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W. A. Schoenfeld, Director

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THE YOUNG DEWBERRY (YOUNGBERRY)

by

George F. Waldo, Asst. Pomologist, Bureau of Plant
Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture;
W. S. Brown, Head, Department of Horticulture; and
O. T. McWhorter, Extension Horticulturist, Oregon
State College

The Young dewberry or Youngberry has attracted considerable interest in Oregon in the last few years in part because of its rapid rise in popularity in the southeastern states, but more especially in southern California. Interest in this fruit has been due to its size, fine flavor, productivity, and vigorous habit of growth. It has been found to be more disease-resistant than the Lucretia dewberry in the eastern states and appears to be more resistant to disease and low temperatures than the Logan (Loganberry) in the Northwest.

Origin

The Young dewberry was originated by B. M. Young of Louisiana, as a result of a cross of the Phenomenal (similar to Logan) with the Mayes dewberry, made in 1905. Plants of it were given to J. F. Jones, then of Jeanerette, La., but who later moved to Pennsylvania taking plants with him. Meanwhile, all the plants on Mr. Young's place were destroyed. In November, 1921, Mr. Jones sent a few plants to the U. S. Department of Agriculture at Washington, D. C. for testing. When they came into fruiting at the U. S. Horticultural Station at Glendale, Md. in 1923, they immediately attracted attention because of their handsome fruit and superior dessert quality. Plants were propagated and sent out for trial. Mr. Jones also sent plants to southern Alabama where the variety succeeded and soon was grown commercially. Since 1926 it has been widely distributed in various parts of the United States and also in foreign countries.

Characteristics

The popularity of this berry rests primarily upon the superior quality of the fruit, especially when fully ripe. The berry is more pleasant to eat fresh than the Logan, because it is less acid and has a milder flavor. It retains its flavor especially well when frozen and because of this quality it may be of value to the preserving industry, to the bakery trade for pie making, and for the home consumer trade. The color is dark purplish red.

The fruits are among the largest of the bramble berries, chiefly because of the number and large size of the drupelets. Berries will average 60

to 80 to the pound and many exceed 50 to the pound. The seeds, also are among the largest of the berry fruits, but, because they amount to only three to four per cent of the weight of the berry, are not objectionable. In fact, the seeds are so little noticed that this variety has even been called the seedless dewberry. Compared with the Logan, the plant grows vigorously, though not quite so large. The canes are somewhat more numerous but smaller and more brittle. In most respects the plants resemble those of the eastern dewberry.

Training

Care must be taken in training to prevent breaking of the canes. The tips of the canes root readily and it is easy to propagate if tips are covered with earth when the ends of the canes become a whitish green with small curved leaves which usually occurs after the first fall rains, during October. The best methods of training have not been worked out. Various methods are now in use. In eastern states, tying to stakes and training on a two-wire horizontal trellis are the most common methods. Pacific Coast growers have been using the two-wire vertical trellis which is used for the Logan. In most southern sections it is the practice to remove the old canes as soon as the harvest season is past. It is not yet known whether there is any advantage in removing old canes at this time of year under Oregon conditions. It is best to cut the canes back somewhat, rather than allow the whole cane to fruit.

Diseases and Hardiness

At present there are no serious insect or disease pests of the Young dewberry in Oregon. Though leaf spot has been found on the canes, it has usually done no noticeable injury and this variety is known to be more resistant than most other sorts. The Oregon Experiment Station is working on methods of control for sections where the disease may be serious. It is much more hardy than the Logan in the East but may not be so much more hardy in the Northwest. It has been found hardy in sections with temperatures below zero when covered with snow, and will withstand considerable freezing weather without injury when not protected. At present it is not known whether it is adapted to any particular soil type. Plantations have been made on many different soils. Following the requirements of other berry fruits, it is always best to plant on rich, deep, well-drained soils which can be easily worked.

Uses

The commercial canned product from this berry is soft and of excellent to poor color and general appearance, depending on the processing. It makes a first-class, attractive jam and has been highly recommended by the National Preservers Association for this purpose. When frozen fresh, it makes a product of fine appearance and excellent quality. As a fresh market berry it is rapidly attaining great popularity because of its superior dessert quality.