‘Lewis’ Red Raspberry

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‘Lewis’ (Fig. 1) is a new floricane fruiting red raspberry (Rubus idaeus L.) from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture–Agricultural Research Service (USDA–ARS) breeding program in Corvallis, Ore., released in cooperation with the Horticulture and Food Research Institute of New Zealand, Oregon State Agricultural Experiment Station, the Washington Agricultural Research Center, and the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station. ‘Lewis’ is an outstanding fresh-market cultivar with large, glossy, attractive, and firm fruit. In the Pacific Northwest, yields of ‘Lewis’ were similar to ‘Meeker’, but the fruit are consistently larger and firmer than those of ‘Meeker’. In New Zealand, yields of ‘Lewis’ were very good and the fruit were medium-large, medium-red, very firm, shiny, and separated easily from the torus. ‘Lewis’ was originally released due to its superior performance in New Zealand in research trials and growers’ production fields as a fresh market fruit. Subsequently, small commercial plantings have been established in California climates that are similar to New Zealand.

‘Lewis’ is named for Meriwether Lewis, who along with William Clark, made a remarkable exploratory trip from the eastern United States in the early 1800s, as well as for Henry Lewis who was an active explorer/surveyor in New Zealand and for whom Lewis Pass, among other sites, is named.

Origin

‘Lewis’ was selected in 1978 from a cross between ORUS 1570 and ORUS 1748 and tested as ORUS 576-47 (Fig. 2). The parents in the pedigree represent a diverse mix of cultivars and selections from the USDA–ARS, Washington State Univ., Scottish Crop Research Institute, East Malling Horticulture Research International breeding programs along with native R. idaeus var. strigosus (Michaux) Maxim. material from Mt. Mitchell, N.C. ‘Lewis’ and ‘Coho’ (Finn et al., 2001) are the first cultivars released with the native R. idaeus var. strigosus from North Carolina in their derivation.

The cultivar has been tested in Aurora, Ore. [Oregon State Univ.–North Willamette Research and Extension Center (OSU–NWREC)], Mt. Vernon [Washington State Univ. (WSU)] and Puyallup, Wash. (WSU), and various grower sites throughout New Zealand. The most thorough testing in research plots was done in the United States. From 1987 to 1992, ‘Lewis’ was evaluated in nonreplicated trials at OSU–NWREC including 50-m long rows that were machine harvested and the yield measured. More recent replicated trials at OSU–NWREC (planted in 1996), Mt. Vernon (planted in 1992), and Puyallup (planted in 1992), were arranged in a randomized complete-block design, with three replications of three plants each used for fresh fruit characteristics, harvest season, yield, and fruit weight. Plants were planted 1.2 m apart within plots and 2.4 m between plots. The yields in the Mt. Vernon planting were unusually large for all cultivars. The replicated trial in Aurora, Ore., was not planted on raised beds and the planting in general suffered heavily from Phytophthora root rot (caused by Phytophthora fragariae var. rubi Wilcox and Duncan). During the harvest season, fruit were harvested one to two times each week depending on the environmental conditions. Fruit weight data for a season was obtained from the weight of a randomly selected subsample of 25 fruit at each harvest. Annual average fruit weight was calculated from these measurements after adjusting for the proportion of the

Fig. 1. ‘Lewis’ red raspberry.
total harvest on each date. At each harvest in the unreplicated trials run from 1987–90, the force necessary to separate 10 fruit from the torus and the force necessary to close the opening of 10 fruit were measured with a push-pull spring gauge (Hunter Spring Mechanical Force Gauge Series L; Ametek, Hatfield, Pa.). Fruit from each harvest were frozen and bulked. A thawed subsample from this bulked sample was used to determine soluble solids, titratable acidity (as a percentage of citric acid) and, from 100-g puree samples extracted with an acid ethanol solvent, the anthocyanin content as determined at 535 nm absorbance. At Puyallup, the force required to close the opening of five fruit with a push-pull spring gauge was measured to determine firmness (Moore et al., 1990). These data, collected from 1994–95 in Washington and from 1998–99 in Oregon, were analyzed as a split-plot in time with cultivar as the main plot and year as the subplot. While the planting included many genotypes, only the data from the cultivars (‘Meeker’ and ‘Willamette’ in all trials; ‘Chilcotin’, ‘Chilliwack’, ‘Comox’, ‘Glen Ample’, ‘Tulameen’ in Washington trials, and ‘Qualicum’ in the Mt. Vernon trial) were included in the analysis. The fruit ripening season was characterized by the dates at which 5%, 50%, and 95% of the total fruit yield were reached (Tables 1 and 2). In Oregon, subjective evaluations were made two to three times each year for pricomance and floricanes vigor, fresh fruit characteristics including firmness, color, shape, texture when eaten, and flavor, and ease of fruit separation from the plant in all plots and averaged. In all trials, a minimal fungicide program was followed with only dormant season fungicides applied for cane diseases.

Fruit samples from the Puyallup trial were frozen on trays and sent as bulk frozen samples to the OSU Dept. of Food Science, where they were prepared as pureed products (Yorgey et al., 1996), ‘Tulameen’, ‘Chilcotin’, ‘Meeker’, ‘Willamette’, ‘Comox’, ‘Lewis’, and several advanced breeding selections were evaluated by 30 representatives of the raspberry industry. The samples were presented blindly to the panel and they were asked to evaluate color, appearance, flavor, and overall quality and assign a rank score for each genotype for each trait. A Kruskal-Wallis analysis of rank was used to determine probability of significant differences (Yorgey et al., 1996).

### Table 1. Fruit weight, yield, and harvest season for raspberry genotypes planted in 1996 at OSU–North Willamette Research and Extension Center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultivar</th>
<th>Fruit wt (g)</th>
<th>Yield (kg·ha–1)</th>
<th>Harvest season*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lewis</td>
<td>3.2 a</td>
<td>3.3 a</td>
<td>3.3 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeker</td>
<td>2.6 b</td>
<td>2.9 a</td>
<td>2.8 b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willamette</td>
<td>3.0 a</td>
<td>3.2 a</td>
<td>3.1 a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Date at which the yield reached the given percentage of the total yield.

**Mean separation within columns by Duncan’s multiple range test, P ≤ 0.05.

**Description and performance**

There was a significant cultivar × year interaction for yield and fruit weight (Tables 1 and 2). In Oregon, ‘Lewis’ had greater yields than ‘Meeker’ and ‘Willamette’, the most widely grown cultivars in the Pacific Northwest (Daubeny et al., 1998; Moore and Daubeny, 1993), in its first harvest season (Table 1). ‘Lewis’ is susceptible to phytophthora root rot when not grown on raised beds; thus its second-year (1999) harvest was much smaller than it should have been due to root rot infestation. In Washington, ‘Lewis’ had similar yield to the other commercial cultivars in the trials, however, in Puyallup, its yield over 2 years was greater than ‘Chilliwack’ (Table 2). Several of these commercial cultivars, especially ‘Comox’, have been noted for their high or exceptionally high yields (Daubeny et al., 1987; Daubeny and Anderson, 1991; Daubeny and Kempler, 1995). In unreplicated, machine-harvested trials at OSU–NWREC, ‘Lewis’ yielded slightly less than that of ‘Meeker’ (Table 3).

‘Lewis’ is large fruited. In Oregon trials, ‘Lewis’ fruit were generally heavier than ‘Meeker’, but this was not always significantly so (Tables 1, 3, and 4). In Washington, ‘Lewis’ was usually heavier than ‘Chilliwack’ and depending on the year, similar to most other cultivars (Table 2), including ‘Tulameen’, which is noted for its exceptionally large fruit (Daubeny and Anderson, 1991). New Zealand growers responding to a questionnaire reported that ‘Lewis’ was larger or much larger than ‘Southland’ and ‘Fairview’, and similar to ‘Skeena’.

‘Lewis’ fruit are firm. In subjective evaluations of fresh fruit, ‘Lewis’ was consistently rated as firmer than ‘Meeker’ and ‘Willamette’ (data not shown). While there were no firmness differences among the commercial cultivars and ‘Lewis’ in 1994, in Puyallup, as measured objectively, ‘Lewis’ was firmer than ‘Meeker’, ‘Willamette’, and ‘Chilliwack’ in 1995 (Table 2). In unreplicated trials at OSU–NWREC, ‘Lewis’ had firmer fruit than ‘Meeker’ and ‘Willamette’, was similar to ‘Chilliwack’, and was softer than ‘Coho’ (Table 4). Fruit rot is generally low in ‘Lewis’ and in some years it was lower than ‘Chilcotin’ and ‘Tulameen’ (Table 2).

‘Lewis’ fruit are attractive, more conical than ‘Meeker’ and ‘Willamette’, and have a bright fresh color more similar to ‘Meeker’ than ‘Willamette’. Fresh fruit samples have had soluble solid levels similar to ‘Coho’ and ‘Meeker’, greater than ‘Willamette’, and less than ‘Chilliwack’ (Table 4). The titratable acidity of ‘Lewis’ is intermediate between ‘Meeker’ and ‘Willamette’ (Table 4). ‘Lewis’ has fewer pyrenes per unit of fresh weight than ‘Coho’, ‘Meeker’, ‘Chilliwack’ or ‘Willamette’ (Table 4). Fresh flavor was rated similar to ‘Meeker’ and not as intense as ‘Willamette’ (data not shown).

‘Lewis’ is a late-season ripening berry. In Oregon and Puyallup, while ‘Lewis’ begins to ripen ≈7 d later than ‘Meeker’, its overall season is fairly similar (Tables 1, 2, and 4). Further north in Mt. Vernon, ‘Lewis’ reached 5%, 50%, and 95% ripe fruit later than all cultivars (Table 2). In all three replicated trials, ‘Lewis’ s fruiting season was 27 d long (Tables 1 and 2).

While ‘Lewis’ is predicted to be primarily a fresh market berry, it was evaluated for its processing characteristics by Yorgey et al. (1996) whose results are summarized here. As an IQF (individually quick frozen) berry, ‘Lewis’ was better for color and appearance than ‘Willamette’ and poorer than ‘Tula-meen’. ‘Lewis’ was similar for flavor and overall quality to all other cultivars in the evaluation except for ‘Tulameen’, which was rated better than ‘Lewis’. As a pureed product, ‘Lewis’ was ranked similar to ‘Chilcotin’ and ‘Meeker’ and poorer than ‘Willamette’, ‘Tulameen’, and ‘Comox’ for color. Its appearance was ranked.