



PEACH VARIETIES FOR VIRGINIA

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Because the number of new varieties of peaches has increased greatly in recent years, it is difficult for a peach grower to decide which of them are best suited to his needs. Only those which please the consumer and are adapted to your soil and climatic conditions should be considered.

Market conditions determine the distribution of the ripening season and the number of varieties to be selected. The profitable commercial peach planting usually consists of not more than four or five varieties. Where a good local market exists the number of varieties and the range of the ripening period may be increased.

Time of maturity, quality, appearance, handling characteristics, disease resistance, productivity, and tree vigor are important factors to be considered in the selection of each variety.

STANDARD COMMERCIAL VARIETIES

The following varieties are recommended for general commercial planting in the State of Virginia.

Variety	Weeks earlier than Elberta	Weeks after Elberta
Dixired	5-6	
Redhaven	4-5	
Triogem	3	
Halehaven	2	
Early Elberta (Gleason)	1	
Elberta	0	
		Weeks after Elberta
Rio Oso Gem		1

Dixired—A very early variety, ripening 5 to 6 weeks before Elberta. It is a yellow flesh clingstone of medium size and fair quality. The usually bright red skin may be objectionably dark as the fruit matures. The flesh is medium firm and stands shipping well for an early peach. Tree vigorous and productive. Buds relatively hardy. Must be thinned early.

Redhaven—Early, ripening 4 to 5 weeks before Elberta. Fruits must be thinned early and heavily to develop good size. The skin is an attractive

bright red. Usually freestone when ripe. The yellow flesh is firm, of fine texture, and high quality. An excellent variety for quick freezing because of resistance of the flesh to browning upon exposure to the air. It is a good canning variety also. The tree is vigorous and very productive. Flower buds are moderately hardy. A good shipper.

Triogem—Early, ripening about 3 weeks before Elberta. Must be thinned early. The oval fruits are medium to large, bright yellow skin with an attractive blush, and fully freestone. The flesh is yellow, fine textured, firm, and of high quality. It is a good canning variety and excellent for freezing. The tree is vigorous and productive. Flower buds tender. A good shipper.

Halehaven—A midseason variety, ripening 2 weeks before Elberta. The fruits develop good size and are almost round. Skin usually a good red color but may be dull some seasons. It is a yellow freestone with firm flesh which may be noticeably stringy in some areas, particularly southwest Virginia. It is above average in quality, as a fresh, canned, or frozen product. Rates fair as a shipper. Halehaven may be preferred over Sunhigh because of its productiveness.

Early Elberta (Gleason strain) — A large, yellow freestone ripening about 1 week before Elberta. Resembles Elberta in many respects but has a brighter color and a milder flavor. A good freezing and canning variety. Ships well. Tree vigorous and productive. Flower buds tender. Believed by many to be of higher quality than Sullivan's Early Elberta, and usually colors better.

Elberta—Still the most important commercial variety in Virginia. It is adapted to a wide range of soil and climatic conditions. Fruits are large with a red blush. The flesh is yellow, free, firm, and of fair to good quality. Although flower buds are tender, the tree is vigorous and productive.

Shipping quality of the fruit is rated very high.

Rio Oso Gem—Ripens about 1 week after Elberta. Fruits are large, usually well colored, but frequently irregular in shape. Flesh is yellow, free, firm, and of good quality. Flower buds medium hardy. Tree lacking in vigor but moderately productive. Susceptible to mildew and probably should be given special spray protection. Popular because of fruit size, firmness, attractiveness and time of ripening.

Special-Purpose Varieties

The following varieties are suggested for special purposes, for certain localities, or to extend the ripening season.

Mayflower—A very early variety for local market. Ripens about 8 weeks before Elberta. A clingstone of only fair quality. The fruits are small with red skin and soft, white flesh. Yields are usually low. There is a noticeable tendency toward split pits. Early ripening is the only important merit.

Erly-Red-Fre—A very early variety, ripening 5 to 6 weeks before Elberta. The fruit is large and of good quality for an early peach. Skin is highly colored and attractive. The flesh is white and may be slightly soft. It is a semi-cling under average conditions, but may be free when fully ripe. There is a noticeable tendency toward split pits. The trees are moderately productive and the flower buds hardy. Erly-Red-Fre has been a profitable variety for roadside stands and local markets.

Redrose—For planting where the local market prefers a good white fleshed peach. Ripens 3 weeks before Elberta. Fruits develop good size and attractive color. A freestone with firm flesh and good flavor. Probably the best early midseason white fleshed peach for this area at present. Tree vigorous and productive. Flower buds medium hardy.

Sunhigh—For markets demanding attractive, high quality fruit. Ripens 2 weeks before Elberta. Fruits are large and attractive with a light red skin. Flesh is yellow, free, firm, and of fine texture. A non-browning variety rated excellent for freezing and very good for canning and eating fresh. It is susceptible to bacterial spot. A relatively short chilling requirement and buds tender to low spring temperature make the yield somewhat uncertain. Because of its attractiveness and superior quality, this variety has brought a premium price on the market.

Ambergem—Best commercial canning variety now available. Ripens about 2 weeks before Elberta. A clingstone with round medium size fruits. Flesh yellow, firm, and of fine texture. Tree productive. Flower buds hardy. As this is strictly a commercial canning clingstone variety, a market should be assured before planting in quantities.

Belle of Georgia—For local market. Ripens one week before Elberta. A white fleshed, freestone of high quality. Skin sometimes lacking in color. Tree vigorous and productive. Flower buds hardy.

Hale Harrison Brilliant—Especially adapted to Piedmont Virginia (Albemarle, Amherst, and Nelson counties). Ripens with or slightly before Elberta. A large freestone with very attractive skin color. Firm, yellow flesh of fine texture and better than average quality. A good shipper. Trees vigorous and productive. Flower buds hardy. Superior to Elberta in areas where adapted.

Lizzie—For plantings where local market for late varieties is good. Ripens about 2 weeks after Elberta. Medium to large fruits lacking in red skin color. A firm, yellow fleshed freestone, usually of acceptable quality. Tree vigorous and productive. Flower buds tender.

PROMISING NEW VARIETIES

The following varieties show promise in Virginia, but because of limited trial cannot as yet be recommended for general commercial planting. Until their value is fully determined they should be planted only for trial or in small quantities.

Variety	Weeks earlier than Elberta
Cardinal	6½
Sunrise	6
Sunhaven	5½
Ranger	3½
Washington	3
Richhaven	2
Blake	1
Redskin	0

Cardinal—A clingstone ripening 6½ weeks before Elberta. Fruits round and of medium size. Skin color an attractive red over good yellow ground color. Flesh is yellow, firm, medium textured, and of good flavor. Tree vigorous and productive. Must be thinned early and very heavy to produce fruit of acceptable size.

Sunrise—A yellow fleshed, semi-cling, ripening about 6 weeks before Elberta. Fruits are well

colored, of good size, and good quality. Tree vigorous and productive. Fruit set is heavy and requires early thinning.

Sunhaven—Ripens 5½ weeks before Elberta. Fruits large, nearly round, freestone when ripe. Skin bright red. Flesh yellow, fine textured, firm, and of good flavor. Tree vigorous and productive. Test of this variety under Virginia conditions has been limited up to the present time.

Ranger — Ripens 3½ weeks before Elberta. Fruits medium to large, almost round. Skin highly colored. Flesh yellow, medium firm, medium texture. Good flavor and rates high for canning and freezing. Resistant to bacteriosis. Tree vigorous and productive.

Washington—A recent V. P. I. introduction. Ripens about 3 weeks before Elberta. A high quality freestone with firm yellow flesh and an attractive red skin color. Sizes well. Tree vigorous and productive. Flower buds hardy.

Richhaven — Ripens 2 weeks before Elberta. Fruits large, uniform in size and shape. The skin has a bright red blush with stripes of red and gold over a bright yellow ground color. A freestone with firm, yellow flesh reddening slightly around the pit. A high quality variety for shipping, canning, or freezing. Susceptible to bacteriosis. Tree vigorous and productive. Test of this variety under Virginia conditions has been limited up to the present time.

Blake—Ripens about one week before Elberta. Fruits are medium to large with an attractive red skin. A firm, yellow fleshed freestone of excellent flavor. Much red about the pit extending into the flesh. Tree vigorous and productive. Flower buds moderately tender.

Redskin—Ripens with Elberta. The skin is well colored with a deep red blush. Colors well even in shade. Flesh is yellow and entirely free. Fruits are almost round and moderately firm. Must be thinned heavily. Quality is slightly superior to Elberta. Ships well and is good for freezing and canning. Tree vigorous and produc-

tive. An early bloomer. Flower buds very tender to frost at this stage.

NECTARINES

Due to increased interest in the production of nectarines for local markets, roadside stands, and home use the following varieties are suggested for planting on a small scale.

Variety	Weeks earlier than Elberta
Redbud	4
Lexington	2½
Redchief	2
Cavalier	1½

Redbud—Ripens about 4 weeks before Elberta. Very attractive bright red skin with smooth finish. A good quality, white fleshed freestone above average in firmness. Fruits will average 2 inches in diameter. Tree of moderate vigor and produces heavy sets of buds. Buds moderately hardy to low temperature. A V. P. I. introduction.

Lexington — Another V. P. I. introduction ripening about 2½ weeks before Elberta. The oval fruits average 2 inches in diameter. Skin is a deep yellow overlaid with medium red. Flesh is yellow, free, of medium texture, and good quality. Tree extremely vigorous and produces a heavy set of buds. Moderate resistance to frost.

Redchief — Nearly 2 weeks before Elberta. Fruits are a bright red color and average 2 to 2⅓ inches in diameter. Flesh is white, fully freestone, and moderately firm. Mild in flavor and above average in quality. Tree vigorous and productive. Blossoms somewhat tender to frost. V. P. I. introduction.

Cavalier—Ripens about 1½ weeks before Elberta. Skin color is a rich yellow overlaid with mottled deep red. Fruits ovate, slightly smaller than those of Redchief. Flesh yellow, firm, and entirely free from the pit. The flavor is aromatic and slightly bitter. Quality is better than average. Tree is vigorous and productive and the blossoms hardy. V. P. I. introduction.

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