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Chamberlin, Sr.

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[54] **PLUM TREE NAMED ‘YELLOW #503’**
[75] Inventor: **Thomas O. Chamberlin, Sr.**, Visalia,
Calif.
[73] Assignee: **Corrin Family Trust**, Reedly, Calif.
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Primary Examiner—Howard J. Locker
Assistant Examiner—Anne Marie Grünberg
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Richard A. Ryan

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct variety of plum tree which is distinguished by producing fruit which are mature for harvesting and shipment approximately June 16 to June 20 in the San Joaquin Valley of central California and wherein the fruit is small and round with a crisp and firm flesh which does not bruise easily and having a bright yellow-green skin coloration.

1 Drawing Sheet

BACKGROUND OF THE NEW VARIETY

The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of plum tree, which will hereinafter be denominated vari-
etally as the ‘Yellow #503’ plum tree, and, more particularly,
to such a plum tree which produces very small bright
yellow-green fruit which are mature for commercial har-
vesting and shipment approximately June 16 to June 20 in
the San Joaquin Valley of central California.

The commercial market for tree fruit, as with other fresh
fruit and vegetables, is changing to reflect consumer desire
for packaged products. As the fruit market develops to
reflect consumer desires, the shipping and handling charac-
teristics of fruit that can be included in packaged products
become significantly more important. In order for fruit to be
suitable to satisfy the market demand for packaged products,
it should be of a smaller than usual size, have superior flavor
and visual characteristics and be of a firm nature suitable for
packaging in plastic bags and other containers.

**ORIGIN AND ASEXUAL REPRODUCTION OF
THE NEW VARIETY**

The plum tree of the present invention was discovered by
the inventor as a chance seedling in a nursery located near
Reedley in the San Joaquin Valley of central California. The
inventor discovered the seedling from seed planted in the
nursery in 1989. The first fruit was seen on this seedling in
June, 1992. As the fruit matured, it was examined as to size,
shape, coloration, ripening date, flavor, texture and as to
other criteria which were sought in a plum variety having the
desired commercial potential. The initial fruit was very
small with a heavy crop having good flavor. The seedling
was marked for further testing.

Graft wood was collected from this seedling in the Winter
of 1992–1993. Trees were grafted onto Lovell rootstock in
the early Spring of 1993 in the testing part of the nursery.
The first fruit from these asexually produced trees of the new
variety was observed by the inventor in the summer of 1995
and again in 1996. The crop on these trees of the new variety
was very heavy with small yellow-green fruit, which had
very good flavor. The inventor did not thin the fruit on these
trees as it was desired to obtain small fruit for a new market
called Lunch Pack. Fruit for this market is packed in eight
ounce or one pound packages. The fruit from this new
variety of plum tree had the size and flavor desired for this
new market.

The harvest time for the asexually produced trees of this
new variety was about mid-June, the same time as the parent
seedling. These trees produced the same small, round fruit
having flesh of a firm texture. The flavor of the fruit was very
good. The skin coloration of the fruit was the same bright
yellow-green color and the leaves matched the leaves on the
parent seedling. The bark and growth pattern characteristics
also matched the parent seedling. The inventor has con-
firmed that the asexually reproduced trees of the new variety
are the same in all respects to the parent seedling.

SUMMARY OF THE NEW VARIETY

The ‘Yellow #503’ plum tree is characterized by produc-
ing a fruit which has a bright yellow-green skin coloration
and is ripe for harvesting and shipment approximately June
16 to June 20 in the San Joaquin Valley of central California.
The fruit of the new variety are small in size, fully round in
shape and possess an excellent flavor. The pit of this fruit is
very small, resulting in a lot of good flavored flesh to eat
despite the small size of the fruit. The fruit has been
determined to have outstanding storage life, retaining its
firm flesh of very good flavor even after thirty (30) days in
cold storage. These characteristics of this fruit make it
particularly suitable for packaging for sale in the Lunch
Pack market.

The asexually produced plum tree of the present invention
will set a very heavy crop of fruit that is easy to harvest. The
crop does not have to be thinned, thereby saving those costs.
The manner in which the tree grows makes it easy to place
it on a six-foot trellis, as is done with grapes. This method
of growing makes it easy to shape the tree and harvest the
crop.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

The drawing is a color photograph showing mature fruit
of the new variety including a first in side elevation, a second
in bottom plan view showing the apex area thereof, a third
in top plan view showing the base thereof, a fourth in side
elevation showing the suture thereof, a fifth sectioned and
laid open to show the stone in one section and the stone
cavity in the other section, and a sixth showing the stone
itself; and representative foliage, all of the new variety.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring more specifically to the pomological details of
this new and distinct variety of plum tree, the following has

been observed under the ecological conditions prevailing at the orchard of origin, which is located near Reedley, Calif. All major color code designations are by reference to the *Inter-Society Color Council, National Bureau of Standards*. Common color names are also occasionally employed.

TREE

Generally:

Size.—Normal plum tree size but due to the type of growth and fruit setting tree can be grown in different ways.

Vigor.—Vigorous.

Chilling requirements.—250 hundred to 400 hundred hours.

Figure.—Bushy tree to height of eight feet and four feet wide.

Productivity.—Small size plum, typically; formed in clusters on numerous spurs. Average of fifty (50) pounds per tree in year four.

Regularity of bearing.—Will bear a good crop every year.

Trunk:

Size.—Normal diameter.

Surface texture.—Normal plum tree bark with many long vertical splits and small lenticels.

Color.—Light brown bark (58-M.Br.).

Lenticels — numbers.—Small lenticels, approximately 25 per square inch.

Lenticels — vertical splits.—5.08 cm (2 inches) to 7.62 cm (3 inches) long and about 0.32 cm ($\frac{1}{8}$ inch) diameter — color (53 M.O.).

Branches:

Size.—Normal, depending on pruning and shaping.

Surface texture.—Normal. Same characteristics as trunk.

Color.—Light brown (58-M.Br.).

Color — One year or older wood.—Same.

Surface texture — Immature growth.—Smooth.

Lenticels — numbers.—Approxiamtely 25–28 per square inch.

Lenticels — size.—Very small.

LEAVES

Size:

Average length.—6.35 cm ($2\frac{1}{2}$ inches) to 6.67 cm ($2\frac{5}{8}$ inches).

Average width.—3.18 cm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ inches) to 3.49 cm ($1\frac{3}{8}$ inches).

Form: Lanceolate.

Color:

Upwardly disposed surface.—Dark green (126 d.Ol.G.).

Downwardly disposed surface.—Light green (137 d.Y.G.).

Marginal form:

Generally.—Very finely serrate.

Glandular characteristics: No glands found on stem.

Petiole:

Size.—Normal.

Length.—1.27 cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ inch.).

Width.—0.160 cm ($\frac{1}{16}$ inch).

FLOWERS

Flower buds: Information was taken as white started to show at apex of bud.

Length.—0.48 cm ($\frac{3}{16}$ inch).

Diameter.—0.32 cm ($\frac{1}{8}$ inch).

Shape.—Slightly elongated.

Other characteristics.—This fruit sets a very heavy set of buds on fruit spurs, will range in number of buds per spur from about 12 to 23 or 24. Fruit spurs are about 2.54 cm (1 inch) apart on branches.

Color.—Light green (115 V.Y.G.)

Date of bloom: Approximately February 15th to the 24th at Reedley, Calif.

Size:

Petal — length.—0.64 cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch).

Petal — diameter.—0.64 cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch).

Bloom — diameter.—2.54 cm (1 inch).

Shape: Each petal very small and round in appearance.

Fragrance: No characteristic fragrance.

Petals:

Color.—White (263 White).

Pedicel:

Length.—Ranges from 0.48 cm ($\frac{3}{16}$ inch) to 0.64 cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch), depending on location.

FRUIT

Maturity when described: Ripe for commercial harvesting and shipment approximately June 16th to June 20th near Reedley in the central San Joaquin Valley of California.

Size:

Generally.—Small.

Average diameter.—Approximately 3.49 cm ($1\frac{3}{8}$ inches) to 3.81 cm ($1\frac{1}{2}$ inches).

Weight.—1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces each.

Sugar content.—20 Brix.

Form:

Uniformity.—Good.

Symmetrical.—Yes. Very round in appearance, with wide base and rounded apex area.

Suture:

Generally.—Smooth, very slightly indented.

Length.—Approximately 2.86 cm ($1\frac{1}{8}$ inches) to 3.18 cm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ inches).

Vertical surface:

Generally.—Very smooth, slightly rounded to almost flat.

Stem cavity:

Generally.—Rounded.

Depth.—Approximately 0.32 cm ($\frac{1}{8}$ inch).

Base.—Wide and rounded.

Apex.—Slightly rounded to almost flat.

Pistil point: None

Stem:

Generally.—Normal.

Length.—1.11 cm ($\frac{7}{16}$ inch).

Width.—0.16 cm ($\frac{1}{16}$ inch).

Skin:

Thickness.—Very light but firm.

Texture.—Smooth and tenacious to the flesh.

Tendency to crack.—None.

Color.—Bright yellow with green under color. (99S.G.Y.)

Pubescence.—None.

Flesh:

Flesh color.—Yellow (98 brill.G.Y.).

Surface of pit cavity.—Not a free stone. Flesh tight to stone.

Juice production.—Very juicy. Almost no acid taste.

Flavor.—Good — mild and sweet.

Aroma.—Slight.
Texture.—Smooth, juicy and crisp at picking time.
Fibers.—Numbers — None.
Ripening.—Even.
Eating quality.—Very good.

Stone:

Attachment.—Cling.
Fibers.—Number — None.
Size — length.—1.43 cm ($\frac{9}{16}$ inch).
Size — width.—1.11 cm ($\frac{7}{16}$ inch).
Size — thickness.—0.64 cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch).
Form — Generally.—Oval in appearance.
Apex — Shape.—Very slight point.
Color.—Yellow Brown (68 S.OY.).
Base.—Very small and round.
Sides — generally.—Almost smooth.
Ridges.—None.
Tendency to split.—None.

Use: Fresh fruit market.

Keeping quality: Very good, has been kept in cold storage for over 30 days.

Resistance to disease: No disease noted to date.

Harvesting: Fruit is very firm at harvest time.

Shipping and handling qualities: Due to firm nature of fruit, it does not bruise easily and should handle and ship very well. Suitable for being packed in 16 oz. (one pound) plastic bags for Lunch Pack market.

Although the new variety of plum tree possesses the described characteristics noted above as a result of the growing conditions prevailing near and in the central part of the San Joaquin Valley of California, it is to be understood that variations in the usual magnitude and characteristics incident to changes in growing conditions, irrigation, fertilization, pruning, pest control, climatic variation and the like are to be expected.

Having thus described and illustrated my new variety of plum tree, what I claim as new and desire to be secured by Plant Letters Patent is:

1. A new and distinct variety of plum tree substantially as illustrated and described which is distinguished by producing small, fully rounded fruit having a bright yellow-green skin coloration and which are mature for commercial harvesting and shipment approximately June 16th to June 20th in the San Joaquin Valley of central California.

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