'Delta' Peach

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'Delta' peach [*Prunus persica* (L.) Batsch] produces attractive yellow-fleshed, early ripening clingstone, nonmelting fruit. It is released by the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station (LAES) (Fig. 1) and fills the need for a cultivar with a moderate chilling requirement (550 h) with firm fruit for early fresh market. This is the first nonmelting clingstone released for fresh-market use from the LAES peach breeding program.

Origin

'Delta' is an open-pollinated seedling of L65-7-49 (Fig. 2). It was selected in 1973 and tested as L9-A47-33. 'Delta' has been evaluated at the Calhoun, Idlewild, and Citrus Research Stations at Calhoun, Clinton, and Port Sulphur, La., respectively. Additional evaluations were made at grower locations in southern Louisiana and at research stations in Texas, Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Description

'Delta' ripens 3 to 4 days before 'June Gold' and 3 days after 'Bicentennial'. The fruit are slightly elliptical with nonprominent sutures (Table 1). The fruit undercolor is yellow and has a red blush over 45% of its surface. Flesh is yellow, firm, nonmelting, and has some red near the suture. The pubescence is moderate compared with that of 'LaFeliciania'. Blossoms are showy with light rose-colored petals and are pollen-sterile. Fruiting wood normally has 20 to 25 fruit buds per 30 cm. The flower buds require ≈550 chilling hours. Leaves

have slight serrations and reniform two to four petiolar glands.

'Delta' trees were grown in orchards alongside trees of cultivars that are susceptible to

Xanthomonas campestris pv. *pruni* (Smith) Dye. In years when the cultivars susceptible to bacterial leaf spot were completely defoliated, 'Delta' exhibited moderate defoliation. The best adaptation of 'Delta' has been where 'LaFeliciania' performs successfully. The major advantage of 'Delta' is its firm fruit due to the nonmelting flesh.

Availability

Inquiries regarding budwood and trees may be directed to commercial peach nurseries. Limited amounts of budwood may be obtained from the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, P.O. Box 539, Calhoun, LA 71225.

Fig. 1. Fruit of 'Delta' peach.

Fig. 2. Pedigree of 'Delta' peach.

Table 1. Fruiting characteristics² of 'Delta' and 'June Gold' peach at the Idlewild Research Station, Clinton, La. (1981-91).

Cultivar	Fruit			Pub-escence	% Red		Attrac-tiveness	Firm-ness	Pit		
	Set	Diam (mm)	Shape		over-color	Flesh			free-ness	Tex-ture	Qual-ity
Delta	8.0	61	7.5	7.5	40	8.5	8.0	8.5	1.0	8.0	8.0
June Gold	6.9	61	6.7	7.1	74	7.1	7.4	7.1	3.6	7.1	7.0
	*	NS	NS	NS	NS	*	*	NS	NS	NS	*

²Rating on a scale of 1-10; 1 = completely unsatisfactory, 10 = a perfect score; a rating of ≥7 is commercially acceptable. This rating system does not apply to pit freeness, where 1 = clingstone, 10 = freestone.

NS, *Nonsignificant or significant at $P \leq 0.05$.

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