Project No.: 13K-3455-5218

Title: Alternate Crops: Growing Cherries on Dwarfing Rootstocks, Plums and Peaches as Alternate Crops

Reporting Period: 2001

Personnel:

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Accomplishments

A planting of cherry varieties and selections on dwarfing Gisela rootstocks has been established and netting installed to prevent bird damage.. In 2001 several varieties produced significant quantities of fruit for harvest. Data was collected on fruit yields, cracking, maturity, etc. and for those varieties with significant fruit, the crop was harvested, weighed, and sorted into good fruit, cracked, and rot.

Results

Fruit of the late sweet cherry varieties 'Lapins,' and 'Sweetheart,' planted in 1996 on Gisela 5 (148-2) rootstock, was harvested and sorted into good fruit, cracked, and rot. Weights were recorded, and yields per tree calculated (see Appendix, Table 1.) Fruit size in both was somewhat larger than in 2000. This season the yield of 'Sweetheart' was exceptionally low, although it should be noted that compared to 'Lapins,' 'Sweetheart' has consistently produced lower yields and smaller fruit.

'Lapins' appear to have very good potential as a productive late ripening variety with good appearance and flavor. Young grafts of 'Regina' and 'Attika' produced fruit that indicate good market quality but their productivity and other characteristics await further evaluation. 'Surefire,' a newly introduced pie cherry, produced an early, very heavy yield that makes it a potential for tart cherry production. 'Surefire' fruits have dark red juice (unlike 'Montmorency' which has clear juice), and are very attractive when used for jam and pie. Several numbered selections also produced fruit and preliminary evaluations were recorded.

This project also examined the potential of other stone fruit as alternative crops. Several plum and peach varieties look promising for commercial production. Plums in particular cover an extended harvest season from July to September. We anticipate that several new peach introductions have potential for U-pick operations in the future.

Publications

None.

Appendix

The results appear in Table 1 (weights recorded in pounds).

Table 1. Cherry harvest data

Cv	Pick Date	Size gms/frt	Total Fruit [(1)]	Yield lbs/tree	% Crack	% Rot
Lapins	7/24	12.0	214.3	42.9	13	11
Sweetheart	7/31	11.1	26.2	6.6	33	9

[(1)]Trees per plot = 5, except Sweetheart = 4 trees/plot

"Total fruit" included all fruit, "cracked" included all fruit with rain cracking, and "rot" consisted of rotted fruit from whatever cause, i.e. rain cracks, fruit clumped together, etc.