



Horticultural Facts

Alaska Division of Agriculture Plant Materials Center HC 02 Box 7440 Palmer, Alaska 99645 745-4469

RHUBARB VARIETY TRIALS

Rhubarb varieties were planted in the Small Fruit Demonstration Garden in response to increasing inquiries about the crop from both Alaska residents and tourists. They were planted on June 19, 1986. The plants are fertilized annually at the rate recommended by the Cooperative Extension Service, 3/4 pound per plant. A 10-20-20 fertilizer has been used for the fertilizer application. They are irrigated and weeded as necessary.

In the planting year, 1986, stems were harvested only once prior to the first frost. Three harvests were made during 1988. At least 1/3 of the plant was left at each harvest during the growing season. All stems were harvested at the last harvest of the season. The yield of each variety is in the following table.

Variety	Number Planted	'86 Avg YLD/PLT	'87 Avg YLD/PLT	Number Alive '88	'88 Avg YLD/PLT	Total '88 YLD
'Apple'	4	-- lb.	6.85 lb.	4	10.92 lb.	43.70 lb.
'Canada Red'	3	3.71 lb.	6.27 lb.	3	15.20 lb.	45.60 lb.
'Honey Red'	3	7.48 lb.	10.20 lb.	2	26.80 lb.	53.60 lb.
'McDonald'*	3	--	1.90 lb.	2 stems	--	--
'Sutton Seedless'	2	1.44 lb.	8.30 lb.	2	18.30 lb.	36.60 lb.
'Victoria'	3	0.72 lb.	9.20 lb.	1	10.80 lb.	10.80 lb.

* 'McDonald' was severely injured by glaciation in the winter of 1986-1987.

VARIETY DESCRIPTIONS

'Apple' is a variety grown by Dr. Dearborn at the Experiment Station. It produces large, green stems with red streaks. Source 1.

'Canada Red' produces large, dark red stems; they are shorter than other varieties and very tender. A good quality rhubarb. Source 2.

'Honey Red' is a recent introduction. Plant vigor and stem size is similar to 'McDonald'. The stem color is a more intense red throughout the stem. The texture is firm with a mild flavor. It is excellent for freezing. Source 2.

'McDonald' is very productive and mold-resistant. It has a good red color and is a good quality for freezing and canning. Source 2.

'Sutton Seedless' is probably the largest and most productive variety grown. Stems are a pale pink streaked with green at leaf ends. It has a good flavor and is an excellent variety for early canning and freezing. Nearly seedless and very productive. Source 2.

'Victoria' is described as having green stems streaked with red. Parks Seed Company says it is the deepest red of all seed-grown types. Source 3.

SOURCES

- 1 - University of Alaska Agriculture & Forestry Experiment Station
- 2 - Beaverlodge Nursery Ltd., Box 127, Beaverlodge, Alberta T0H 0C0
- 3 - Goldbug Greenhouse, Sally Young, Tok, AK 99780 (Parks Seed Company)