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[54] **NECTARINE TREE 'JULY PEARL'**

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[58] **Field of Search** **Plt./40.1**

[56] **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

P.P. 7,049 10/1989 Bradford et al. Plt./41
P.P. 9,360 11/1995 Bradford et al. Plt./40.1

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

The present invention relates to a nectarine tree and more particularly to a new and distinct variety broadly characterized by a medium size, vigorous, productive and regular bearing tree. The fruit matures under the ecological conditions described approximately the first week in July, with first picking on Jul. 7, 1996. The fruit is uniformly large in size, subacidic in flavor, globose in shape, clingstone in type, medium firm in texture, and nearly full red in skin color. The variety was a first generation cross using Summer Bright (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 7,049) yellow flesh nectarine as the selected seed parent and June Pearl (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 9,360) white flesh nectarine as the selected pollen parent.

1 Drawing Sheet

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BACKGROUND OF THE VARIETY

In a continuing effort to improve the quality of fresh market and shipping fruits, we, the inventors, typically hybridize a large number of nectarine and peach seedlings each year. The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of nectarine tree, which has been denominated varietally as "July Pearl". The present variety was developed by us in 1992 in a cultivated area of our experimental orchard at Bradford Farms near Le Grand, Calif. in Merced County (San Joaquin Valley). It was a first generation cross using Summer Bright (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 7,049) yellow flesh nectarine as the seed parent and June Pearl (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 9,360) white flesh nectarine as the selected pollen parent. Subsequent to origination of the present variety of nectarine tree, we asexually reproduced it by budding and grafting, and such reproduction of plant and fruit characteristics were true to the original plant in all respects.

The fruit produced by the present variety is most similar to its pollen parent, the June Pearl (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 9,360) by producing white flesh clingstone nectarine that are sub-acidic in flavor, medium firm in texture, full red in skin color and virtually free from red texture bleeding, but is distinguished therefrom and an improvement thereon by producing fruit that ripens about three week later, that is sweeter in flavor, that is larger in size, and that is less prone to protruding at the apex.

The present variety is similar to its seed parent, Summer Bright (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 7,049) by producing medium firm, full red clingstone nectarines, but is very distinguished therefrom by producing fruit that is white flesh instead of yellow flesh, that ripens about about one week earlier, and that is subacidic in flavor instead of acidic.

DRAWING

The accompanying photograph exhibits three whole fruits positioned to display the characteristics of the skin color and form, one fruit divided transversely to the suture plane to reveal the flesh and stone, a stone, and typical leaves.

POMOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Referring now more specifically to the pomological characteristics of this new and distinct variety of nectarine tree,

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the following has been observed under the ecological conditions prevailing near Le Grand, Merced County (San Joaquin Valley), Calif., and was developed at the state of firm eating ripe on Jul. 12, 1996. All major color code designations are by reference to the Inter-Society Color Council, National Bureau of Standards. Common color names are also used occasionally.

TREE

Size: Medium.
Vigor: Vigorous.
Growth: Upright and dense.
Form: Round topped.
Hardiness: Hardy.
Production: Very productive.
Bearing: Regular bearer.
Trunk:

Size.—Medium.
Texture.—Somewhat shaggy.
Bark color.—Dark grayish brown [62. d.gy.Br].
Lenticels.—Numerous. Color: Light brown [57. l.Br].
Average Size: ⅛" to ⅜" [3.2–9.5 mm.].

Branches:

Size.—Medium.
Texture.—Medium.
Color.—1st Year wood topside: Grayish red [19. gy.R].
1st Year wood underside: Strong yellow green [117. s.YG]. Older wood: Strong yellowish brown [74. s.yBr].
Lenticels.—Numerous, small. Color: Strong orange yellow [68. s.OY]. Average Size: ⅓₂" to ⅓₁₆" [0.8–1.6 mm].

Leaves:

Size.—Medium. Average length: 5⅝" [142.9 mm.].
Average width: 1½" [38.1 mm.].
Thickness.—Medium.
Form.—Elliptical.
Apex.—Acuminate.
Base.—Acute.
Surface.—Smooth.
Color.—Dorsal Surface: Moderate olive green [125. m.OIG]. Ventral Surface: Moderate yellow green [120. m.YG].

Margin.—Finely serrate.

Venation.—Pinnately net veined.

Petiole.—Average Length: $\frac{1}{2}$ " [12.7 mm.]. Average Thickness: $\frac{1}{16}$ " [1.6 mm.]. Color: Moderate yellow green [120. m.YG].

Stipules.—Numerous. Average Length: $\frac{3}{8}$ " [9.5 mm.].

Glands.—Numbers: 2 to 4 per leaf. Position: Alternately positioned on petiole and base of blade. Size: Medium. Form: Reniform. Color: Brilliant yellow green [116. brill.YG].

Flower buds:

Hardiness.—Hardy.

Size.—Medium.

Length.—Medium.

Form.—Free.

Surface.—Pubescent.

Flowers:

Blooming period.—Medium as compared with other varieties.

Size.—Large.

Color.—Moderate pink [5. m.Pk].

FRUIT

Maturity when described: Firm eating ripe, Jul. 12, 1996.

Date of first picking: Jul. 7, 1995.

Date of last picking: Jul. 16, 1995.

Size: Uniform, medium.

Average diameter axially.—3" [76.2 mm.].

Average transversely in suture plane.—2 $\frac{7}{8}$ " [73.0 mm.].

Form: Globose, uniform, symmetrical.

Longitudinal section form.—Round.

Transverse section through diameter.—Round.

Suture: A shallow groove extending from the base to slightly beyond the apex with a slight depression beyond the pistil point.

Ventral surface: Rounded, lipped throughout, but stronger on one side and toward the apex.

Lips: Unequal.

Cavity: Flaring, circular, suture showing on one side, stem marks typical.

Depth.— $\frac{1}{2}$ " [12.7 mm.].

Breadth.— $\frac{3}{4}$ " [19.1 mm.].

Base: Rounded to somewhat truncate.

Apex: Rounded.

Pistil point: Negligible in length, oblique and depressed within the suture.

Stem: Medium.

Average length.— $\frac{3}{8}$ " [9.5 mm.].

Average width.— $\frac{3}{16}$ " [4.8 mm.].

Skin:

Thickness.—Medium.

Texture.—Medium.

Tenacity.—Tenacious to flesh.

Tendency to crack.—Slight in the wet season.

Color.—Very dark red [17. v.d.R] over a deep pink [3. deep Pk] background with dark orange yellow [72. d.OY] freckling toward the apex.

Flesh:

Color.—Pale yellow green [121. p.YG] with slight moderate red [15. m.R] streaking.

Surface of pit cavity.—Clingstone.

Amygdalin.—Wanting.

Juice.—Abundant, rich.

Texture.—Medium, crisp.

Fibers.—Abundant, fine.

Ripens.—Evenly.

Flavor.—Subacidic and sweet, with 15 to 17 brix.

Aroma.—Distinct.

Eating quality.—Very good.

STONE

Type: Clingstone.

Form: Oval.

Base: Straight.

Apex: Acute.

Sides: Equal.

Surface: Regularly furrowed toward the apex and slightly pitted very near the base.

Ridges: Jagged toward the base.

Color: Light brown [57. 1.Br].

Pit wall: $\frac{7}{32}$ " [5.6 mm.] thick.

Tendency to split: Moderate.

Kernel:

Form.—Oval.

Taste.—Bitter.

Viable.—Yes.

Average width.— $\frac{7}{16}$ " [11.1 mm.].

Average length.— $1\frac{3}{16}$ " [20.6 mm.].

Skin color.—Dark orange yellow [72. d.OY] with moderate brown [58. m.Br] veins.

Pellicle color.—Deep brown [56. deep Br].

Amygdalin.—Abundant.

USE

Market: Fresh and long distance shipping.

Keeping quality: Very good.

Shipping quality: Very good.

Resistance to insects: No unusual susceptibilities noted.

Resistance to diseases: No unusual susceptibilities noted.

Although the new variety of nectarine tree possesses the described characteristics under the ecological conditions at Le Grand, Calif., in the central part of the San Joaquin Valley, it is to be expected that variations in these characteristics may occur when farmed in areas with different climatic conditions, different soil types, and/or varying cultural practices.

We claim:

1. A new and distinct variety of nectarine tree, substantially as illustrated and described that is most similar to its pollen parent, the June Pearl (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 9,360), by producing white flesh clingstone nectarines that are subacidic in flavor, medium firm in texture, full red in skin color and virtually free from red texture bleeding, but is distinguished therefrom and an improvement thereon by producing fruit that ripens about three weeks later, that is sweeter in flavor, that is larger in size, and that is less prone to protruding at the apex.

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