earlier than the Marshall and several days earlier than the Clark; at Hood River it is only slightly earlier than the Clark. It has perhaps been a little more productive than Marshall at Corvallis, but at Hood River, Brown reported it far more productive than Clark or Marshall. The berries are very attractive, having a rich, bright red color, with yellow seeds. The berries are very easy to cap and are very uniform in size and shape, averaging larger than Clark but smaller than Marshall. They become sweet and highly flavored and do not rot readily in rainy weather in Oregon when in contact with the ground.

In the tests of the frozen pack berries the Narcissa has been somewhat variable in its behavior, at times appearing among the best. Usually the early berries had good appearance while the berries picked later in the season were finer in flavor but smaller, with a dark red color. This variety is fairly good canned but not equal to Redheart or Corvallis.

#### Characteristics

Form, round conic to conic; size, medium; pubescence on pedicels, abundant, outspreading; calyx, small, outspreading in mature fruit; apex ripens uniformly; color bright dark red; seeds, greenish yellow to reddish, sunken a little below surface; flesh, solid dark red; texture, tender, medium firm without cavity, juicy; shipping quality, fair; flavor, mild subacid, aromatic; dessert quality very high; season slightly earlier than Marshall and Clark in Oregon, also slightly earlier than Howard 17 in Maryland.