'Salopek' Pecan

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Pecan cultivar Salopek [*Carya illinoensis* (Wangenh. K. Koch)], formerly called W-03, has been released through the Agricultural Experiment Station of New Mexico State Univ. as a protogynous (Type II) cultivar. 'Salopek' kernels comprise an average of 59% of the nut. It matures ≈ 10 days earlier than 'Western Schley'. 'Salopek' is recommended for southern New Mexico's commercial growing area, it could replace 'Wichita' as the main pollinizer for 'Western Schley' in southern New Mexico. 'Salopek' produces alight-golden-colored nut kernel with superior shelling characteristics and, in my opinion, excellent flavor.

Origin

'Salopek' resulted from the late R.M. Nakayama's controlled pollination of 'Wichita' and 'Onliwon' on trees propagated at the Fabian Garcia Science Center, New Mexico State Univ., Las Cruces, in the early 1970s. Later, older trees were grafted with 'Salopek' budwood.

Description

Data obtained from 1981 to 1983 show the mean number of days from pollination to shuck split was 189 for 'Western Schley', 182 for 'Wichita', and 179 for 'Salopek'. 'Western Schley' is the most planted cultivar in the western region, and 'Wichita' is its main pollinizer. 'Salopek' pollination characteristics place it in the protogynous group (Type II), where stigmas are receptive before pollen is released. This period of pollen release is complementary to 'Western'; therefore, 'Salopek' can be used as a pollinizer of 'Western'. 'Salopek' is adapted for commercial and home plantings in southern New Mexico and similar climatic areas. The mean nut weight of 'Salopek' is higher than that of 'Western' or 'Wichita' (Table 1). Similar results were obtained from 1988 to 1990 (data not shown).

'Salopek' nuts are oblong with an oval cross section (averaging 4.26 cm); although the apex shape is acute, the base is obtuse (Sparks, 1992). The outer shell is medium

brown with moderate black markings (Fig. 1). Because the outer shell is thin, nuts are easy to crack, resulting in a high percentage of intact halves. Dorsal grooves are wider than those of 'western' and 'Wichita', and they do not retain packing tissue when cracked. 'Salopek' nuts also are easier to shell than either of the other two cultivars.

There are no commercial yield comparisons among the three cultivars, but I believe that 'Salopek' will outyield 'Wichita' and

'Western'. Currently, 'Salopek' trees have not shown the Zn deficiency and the limb breaking problems usually seen in 'Wichita' trees.

Mean kernel percentage was similar for 'Salopek', 'Wichita', and 'Western Schley' (Table 2), and informal random checks performed on kernels indicated that 'Salopek' had an excellent flavor.

Availability

Scionwood of 'Salopek' is available for limited propagation from the New Mexico Crop Improvement Association, New Mexico State Univ., Box 3CI, Las Cruces, NM 88003; phone 505/646-4125.

Literature Cited

Sparks, D. 1992. Pecan cultivars the orchard's foundation. Pecan Productions Innovations, Watkinsville, Ga.

Table 1. A 3-year comparison of the mean nut weight of three pecan-cultivars grown in Las Cruces, N.M., from 1981 to 1983.

Cultivar	Year						Mean	
	1981		1982		1983			
	Wt	Vol	Wt	Vol	Wt	Vol	g/nut	nuts/kg
	(g/nut)	(nuts/kg)	(g/nut)	(nuts/kg)	(g/nut)	(nut/kg)		
Western	6.78	147	6.84	146	6.96	144	6.86	146
Wichita	7.83	128	8.13	123	7.92	126	7.96	126
Salopek	8.27	121	8.48	118	8.16	122	8.30	120
LSD _{0.05}	0.08		0.20		0.26		0.18

Fig. 1. 'Salopek' nut and kernel.

Table 2. A 3-year comparison of the mean kernel percentage of three mean cultivars grown in Las Cruces, N. M., from 1981 to 1983.

Cultivar	Kernel percentage of nut			
	Year			Mean
	1981	1982	1983	
Salopek	60.8	59.8	58.9	59.8
Wichita	59.9	59.0	60.7	59.8
Western	58.8	59.2	58.3	58.8
LSD _{0.05}	0.89	NS	1.30	NS

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