

Light Sweet Cherry Varieties

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January 1999

Gold - No. 1. sweet cherry grown in Michigan; very small fruit; productive; fairly good crack resistance, but not as crack resistant as Napoleon; very hardy tree; good bacterial canker resistance; fruit removes relatively easily from the stem; blooms very late; pollen Group VI (requires cross pollination), so suggest planting using mid to late blooming pollinator variety(s); ripens late. Flavor poor for eating, but quality is good for brining. Less susceptible to brown rot than most sweet cherries. Has shown phytotoxicity in leaves to higher rates of Bravo applied between bloom and shuck split. Large tree. Comment: Recommended for commercial planting.

Emperor Francis - Very nice quality red blush cherry, medium large, good for brining or fresh. Trees survive better than Napoleon. Fairly good crack resistance. Pollen group III (same as Napoleon). Comment: Recommended for commercial planting.

Napoleon - Fruit size between Gold and Emperor Francis; excellent crack resistance; good quality for brining, but lacks size and blush for fresh. Tree survival is a problem. Do not plant on Mahaleb rootstock. Pollen group III. Blooms early, therefore, doesn't nick well for cross-pollinating with Gold. Comment: Best suited only for exceptionally good sweet cherry sites.

Rainier - Beautiful large, firm fruit, but tree lacks winter hardiness (especially when young). Pollen group IX. Comment: Tree decline in Michigan is too severe to recommend planting for processing, but could be considered for planting on outstanding sites if being grown for a high priced fresh market. Exceptional crack resistance for such a firm cherry.

Vega - Beautiful, large fruit with Rainier type quality, but cracks too badly and is a shy bearer. Comment: Only niche would be for fresh market where Rainier trees will not survive.

Sue - Very crack resistant brine variety, but fruit is medium soft and bacterial canker in leaves and wood is taking its toll on trees at the Station. Comment: Not recommended.

NY8182 - Nice fruit quality; very precocious (trees planted in '92 on Mazzard rootstock have been bearing good crops since '95); tree has maintained good vigor with heavy crops; showing excellent crack resistance to date; low fruit removal force from stems; healthy trees. Comment: I know I shouldn't get too excited too quickly, but this cherry seems to have the traits the Michigan brine industry needs. Recommended for trial planting. Not self-fruitful.

NY13688 - Self-fruitful. It is being patented as Newfane but will be marketed as White Gold. At NWMHRS, we have only seen a couple of cherries on very young trees; expect to see first crop in '99. Bob Andersen likes what he has seen with this variety. Because self-fertile varieties will pollinate all other varieties, this may make a good selection for planting solid brine blocks where the primary variety is Emperor Francis or Gold. Will check on bloom date next year. Will learn much more in next two years.

V69061 - Self-fruitful, red blush cherry from Vineland. Trees are not surviving well at NWMHRS on either Mazzard or Mahaleb rootstocks. Fruit is medium large, firm; very good productivity; cracking similar to or slightly worse than Emperor Francis in our trials. Fruit clings tightly to stem. Comment: Does not look promising as a brine variety for Michigan.

NY7679 - Gorgeous fruit, but trees die, even on good sites.

NY518 - Gold type. Comment: I have no experience with fruit. Bob Andersen reports the productivity of Gold with better crack resistance. Worthy of trial. Expect first crop at NWMHRS in '99.

Please send any comments or suggestions regarding this site to:

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Last Revised: 3-5-99