

'Preserving' Our National Fruit History



Did you know that the complete books of 'The Pears of New York', 'The Small Fruits of New York' and many others are now available online from the Cornell University Library? The library has a website that features scanned copies of important agricultural works of the past, and continues to expand their collection of agriculture references dating back to the early 1800's. These are held in the [Cornell Core Historical Library of Agriculture](#).

The Core Historical Literature of Agriculture (CHLA) is a core electronic collection of agricultural texts published between the early nineteenth century and the middle to late twentieth century. Full-text materials cover agricultural economics, agricultural engineering, animal science, crops and their protection, food science, forestry, human nutrition, rural sociology, and soil science. Scholars have selected the titles in this collection for their historical importance. Their evaluations and 4,500 core titles are detailed in the seven volume series *The Literature of the Agricultural Sciences*, Wallace C. Olsen, series editor. Current online holdings include:

Pages: 850,264
Books: 1,849 (1,910 Volumes)
Journals: 6 (288 Volumes)

Scanned copies of 'The Apples of NY', 'Cherries of NY', 'Peaches of NY' etc have also been recently added. If you browse the Cornell library holdings, you should find many useful antique references. They allow you to search either titles or full text of the books for key words, and display the pages either as image, pdf, or text.

The USDA ARS National Clonal Repository at Corvallis, Oregon, also provides links to [historic fruit images and publications](#) that may be of interest to "agricultural historians" and other interested parties. Some of the featured books and their descriptions from the website are listed below:

THE SMALL FRUITS OF NEW YORK

by *Ulysses Prentiss Hedrick* assisted by *G.H. Howe, O.M. Taylor, Alwin Berger, G.L. Slate and Olav Einset*

The Small Fruits of New York was the seventh and last in a series of fruit monographs published by the New York Agricultural Experiment Station. This reference was completed by U. P. Hedrick in 1925 and has become a classic reference for those working with cultivated varieties of *Rubus*, *Ribes* and *Fragaria*. At NCGR-Corvallis, the descriptions and illustrations in this reference are used to verify identities of historic cultivars growing in the small fruit germplasm collections.

THE APPLES OF NEW YORK

by *Spencer Ambrose Beach*, horticulturist, assisted by *N.O. Booth*, assistant horticulturist and *O.M. Taylor*, foreman in horticulture

The two volumes of *The Apples of New York* were compiled by the New York Agricultural Experiment Station and published in 1905. The experiment station at Geneva was established in 1880 at a time when there were

literally thousands of different apple varieties being grown commercially in the United States. This classic, historic reference is a report to the public of "the long-continued and costly effort" which was begun 20 years earlier by the station's first horticulturist, Professor Emmet S. Goff. In 1891 the effort was passed on to Professor Spencer A. Beach, under whose direction the project was completed. The first volume treats winter apples, beginning with those that ripen in the season with Hubbardston and Tompkins King. The second volume treats apples used in the summer and autumn. In the preface to volume I, Beach summarized the intended value of this report:

"For one who is interested in growing apples either for home use or for commercial purposes, or in supplying nursery trees for orchard planting, or in any of the industries accessory to that of apple-growing, such as storing and marketing the fruit or manufacturing fruit products, it is at times a great advantage to have accessible for ready reference full descriptions of the different varieties of apples, each under the name which pomological authorities are accepting as correct, together with the list of synonyms by which the variety has been known. It is for the purpose of making such information more generally available that this report on the apples of New York has been prepared."

Volume I contains 41 half tone plates and 89 color plates. Volume II contains 37 half tone plates and 44 color plates. Several varieties are depicted more than once. Historic descriptions and illustrations such as these are important tools in establishing or verifying the identities of old apple trees as well as trees in our USDA National Germplasm Collections. Select a highlighted name to receive a JPEG image from this historic reference.

THE PEARS OF NEW YORK

by Ulysses Prentiss Hedrick assisted by G.H. Howe, O.M. Taylor, E.H. Francis and H.B. Tukey

The Pears of New York was compiled by U. P. Hedrick and published by the New York Agricultural Experiment Station in 1921. This was the sixth in a series of monographs on fruits, all of which have become classic references on the fruit cultivars of the period. These volumes are much sought after by pomologists and fruit enthusiasts for the detailed descriptions and beautiful artwork.

As Hedrick wrote in the preface, his goal with *The Pears of New York* was:

"To give an account of the history and uses of the pear; to depict the botanical characters of cultivated pears; to describe pear growing in this country... and, lastly, to give in full detail the synonymy, bibliography, economic status, and full descriptions of the most important cultivated pears with brief notices of varieties of minor importance."

The Pears of New York contains full descriptions and color plates of about 80 cultivars, and brief descriptions of many hundreds more. Historic descriptions and illustrations such as these have become important tools in verifying the identities of trees growing in our germplasm collection. Most of the cultivars illustrated are among the 1500 unique pears growing at NCGR-Corvallis today. Select a highlighted name to receive either a low resolution JPEG image (approximately 50K) or a high resolution image (between 300-500K) from this historic reference.