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'La Festival' Peach

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'La Festival' peach [*Prunus persica* (L.) Batsch] was released to provide a yellow flesh cultivar with a good quality fruit requiring 400 to 500 hr chilling. 'La Festival' produces a heavy crop of medium to large freestone fruit that ripen about 25 June, or about 20 days before 'Elberta' in southern Louisiana.

Origin

'La Festival', tested as L71-A73-3, is a 1971 seedling selected in 1973 by P.L. Hawthorne from a population of open-pollinated seedlings of 'La Feliciana'. This selection was evaluated at the Idlewild Research Station, Clinton, La., for 9 years.

Description

Trees of 'La Festival' are vigorous and productive. No tendency toward sunscald on branch bark has been noted. Leaves are large, dark green with serrations and have 2 to 4 reniform glands. The cold requirement to break rest is estimated at 400–500 hr at 7.2°C or below.

Blossoms are nonshowy, light pink with rose margins, and self-fertile. Flower buds and fruit set have been heavy each year of evaluation, and heavy thinning is required. Fruit shape is round (Fig. 1) with almost equal halves. Surface color is medium yellow with about 80% bright red over-color. The flesh is yellow with red flecks throughout. The freestone fruit are medium to large in diameter (5.7–7.0 cm) with medium pubescence. Fruit quality, firmness and texture are good.

A uniform score card system for rating peach cultivars and selections is used. An average rating of each characteristic determined for 3 trees of 'La Festival', 'Harvester', and 'La Feliciana' for 9 years is presented in Table 1.

Results of experimental plantings have shown that 'La Festival' is a consistent producer of large, attractive fruit that ripen 10 days after 'Harvester' and 10 days before 'La Feliciana'. This cultivar is recommended for southern Louisiana and comparable areas where a cultivar requiring 400–500 hr below 7.2°C is required.

Leaves and fruit of 'La Festival' has shown good resistance to bacteriosis [*Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *pruni* (Smith) Young et. al.] under growing conditions in southeastern Louisiana.

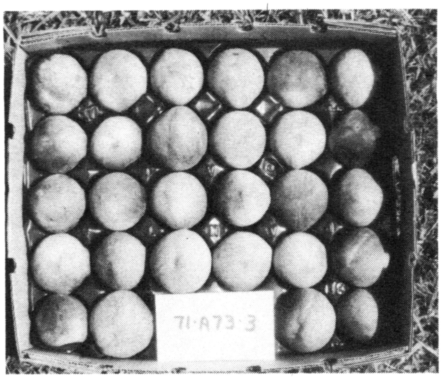

Fig. 1. 'La Festival' peach.

Availability

A limited amount of budwood is available from the Idlewild Research Station, Clinton, LA 70722.

Table 1. Nine-year average fruit ratings for 'La Festival','Harvester', and 'La Feliciana' peaches at the Idlewild Research Station, Clinton, La.

	Fruit rating[z]		
Characteristics	'La Festival'	'Harvester'	'La Feliciana'
Fruit set	8	8	10
Size	5.7–7.0 cm	5.7–7.0 cm	5.7–7.0 cm
Shape	8	7–8	9
Pubescence	7–8	7–8	7–8
Red skin color (% skin with red over-color)	80	80	70–80
Flesh color (freedom from red)	7–8	8	7
Attractiveness	8	8	8–9
Firmness	8	8	8–9
Freestone	8	8	10
Texture	8	8	8
Flavor	8	8	8–9
Avg. maturity date	25 June	15 June	5 July

[z]Rating, except size and skin color, are on a scale of 1 (completely unsatisfactory) to 10 (best). Three trees of each cultivar were evaluated.

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