

Suggested Peach Varieties for Alabama

Selecting varieties is one of the most crucial decisions a grower must make when establishing a peach orchard. Planting varieties not adapted to an area can be financially disastrous. You must consider chilling requirements, disease resistance, and fruiting characteristics when selecting varieties for your area.

Groups of varieties adapted to particular regions of the state have been established through research, Extension variety demonstrations, and years of grower experience. In some cases, one or more varieties are adapted throughout the state, while some selections have a very limited growing area.

Give special attention to chilling requirements when selecting varieties. In southern counties where chilling may prove inadequate some years, growers should not plant varieties with chilling requirements that exceed the average for the area by more than 50 hours.

Winter Chilling Relationships

Winter temperatures vary across the state, with northern counties receiving the highest annual chilling ($\leq 45^{\circ}\text{F}$) accumulations (Figures 1 and 2). Growers in southern counties should refer to Figure 1 which measures chilling until February 15 to determine average chilling in their area. Chilling received up until February 28 is generally considered effective for central and northern counties (Figure 2). Lack of chilling can be a serious problem in southern counties where chilling usually averages 550 to 900 hours. In the southern two-thirds of Baldwin, Mobile, and Houston counties, the average chilling is 450 to 750 hours, depending upon location.

In general, growers north of Birmingham should plant only varieties with a chilling requirement of 850 hours or greater. Very few 750-hour varieties are hardy enough for this area.

In central counties, it is best to plant only varieties with a 750-hour chill requirement or higher. Plant 650-hour varieties on the warmest sites.

Grow varieties with chill requirements of 550 to 900 hours in southern areas. In extreme southern counties (Mobile, Baldwin, and Houston), varieties with 500- to 650-hour chill requirements are ideal. The 400- to 450-chill-hour extremely early varieties

grown in these areas can be quite profitable but are very risky because of crop loss from freezes.

Different Fruit Types/Varieties and Their Characteristics

The number one criterion for a peach or nectarine variety is that it must fruit consistently in the growing area. A variety cannot be commercially profitable without successful cropping.

The second most important characteristic of a variety is the ability to adequately size its fruits. Only varieties that can produce medium to large fruits (for season of maturity) will prove profitable. Firmness of fruits is the third most important criterion, if fruits are harvested and transported any appreciable distance (50 to 100 miles or more). However, some softer-flesh varieties may be used successfully in Pick-Your-Own (PYO) operations or in a local farmer's market where handling and transporting are greatly reduced.

An outstanding variety must also possess a number of other attributes such as attractive skin and flesh color, fruit shape, low percentage of split pits, and acceptable flavor. Flavor becomes especially important when fruits are marketed locally.

You may grow both yellow- and white-fleshed peaches commercially. Since white-fleshed peaches are usually too soft for shipping long distances, they are primarily of value for local roadside marketing or PYO.

Summer Pearl and Belle of Georgia are two of the finest white-fleshed varieties grown. Eden is a release (1978) from New York which is worthy of evaluation.

Many other white-fleshed selections listed in Table 2 are quite old but give the producer an opportunity to have peaches of this type throughout the season. It is suggested that you only plant a small number of these older selections, most of which have softer fruits.

Scarlet Pearl, Southern Pearl, La White, Carolina Belle, and Summer Pearl are among the more recently introduced varieties. Some of these may prove firm enough for short-distance hauling. Scarlet Pearl and Summer Pearl have excellent fruit quality while the latter has a bacterial spot problem.

Newly introduced white-fleshed peach varieties from California (such as White Lady) that possess greater firmness (not listed in Table 2) are now being shipped to eastern markets. However, practically all of these varieties are unproven in Alabama, and testing is needed before recommendations are made. In the past, most California selections have not proven reliable enough in the Southeast for profitable production.

In addition to the standard yellow- and white-fleshed peaches having the normal round or "peach shape," growers who retail market roadside may be interested in the "peento" (saucer or cinnamon roll

shaped) varieties. Saturn (white-fleshed) is the most common variety grown, but a number of promising new breeding lines are being tested in the state at the present time.

Freeze Problems and Cold Hardiness

Lack of consistent annual crop production is the most important problem facing the peach industry in Alabama today. Late freezes cause the greatest part of the problem. Winter freeze damage to fruit buds can also be disastrous, especially among the commonly grown, older "southern" varieties and the more bud-tender varieties from

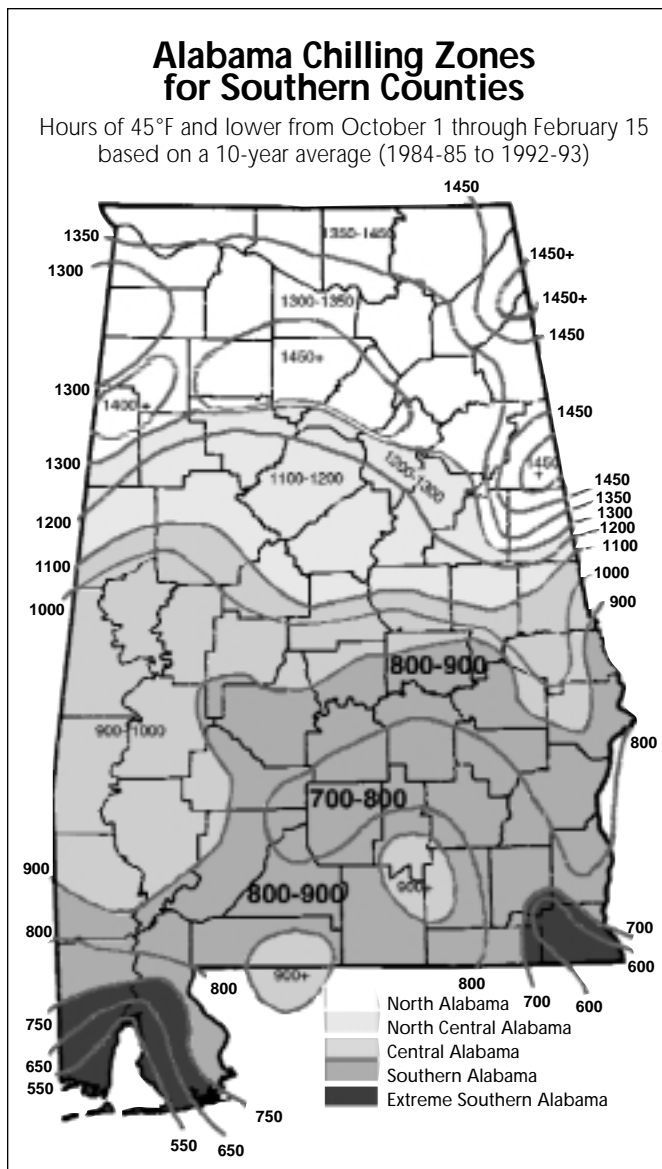


Figure 1. Alabama chilling zones for southern counties

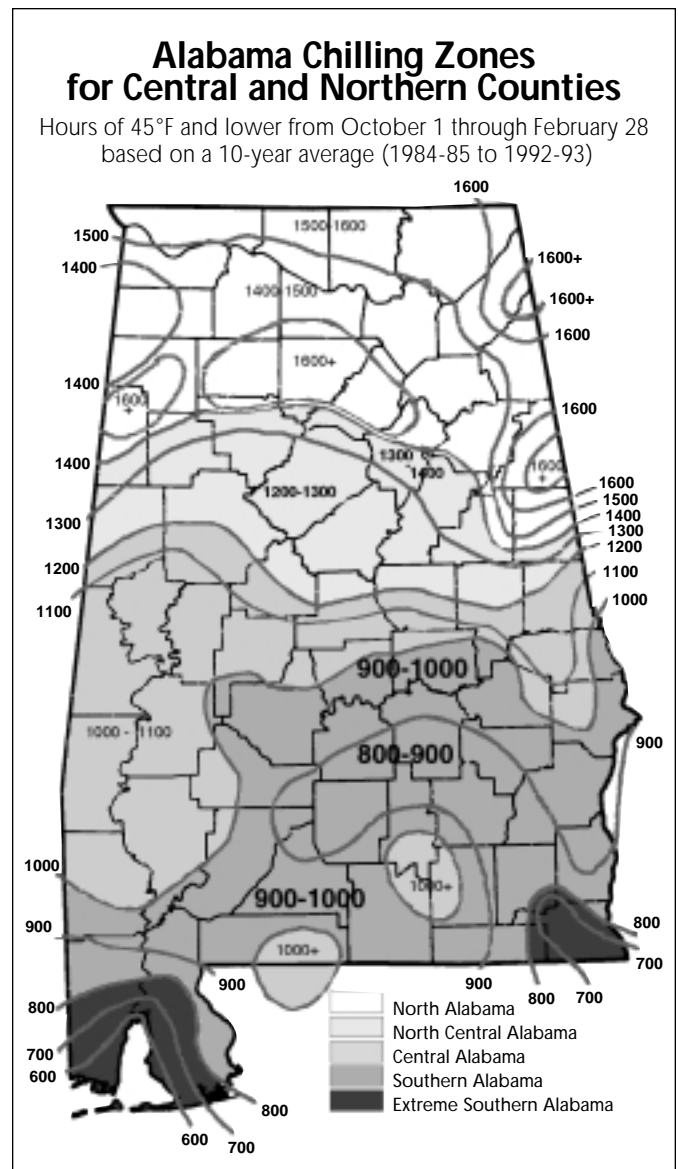


Figure 2. Alabama chilling zones for central and northern counties

California and the USDA breeding program at Byron, Georgia. Extremely low temperatures throughout the winter months cause freeze damage to fruit buds and may also cause tree damage. Winter fruit-bud damage to tender varieties such as Camden, June Gold, Loring, Goldcrest, Goldprince, Juneprince, O'Henry, and Topaz often leaves few fruit buds to produce full crops.

The January 1985 record freeze (temperatures ranged from 2 to -20°F across the state) was so severe that the entire peach crop in northern Alabama was eliminated 2 months before the normal flowering period. However, growers are more likely to remember the annual damage caused by spring freezes during the flowering-early fruit development period of March and April as occurred in 1996 (worst freeze in 40 years). Growers must be prepared to deal with both winter and spring freezes.

As a first step, a peach grower should begin planting varieties with greater hardiness and cropping ability to decrease losses from freezes. After more than 18 years of variety evaluation through research, demonstration plantings, and grower experience across the state, we have identified a number of hardy peach varieties that will crop much more consistently.

Experienced growers know there are no perfect varieties. All have one or more flaws. However, the varieties identified will at least give the grower a greater opportunity for profitability. Ideally, varieties planted in central and northern areas should rate at least "fair to good" or higher for cold hardiness. Also, growers in these areas should be reminded that varieties in the "fair to good" hardiness rating are at the highest risk of crop loss to freezes.

Once hardy varieties become an integral part of the grower's production management program, the use of additional freeze protection practices (including proper pruning) will further improve annual cropping. This should be the goal of all producers. When approved by the EPA, the use of a promising growth regulator to enhance bud hardiness and delay flowering may eventually improve overall annual fruiting of varieties and permit planting of more tender varieties in some situations.

Fruit bud loss during winter freezes is not nearly as severe in southern Alabama as it is in central and northern counties. Because most varieties can withstand the winter temperatures in southern Alabama, hardiness during flowering and early fruiting is usually of greatest importance. A variety that might rate "good" in southern Alabama may only rate "fair" in northern Alabama. For the most consistent performance, varieties used in southern Alabama should rate at least "fair" or higher in cold hardiness.

Varieties for Extreme Southern Alabama

Because of low as well as fluctuating winter chilling in these areas, variety selection is extremely important. It is generally best to plant some moderate chilling varieties (600 to 700 hours) as well as lower chilling (450 to 550 hours) in order to have varieties for successful cropping each year.

For growers in extreme southern Alabama, Flordaking is presently "among the best in the season" for the very early harvest period of late April through early May. However, growers should plan on using freeze protection or risk crop loss 25 to 50 percent of the time. Freeze protection is also required with other similar low-chilling varieties (400 to 425 hours). A good practice is to plant limited acreage in high-risk varieties (especially if annual freeze protection is not provided) until the site is evaluated.

Before Flordaking was released, June Gold had been the main "volume variety" in these southernmost counties. June Gold is still considered "among the best in the season" for this area. This variety has many disadvantages including a shattered pit problem. Some of the promising early varieties such as Empress, Regal, and Goldprince may at least partially replace June Gold in southern Alabama but not in other areas.

Texstar looks good, but fruit size is not as large as June Gold. However, if it is thinned well and girdled, it is one of the best commercial varieties for extreme southern Alabama. Its 500-hour chill requirement is well suited for this area. Texstar is subject to freeze problems like other very low-chilling varieties.

Flordaglobe was released as a 450-hour variety but appears to require at least 500 to 550 hours of chilling. Although it produces smaller fruit than Flordaking, it ripens a week or more ahead of this variety. Flordaglobe may prove worthwhile as the earliest variety available. Early, heavy thinning and possible girdling are required to produce 2-inch and greater fruits consistently.

Regal, Delta, and Gala (Louisiana releases), along with Juneprince (USDA), and Texroyal (Texas A&M) are showing promise as commercial varieties in these southernmost areas.

Peach varieties listed in Tables 1 to 4 are self-fruitful and may be planted in solid blocks without the use of additional pollinators.

- Table 1 provides information on yellow-fleshed varieties suggested for commercial use as well as trial plantings in all but extreme southern areas.

- Table 2 provides a "best of season" variety list.

- Table 3 provides characteristics of yellow and white-fleshed varieties suggested for commercial and trial plantings for extreme southern Alabama.

- Table 4 lists characteristics of white-fleshed varieties for PYO or local marketing.

Table 1. Characteristics of Yellow-Fleshed Peach Varieties Available for Commercial Use and Trial Plantings

Variety	Ripening Season (Days Before Elberta) ¹	Chill Hours ²	Stone Free-ness ³	Fruit Size ⁴	Cold ⁵ Hardi-ness	Marketing ⁶		Areas of Best Adaptation ⁷
						Ship-ping	Local Sales	
Goldcrest ^t	60	650	Semi-Free	S	F	*	*	S
Camden	58	750	Cling	S to M	F	*	*	S,C
PF1	56	800	Cling	S to M	?	*	*	S,C,N
Regal ^t	56	700	Semi-Free	S to M	F to G?	*?	*	S,C
Springold	55	850	Cling	S to M	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
Empress ^t	52	650	Cling	S to M	F	*	*	S,C
Suzi-Q	52	650	Semi-Cling	S to M	F to G	*	*	S
Bicentennial	51	700	Cling	S to M	F to G	-	*	S,C
Correll	51	850	Cling	S to M	G	*	*	S,C,N
Springcrest	51	650	Cling	S to M	F to G	*	*	S,C
Derby ^t	48	850	Semi-Cling	M	G?	*	*	S,C,N
Goldprince ^t	47	650	Cling	M	F	*	*	S
June Gold	47	650	Cling	L	F	*	*	S,C
Tiz-A-Jewel ^t	46	850	Cling	M	F to G	*	*	SC,N
Harrow Diamond	45	850	Semi-Cling	S to M	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
Texstar	45	500	Semi-Free	M	G	*	*	S
Surecrop	44	1,000	Semi-Free	S to M	G	*	*	C,N
Earliglo ^t	44	900	Semi-Free	M	G	*	*	C,N
Golden Monarch	42	850	Semi-Free	S to M	G to E	-	*	S,C,N
Magnolia ^t	42	650	Cling	M	F	*	*	S,C
Sentry ^t	42	850	Semi-Free	M to L	P to F	*	*	S,C,N
Shepard's Beauty ^t	42	650	Cling	M	F	*	*	S,C
Summerprince	42	850	Semi-Free	M to L	F	*	*	S,C,N
Sweethaven	42	850	Semi-Free	M	E	-	*	S,C,N
Dixired	41	950	Semi-Free	M to L	F to G	*	*	C,N
Valley Fire ^t	41	850	Semi-Free	M	F to G?	*?	*	S,C,N
Delta ^t	40	550	Cling	M	?	*?	*?	S
Maygold	39	650	Cling	M	F to G	*	*	S,C
Jerseydawn	38	850	Semi-Free	M to L	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
Garnet Beauty	38	850	Semi-Free	M	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Juneprince ^t	35	650	Semi-Free	M	F	*	*	S
Brighton ⁶	34	750	Semi-Free	M	F to G	*	*	S,C
Texroyal ^t	34	600	Free	M	F to G?	*?	*	S
Early Redhaven	34	950	Semi-Free	M to L	F to G	*	*	C,N
Gala ^t	33	700	Semi-Free	M	F to G?	*?	*	S,C
Flavorcrest ^t	33	750	Semi-Free	M	F?	*?	*	S,C
Regina ^t	32	850	Semi-Free	M	F to G?	*	*	S,C,N

Table 1. Characteristics of Yellow-Fleshed Peach Varieties Available for Commercial Use and Trial Plantings (Continued)

Variety	Ripening Season (Days Before Elberta) ¹	Chill Hours ²	Stone Free-ness ³	Fruit Size ⁴	Cold ⁵ Hard-ness	Marketing ⁶		Areas of Best Adaptation ⁷
						Ship-ping	Local Sales	
Sentinel	32	850	Semi-Free	M	G	*	*	S,C,N
Pekin	31	950	Semi-Free	S to M	G to E	*	-	C,N
Harson	30	850	Semi-Free	M to L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Jerseyland	30	850	Semi-Free	M to L	E	*	*	S,C,N
Redhaven	28	950	Semi-Free	M	G	*	*	C,N
Sugar Sweet ^t	28	850	Semi-Free	S to M	F to G	*?	*	S,C,N
Harbrite	26	850	Free	M to L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Norman ^t	26	850	Free	M to L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Harken ^t	25	850	Free	M to L	G	*	*	S,C,N
La Gold	25	700	Free	M	F	-	*	S,C
Newhaven ^t	25	850	Free	L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Clayton	24	850	Free	M	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Troy ^t	24	850	Free	M to L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
PF12A	23	800	Semi-Free	M to L	?	*	*	S,C,N
Delp Early Hale	22	850	Free	M to L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Harvester	22	750	Free	M to L	G	*	*	S,C
Jim Dandee ^t	22	850	Free	M to L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Topaz	22	850	Free	L	F	*	*	S
Sunland	21	750	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C
Velvet	21	750	Free	M to L	G	*	*	S,C
Bellaire	20	900	Free	M to L	G to E	*	*	C,N
Cary Mac	20	750	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C
Cullinan ^t	20	750	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
CVN-z ^t	20	750	Free	M to L?	F to G?	*?	*	S,C
Envoy	20	950	Free	M to L	F to G	*	*	C,N
La Felician ^a ^t	20	550	Free	M to L	F	-	*	S
Reliance	20	950	Free	S to M	E to O	-	*	C,N
Veeglo	19	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
Jayhaven	18	900	Free	M to L	E	*	*	C,N
Vivid	18	850	Free	M to L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Carogem	17	900	Free	L	G	*	*	C,N
Fireprince ^t	17	850	Free	M to L	F to G?	*	*	S,C,N
Hawthorne ^t	17	600	Free	M to L	F	*?	*	S
Majestic	17	800	Free	L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Harrow Beauty	15	850	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
PF15A	15	800	Free	L	?	*	*	S,C,N
Zachary Taylor ^t	15	850	Free	L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Glohaven	14	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	C,N
Stagg	14	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C,N

Table 1. Characteristics of Yellow-Fleshed Peach Varieties Available for Commercial Use and Trial Plantings (Continued)

Variety	Ripening Season (Days Before Elberta) ¹	Chill Hours ²	Stone Free-ness ³	Fruit Size ⁴	Cold ⁵ Hard-ness	Marketing ⁶		Areas of Best Adaptation ⁷
						Ship-ping	Local Sales	
Ellerbe ^t	13	850	Free	M to L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Winblo	13	800	Free	L	G	*	*	C,N
Bounty ^t	12	800	Free	M to L	F to G	*	*	S,C
La Premier	12	1,050	Free	M to L	G	*	*	C,N
Loring	12	750	Free	Very L	F to G	*	*	S,C
PF17	12	800	Free	L	?	*	*	S,C,N
Canadian Harmony	10	850	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Summergold	10	750	Free	M to L	F to G	*	*	S,C
Suncrest ^t	10	650	Free	M to L	F to G?	*	*	S
Contender	9	1,050	Free	M to L	E	*	*	C,N
Madison	7	850	Free	M to L	G to E	-	*	S,C,N
Red Kist	7	850	Free	M to L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Yakima Hale	7	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
Denman	6	850	Free	L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Alred Elberta	4	750	Free	M to L	F to G	*	*	S,C
Earlirio	4	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
Biscoe	3	900	Free	L	E	*	*	C,N
Cresthaven	3	850	Free	M to L	E	*	*	S,C,N
Dixiland	3	750	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C
PF23	3	700	Free	L	?	*	*	S,C,N
Lizzie Lou ^t	3	750	Free	M to L?	F to G?	*?	*	S,C
Ruston Red	3	850	Free	L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Sunprince	3	800	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C
Indian Red	2	850	Cling	M to L	E	-	*	S,C,N
Redskin	2	750	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C
Harcrest	0	850	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
	(Days After Elberta)¹							
Glory ^t	2	850	Free	M to L?	F to G?	*?	*	S,C,N
Clyde Wilson ^t	2	850	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Havis ^t	3	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
Jefferson	3	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
Jerseyglo ^t	4	850	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Emery	5	900	Free	L	G to E	*	*	C,N
Autumnglo	6	850	Free	L	E	*	*	S,C,N
Bobeva	6	1,050	Free	L	G to E	*	*	C,N
Marglow	6	850	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Marland	6	850	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Monroe	6	850	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Tyler	6	950	Free	L	G to E	*	*	C,N

Table 1. Characteristics of Yellow-Fleshed Peach Varieties Available for Commercial Use and Trial Plantings (Continued)

Variety	Ripening Season (Days After Elberta) ¹	Chill Hours ²	Stone Free-ness ³	Fruit Size ⁴	Cold ⁵ Hardi-ness	Marketing ⁶		Areas of Best Adaptation ⁷
						Ship-ping	Local Sales	
CVN-4 ^t	6	850	Free	M to L?	F to G?	*?	*	S,C,N
Encore	7	850	Free	L	E	*	*	S,C,N
Gemmer's Late Elberta	7	750	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Finale	8	750	Free	L	E	*	*	S,C
Sweet Sue	8	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C
O'Henry	10	750	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C
Flameprince ^t	10	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C
Marqueen	11	750	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
CVN-7 ^t	12	850	Free	L?	F to G?	*?	*	S,C,N
Rubidoux	13	800	Free	L	G to E	*	*	S,C,N
Legend ^t	14	850	Free	L?	G	*?	*	S,C,N
La Jewel ^t	15	850	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
Ouachita Gold ^t	17	800	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C,N
NJ193	20	750	Free	M to L	E	-	*	S,C,N
Cal Red ^t	22	750	Free	L	F to G	*	*	S,C
CVN-3t (Big Red)	22	750	Free	L?	F to G?	*?	*	S,C
Marsun	24	850	Free	L	G	*	*	S,C,N
Fairtime	30	750	Free	L	F	*	*	S,C
Parade	30	850	Free	L	F	*	*	S,C

¹Elberta usually ripens in July in south Alabama, mid-July in central Alabama, and late July in north Alabama.

²Refers to hours at or below 45°F needed to satisfy rest (cold requirement) of variety.

³Refers to freeness of stone—Cling, Semi-Cling, Semi-Free, Freestone.

⁴S (small), M (medium), L (large).

⁵Overall hardiness rating (winter bud hardiness plus hardiness during flowering) is as follows: P (poor), F (fair), G (good), E (excellent), and O (outstanding).

⁶Marketing method: *indicates fruits are best adapted to this type of marketing.

⁷Area in state where varieties are best adapted: North (N), central (C), south (S). Varieties with chilling requirements above 700 should not be planted in southern two-thirds of Mobile, Baldwin, and Houston counties.

^tIndicates varieties suggested for trial plantings.

Purchasing Trees and Rootstock Selection

Growers must make decisions about their annual tree needs in the spring (no later than May) to be assured of obtaining budded trees for fall planting. Eastern nurseries that supply most of the peach and nectarine trees planted in the Southeast complete their budding operation in May and June.

Lovell and Halford continue to be the primary rootstocks for peaches and nectarines grown in Alabama. Nemaguard continues to be an acceptable rootstock for southern counties when virgin sites are

planted and in clay soils where nematodes are not a problem. Don't use it on "old peach" sites. It was initially thought that Guardian, the latest rootstock released for peaches, might be the answer to the grower's problems. However, recent tree loss under certain orchard conditions may necessitate a change in the use of this rootstock.

Among the many varieties available, some have already proven superior for their season of ripening, others are showing promise, while still others are awaiting evaluation. The information in Table 2 summarizes the current performance of peach varieties in Alabama.

Table 2. "Best of Season" Variety List

<i>Season of Ripening—Days before Elberta (DBE) or days after Elberta (DAE) with common variety associated with season.</i>	<i>Variety considered "Best in Their Season"</i>
55–60 DBE (Camden - Springold season)	None are really outstanding although Regal is promising (need higher chiller for this season).
49–54 DBE (Springcrest - Bicentennial season)	Again, no single superior variety; Correll best in cropping but fruit quality lacking; Empress has quality fruit but too tender for cropping consistency; Bicentennial fruits are too soft; Springcrest is acceptable; Sunbrite (not listed) produces best fruit of all but too susceptible to bacterial spot.
43–48 DBE (June Gold - Surecrop season)	June Gold has dominated this season for years except in northern areas where Surecrop is better adapted; Goldprince may prove best in southern areas but too tender otherwise; June Gold is not ideal but still okay; Surecrop best in northern and central areas; Derby may have fruit quality problems and needs more evaluation.
37–42 DBE (Redcap - Dixired season)	No overly superior varieties, but Dixired and Garnet Beauty very acceptable and fairly hardy; Sweethaven very hardy, excellent flavor but medium sized fruits with less firm flesh make it best for roadside retail; Delta and Summerprince both show promise, but Delta is susceptible to phomopsis, while Summerprince lacks hardiness, has small fruit size (must be thinned early), and may only be satisfactory in southern counties. Sentry still remains questionable and may have hardiness problems.
31–36 DBE (Coronet - Sentinel season)	In southern areas, Gala may prove best; Texroyal shows promise but is still questionable; Juneprince has quality fruit but is still too bud-tender to grow except possibly in southern counties; Flavorcrest, Gala, and Sentinel are adapted in southern and central areas; however, Sentinel lacks color and firmness; Flavorcrest has the best fruit quality in its season but lacks hardiness and has bacterial spot problems; Gala is most attractive in season and crops adequately but is especially susceptible to phomopsis; Pekin does well in central and northern areas but lacks size and flavor; Early Redhaven is a better selection for these areas but lacks flavor.

Table 2. “Best of Season” Variety List (Continued)

25–30 DBE (Redhaven season)	In spite of certain problems, Redhaven remains one of best in this season; Newhaven shows promise of good performance. Jerseyland has bacterial spot problems but is hardy and still performs well; Harbrite, Norman, and Harken are all satisfactory.
19–24 DBE (Ranger - Harvester season)	Harvester and Bellaire best (Bellaire is a small-flowered variety). There are at least two different “Harvester” selections available. Plant only the higher chilling variety. Some growers feel fruit quality in Bellaire is lacking. Cary Mac has excellent fruit quality but lacks hardiness; Sunland, Velvet, and Topaz well adapted to southern areas. Topaz does not crop well in central and northern areas. Ranger, Delp Early Hale, Velvet, Sunland, Clayton, Troy, Envoy, and Veeglo are all satisfactory for area recommended.
13–18 DBE (Majestic - Redglobe season)	Majestic is among the best in this season; however, Jayhaven, Stagg, and Winblo are very good, although Stagg may exhibit fruit cracking and is moderately hardy; Vivid, Carogem, and Ellerbe are satisfactory; Fireprince and Glohaven are good but lack hardiness.
6–12 (Loring - Madison season)	Loring still remains a leading variety in the state because of superior fruit quality but is not best in season because of crop loss to freezes. Only plant Loring on warmest sites in central counties. Contender and Redkist are outstanding in this season; Contender has remarkable hardiness and excellent fruit appearance and size when thinned correctly. Attention must be given to properly thinning Redkist for optimum fruit size. Madison is very good for local markets; Canadian Harmony, La Premier, Yakima Hale, Denman, and Summergold are all satisfactory. La Premier is very hardy but has soft fruit that lack color; Bounty shows promise but lacks hardiness.
0–5 DBE (Elberta - Redskin season)	Cresthaven, Ruston Red, and Biscoe are best in season; Ruston Red is very dependable, but fruit quality is only fair. Cresthaven may crop light in low-chill years. In some cases, Biscoe fruits may be shy on looks and flavor. Alfred Elberta, Dixiland, and Redskin are satisfactory but lack crop consistency because of freezes; Sunprince has good fruit quality but lacks hardiness and is best adapted to southern counties; Indian Red is a very hardy cling and of value only for local markets.
Days After Elberta (DAE)	
-1 to -6 DAE (Rio Osa Gem - Monroe season)	Autumnglo is very cold hardy and probably best in season but can have bacterial spot problems; Monroe, Jefferson, and Emery are satisfactory; Clyde Wilson and Havis produce quality fruit but lack cropping consistency. Havis has best fruit quality in this season.

Table 2. “Best of Season” Variety List (Continued)

-7 to -13 DAE (Encore - O’Henry season)	Encore, Finale, and Rubidoux are quite hardy and generally best in season although they have major limitations. Fruit quality is very limiting in Finale and Rubidoux, while Encore lacks color but has fair fruit quality. Marqueen and Gemmers Late Elberta are satisfactory; O’Henry and Sweet Sue have excellent fruit quality, but both lack cropping consistency and are susceptible to bacterial spot. Sweet Sue usually crops adequately in southern counties and warmer locations in central areas. Fruit shape not ideal. Flameprince looks promising but needs more evaluation. Although initially praised when released, Legend is only performing well in northern states. Small fruit size and other problems resulted in it being dropped in most southern states.
-14 to -23 DAE (Quachita Gold season)	None of these varieties are outstanding, but La Jewel and Quachita Gold are acceptable; NJ193 is very hardy but lacks fruit quality, while Cal Red has exceptional fruit quality (best in season) but lacks hardiness and cropping consistency.
-24 to -30 DAE (Fairtime season)	Fairtime is the best of the real late varieties but lacks hardiness, cropping consistency and has bacterial spot problem; Parade is generally satisfactory, while Marsun exhibits minimally acceptable fruit quality and poor tree characteristics.

Table 3. Peach Varieties Recommended for Commercial and Trial Plantings in Extreme Southern Alabama^a

Variety	Ripening Season (Days Before Elberta) ^a	Chill Hours	Stone Freeness	Fruit Size	Cold Hardiness	Marketing Shipping	Marketing Local Sales
Flordaglobe ^t	61	550	Cling	S to M	F to G	*	*
Goldcrest ^t	60	650	Semi-Free	M	F	*	*
Empress ^t	52	650	Cling	S to M	F	*	*
Suzi-Q	52	650	Semi-Cling	S to M	F to G	*	*
Flordaking	51	400	Cling	M to L	P to F	*	*
Springcrest	51	650	Cling	S to M	F to G	*	*
June Gold	47	650	Cling	L	F	*	*
Cherry Gold ^t	47	650	Cling	S to M	P to F	*	*
Goldprince ^t	47	650	Cling	S to M	F	*	*
Texstar	45	500	Semi-Free	M	G	*	*
Magnolia ^t	42	650	Cling	M	F	*	*
Shepard's Beauty ^t	42	650	Cling	M	F	*	*
Flordacrest ^t	41	425	Semi-Free	S to M	F?	*?	*?
Delta	40	550	Cling	M	?	*?	*?
La Pecher ^t	39	450	Semi-Free	M	F	-?	*
Maygold	39	450	Cling	M	F to G	*	*
Junepriace ^t	35	650	Semi-Free	M	F	*	*
Texroyal	34	600	Free	M	F to G?	*?	*
Flordagold ^t	34	350	Cling	M	P to F	*	*
Rio Grande	25	450	Free	L	G	-	*
Sun Grande	25	450	Free	L	G	-	*
La Feliciana ^t	20	550	Free	M to L	F	-	*
La Festival ^t	20	450	Free	M to L	F	-?	*
Hawthorne ^t	17	600	Free	M to L	F	*?	*
Suncrest ^t	10	650	Free	M to L	F to G?	*	*

^aExtreme southern Alabama refers to the southern two-thirds of Mobile, Baldwin, and Houston counties. The optimum chilling range in this area is 450 to 650 hours at or below 45°F. Don't use varieties with chill requirements much above 700 hours or below 400 hours. Varieties with chilling requirements of 450 hours when grown in the other southern most counties of Escambia, Covington, and Geneva will be subject to freeze problems nearly every year. The upper limit for chilling in these three counties is about 750 hours (except 850 in northern portions).

^tThese varieties are initially recommended only on a trial basis. Some are older varieties never grown much, while others are newly released promising selections. Note: Early Gal is not recommended because of previous poor performance.

*Indicates fruits best adapted to this type of marketing.

Table 4. Characteristics of White-Fleshed Varieties Available for Local and PYO Use

Variety	Ripening Season (Days Before Elberta) ²	Chill Hours ³	Stone Free-ness ⁴	Fruit Size ⁵	Cold ⁶ Hardi-ness	Marketing ⁷		Areas of Best Adaptation ⁸
						Ship-ping	Local Sales	
Starlite ¹	55	650	Semi-Cling	M	F	-	*	S,C
Scarlet Pearl ¹	47	750	Semi-Free	M	G?	*?	*	S,C
Southern Pearl	38	650	Free	M to L	F?	-	*	S,C
La White ¹	27	650	Free	M to L	G	-	*	S
Nectar	22	1050	Free	M to L	G	-	*	C,N
Wildrose	21	750	Free	M	G to E	-	*	S,C
Eden	20	850	Free	M to L	G	-	*	S,C,N
Carolina Belle	18	750	Free	M to L	G?	-	*	S,C
Belle of Georgia ¹	3	850	Free	M to L	G to E	-	*	S,C,N
Summer Pearl ¹	3	850	Free	L	G to E	-	*	S,C,N
	(Days After Elberta)							
White Hale	4	750	Free	L	G to E	-	*	S,C,N
Honey Dew Hale	6	850	Free	L	F to G	-	*	S,C,N
White Rose	7	850	Free	L	F to G	-	*	S,C,N
White Star	7	850	Free	L	G	-	*	S,C,N

¹These varieties are the best in their ripening season.

²Elberta usually ripens in July in south Alabama, mid-July in central Alabama, and late July in north Alabama.

³Refers to hours at or below 45°F needed to satisfy rest (cold requirement) of variety.

⁴Refers to freeness of stone—Cling, Semi-Cling, Semi-Free, Freestone.

⁵S (small), M (medium), L (large).

⁶Overall hardiness rating (winter bud hardiness plus hardiness during flowering) is as follows: P (poor), F (fair), G (good), and E (excellent).

⁷Marketing method: *indicates fruits that are best adapted to this type of marketing.

⁸Area in state where varieties are best adapted: North (N), central (C), south (S). Varieties with chilling requirements above 700 should not be planted in southern two-thirds of Mobile, Baldwin, and Houston counties.



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For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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