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1922



# The Pineapple Pear

It's Growth and Origin



(Actual Photograph)

Pineapple Pear Nursery  
and  
Orchard Company

523 Forsyth Bldg.      Atlanta, Ga.

## **THE INVESTIGATION WORK WITH PEARS AT THE GEORGIA EXPERIMENT STATION.**

Pear culture in the South received a great impetus following the early Seventies of the last century. This was due to the introduction of the LeConte variety which, at the time, was thought to be resistant to the pear blight. Commercial pear orchards sprang up as rapidly as propagating stock could be secured so that many hundreds of acres were planted. These plantings centered in Southwest Georgia in the vicinity of Thomasville, and for a time the outlook was very encouraging. As these orchards reached maturity, however, they were ravaged by fire blight to such an extent that they were practically annihilated. Many orchards were promptly abandoned from the commercial standpoint and turned out to sod. This sod and lack of culture, by reducing the plant food, enabled the surviving trees to struggle along, producing more or less inferior crops. Up to the present time the remnants of these once great orchards can still be seen as reminders of what the pear industry could be were there a variety resistant to fire blight.

In the early spring of 1912 a series of experiments was started at the Georgia Experiment Station to test the relative resistance to blight, as well as their general habits of growth, of several of the better known varieties of pears. New varieties were added from time to time, to replace those dead from blight. The following notes represent the status of this planting as recorded in 1922. From four to six trees each were planted to the following varieties: B. de Anjou (on quince), Kieffer (on quince), Garber, Le Conte, LaFrance, Japanese Golden Russett, Tyson, Lincoln, Wilder, Lawrence, Koonce, B. de Anjou, Pineapple, Howell, Flemish Beauty Buerre Diel, Bartlett, Seckel, Keiffer, Rasney, Sheldon.

Up to September, 1919, the field records of these varieties showed that all the varieties excepting the Garber, Tyson, Koonce, Seckel, Kieffer, and Pineapple pear were practically ruined by blight. At that time the Garber, Tyson, Koonce, and Seckel showed more resistance than the Kieffer. The 1922 field records show that all these varieties excepting the Pineapple pear, have succumbed to blight to such an extent as to eliminate them from commercial plantings. A number of introductions, received from the Office of Foreign Seed and Plant Introductions, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, have been added to the collection since the original planting. These are yet too young to afford anything like conclusive results; even though some are showing considerable resistance.

### **The Pineapple Pear.**

From the standpoint of the experimenter, this pear has been the most interesting of any in the collection. The Georgia Experiment Station received the cions of this pear and made grafts in 1910. The cions were taken from a very large tree growing on the plantation of Mrs. B. N. Stuckey, near Nesmith, S. C. This tree measures slightly more than nine feet in circumference one foot above the ground, and has a record of producing more than fifty bushels of fruit in a single season. Its chief and most interesting characteristic, however, is that it is highly resistant, almost to the extent of immunity, to pear blight.

The trees, as grown at the Georgia Experiment Station, have been subjected to the most rigid trials succumbing to fire blight. In addition to being

grown in a general variety collection where a large percentage of the trees were annually dying from blight, a number of the trees were inoculated with laboratory cultures, no appreciable injury was ever observed. Even where the inoculation would take the organism did not spread enough to do the trees any appreciable damage. The inoculated twig would die back for a few inches, but the disease was not able to spread to any other twig, and was soon overcome. In fact the variety is so highly resistant that the orchardist may plant trees without fear of blight. Ten-year-old trees now standing at the Georgia Experiment Station show no signs of blight, even though they have had every chance to become infected.

### **History of the Pineapple Pear.**

The exact history of this pear is unknown. However, its general botanical characteristics indicate very clearly that it is a hybrid between *Pyrus serotina* and *Pyrus communis*. Its exact parentage and time of origin, however, will probably never be known. Some have suggested that it is an immigrant from China or Japan. Mr. Geo. D. Lowe, investigating this subject, says, in part: "In the winter of 1888 Dr. C. C. Daniel, a prominent Liberty county, Georgia, physician, drove up to the gate of John W. DeLoach's plantation some forty miles south of the LeConte place, and now in Long county, Georgia. He handed Mr. DeLoach a pear switch with the remark that he had cut it from the finest pear tree he had ever seen in his life down on the island (near Brunswick, Ga.), advising Mr. DeLoach to set it immediately, which he did. It was placed in a small orchard of blighting LeContes and Kieffers and grew off rapidly as the pear always does in South Georgia. It came into bearing the sixth year from the switch and showed quality and productivity beyond expectation."

"It appears evident that the original pineapple pear was given to a planter in South Carolina by a relative who was an officer in Commodore Perry's fleet which visited China and Japan in the middle fifties, and brought the rooted pear from China when he returned. The tree now stands still vigorous and in bearing, nine feet in circumference just above the ground and with tremendous spread of limbs. In its prime several yields of over one hundred bushels were harvested and last year it bore some forty bushels. Undoubtedly the tree on the Georgia island came from a cutting sent by some South Carolina relative of the owner. The South Carolina specimen stands alone in its generation outside of China, so far as close inquiry yet discloses."

A few trees of this pear, up to the present time have been located in widely scattered places in South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. However, no systematic effort has been made to chart its distribution.

### **Usefulness of the Pear.**

This pear cannot be classed as a dessert variety. In quality of fruit it would be classed along with the LeConte and Garber. It is perceptibly better than the Kieffer, though could not be considered along with such varieties as the Seckle or Bartlett. It is primarily a culinary pear and can hardly be surpassed for preserving, baking and canning purposes. Canneries report that it brings a premium above the Kieffer when canned and is in great demand by those who consume canned pears.

H. P. STUCKY.

Director: Georgia Experiment Station.

# Care Should Be Taken In Planting So as to Give The Trees Plenty Of Space to Grow In.

On account of the long life and vigorous growing quality of the Pineapple Pear it is recommended by leading horticulturists that this pear be planted not less than 40x40 feet which is twenty-seven (27) trees per acre. The pear begins bearing the fourth year and yields as high as eighteen bushels per tree the seventh (7) year

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