Availability

Inquiries about seed should be directed to Florida Foundation Seed Producers, Inc., P.O. Box 14006, Univ.
Station, Gainesville, FL 32604. Distribution to seedsmen has already been made so seed for commercial growers
should be in good supply for the 1980 season. Requests for limited amounts of breeder seed should be directed to
the authors at ARC Leesburg, P.O. Box 388, Leesburg, FL 32748.


‘Edelweiss’ and ‘Swenson Red’ Grapes1

E. Swenson, P. Pierquet, and C. Stushnoff2

Department of Horticultural Science and Landscape Architecture,
University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108.

Additional index words. fruit breeding, winter hardiness

‘Edelweiss’ and ‘Swenson Red’ grapes were developed from crosses made over 30 years ago with the goal of improving
table grape quality in cultivars suitable for northern locations. Both have been
grown at the University of Minnesota, Horticultural Research Center since 1968.

Origin

The 2 cultivars were derived from crosses made by E. Swenson in Osceola,
Wisconsin. Testing was conducted at this location, with cooperating growers
from the northern U.S. and at the Horticultural Research Center, Excelsior,
Minnesota. MN 79 (‘Beta’ x ‘Witt’), a common parent to both, was developed
by A. N. Wilcox in the early 1940’s at Excelsior. (Table 1).

Description and adaptation

‘Edelweiss’ (Fig. 1) is an early
maturing, white table grape showing considerable cold hardiness in south-
central Minnesota. Clusters are medium in size, very loose to moderately comp­
tact, often double-shouldered. Berries are round, medium sized and green
skinned with a white bloom. Flesh is tender and melting, with a “slipskin”
typical of cultivars derived from Vitis labruscana Bailey. Flavor is fruity-
labrusca, changing to a strong foxiness in late maturity. Fruit matures with or
without winter protection. ‘Edelweiss’ appears to have resistance to foliage diseases,
comparable to ‘Beta’. It has survived a winter low of -36°C and fruited well
without winter protection.

‘Edelweiss’ is suggested for trial as a
very early maturing white table grape
that can be grown in areas colder than
traditional grape growing districts.

‘Swenson Red’ (Fig. 2) is early
maturing with excellent fresh fruit quality but less winter hardiness than
‘Edelweiss’. Clusters are medium in size, conical, slightly loose to very
compact, with a single shoulder. Berries are large, round to slightly ovate,
dark red to lavender with a light bloom. Flavor is rich, fruity but nonlabrusca in
character. Flesh is very firm and meaty. Skin is thin, edible and cling to the
flesh. An outstanding characteristic of ‘Swenson Red’ is its ability to maintain
quality for several months in cold storage. The fruit matures approximately
with ‘Fredonia’, when not overcropped.

‘Swenson Red’ vines are medium to
highly vigorous, and tend to be overly
productive; cluster thinning may im­
prove fruit maturity. Hardiness appears
comparable to ‘Foch’, as grown at
Excelsior. It has been fully hardy in
southern New Hampshire and south­
western Michigan. Foliage of ‘Swenson
Red’ is quite susceptible to downy
mildew.

‘Swenson Red’ is suggested for trial
as a very high quality table grape for
short season areas.

Availability

Cuttings are available in limited
quantity for testing purposes by research stations from the Horticulture Research
centers in north central Minnesota. Requests for limited amounts of breeder seed should be directed to
the authors at ARC Leesburg, P.O. Box 388, Leesburg, FL 32748.

Table 1. Derivation of ‘Edelweiss’ and ‘Swenson Red’ grapes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultivar</th>
<th>Selection number</th>
<th>Parentage</th>
<th>Year of cross</th>
<th>Year selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Edelweiss’</td>
<td>E.S. 40</td>
<td>MN 78 (‘Beta’ x ‘Witt’)</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Swenson Red’</td>
<td>E.S. 439</td>
<td>MN 78 x ‘Seibel 11803’</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Under postal regulations, this paper must therefore be hereby marked advertisement solely to indicate this fact.
2Gardener, Research Fellow and Professor, respectively.