



The Fruit Orchard at Bull Meadow

*Varieties
planted
in 2023*

William Crump

This apple takes its name from Mr William Crump who was the one time head gardener at Madresfield Court near Malvern. He is credited with raising the variety and personally exhibited it in 1908 when it received an RHS Award of Merit. It is believed to be a cross between Cox's Orange Pippin and a Worcester Pearmain.



Worcester Pearmain

The best known of the county's apples, this is the only one still grown commercially. It is believed to have originated from the pip of a Devonshire Quarrenden grown by a Mr Hale of Swan Pool, Worcester and was introduced as a commercial variety by Messers Smith of Worcester in 1874. This variety has been much used in breeding and several other varieties contain Worcester Pearmain in their parentage.



Lord Hindlip

This apple, grown from a seedling from the Hindlip estate across the road – now the HQ of West Mercia Police but then owned by the Allsopp brewing family – was first recorded in 1896 when it was introduced to the Royal Horticultural Society by John Watkins of Pomona Farm in Hereford. It received an Award of Merit from the RHS in 1896 and a First Class Certificate in 1898.



Red Sentinel

This fruiting crab apple tree was brought into cultivation in 1959 and is popular for providing winter colour. The bright red crab apples appear as the summer draws to an end and autumn arrives. If they are not eaten by birds, these attractive fruit remain on the tree well into winter.



John Downie

The history of this tree goes back to 1875 in Lichfield when it was raised by Mr Edward Holmes. The tree was named after his friend and fellow nurseryman John Downie from Scotland. John Downie remain one of the most popular English crab apples and are very popular for making jelly.



Pitmaston Duchess

Raised in 1841 by John Williams at Pitmaston, in Worcestershire, this pear produces huge fruit with an excellent flavour. Nurseryman George Bunyard regarded it as "the best and finest market pear" in 1899.



Black Worcester

The Worcester Black pear may originally have been introduced into the country by the Romans and is the oldest surviving cultivar of pears of its type. An image of the pear blossom was borne as a badge by the Worcestershire Yeomanry Cavalry until 1956. The earliest reference to any pear associated with a crest is in relation to the Worcestershire Bowmen, depicting a pear tree laden with fruit on their banners at the battle of Agincourt in 1415. Tradition has it that during the visit of Queen Elizabeth I to Worcester in 1575 she saw a pear tree laden with black pears by the gate through which she entered the city. Elizabeth is said to have directed the city to add three pears to its coat of arms.



Concorde

Concorde is a modern English dessert pear variety developed at the East Malling Research Station in Kent in the 1970s and is a cross between Conference and Doyenne du Comice. After artificial pollination was completed in 1968, a number of candidate varieties were developed and the Concorde was selected as the best one in 1977. It was released commercially in 1994 and received the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit in 1993.



Pierre Cornelle

This pear variety arose in France, becoming known from 1892, and was one of a number of varieties studied for growing commercially in France. As a result it was recommended in 1974 but uptake was limited because it bruised easily and did not store well.



Pershore Purple

Formerly known as Martin's seedling, this plum was created by Walter Martin of Drakes Broughton in 1877 when he crossed the Purple Diamond plum and it would go on to help win World War I. In August 1916, in the midst of the Battle of the Somme, William George Haynes was given permission to take leave from active service in France to return home to Pershore to help bring in the harvest. The Pershore Purple was ideal for bottling, canning and pickling and the Pershore egg plum was used to make the apple and plum jam which helped to make up the 3,000 calories a day needed by troops. The authorities' decision to send William home to help harvest these plums during the Battle of the Somme indicates their awareness that food had very much become a weapon of war.



Early Prolific

Raised in about 1820 by Thomas Rivers at his Sawbridgeworth nursery and introduced in about 1834, this plum was awarded a First Class Certificate by the RHS in 1895.

Cambridge Gage

Greengages originated in northern Persia/Armenia, spreading across Europe until being introduced into England in the early 18th century, with a number of trees sent from France, to Sir William Gage of Hengrave Hall, near Bury St Edmunds. Legend states that the labels got lost in transit, so the head gardener decided to name them after his master.



What makes a gage different from a plum? There is no definitive answer! Gages are a group of cultivars of plums. On the whole, gages are smaller than most plums, and also rounder and sweeter, with a more intense flavour.

The Cambridge Gage is believed to have originated from a greengage seedling from the Cambridge area. It was first adopted and grown commercially by jam-makers Chivers & Son, Histon, Cambridgeshire, UK who sent it to the National Fruit Trials in 1927.

Shropshire Prune

The Shropshire Prune, a type of damson, is a subspecies of the plum, and is thought to be a hybridisation of the bullace (the wild plum). The damson has a distinguished heritage, having been introduced to the country by the Romans. The first written record of the damson dates back to 1676. The Shropshire Prune was once common in Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Montgomeryshire within orchards and as a hedgerow tree.



Many Shropshire Prune trees were planted in the 19th century to provide dye. The damson crop was sent, for example, to the Lancashire cotton mills for uniforms, to Kidderminster for the carpet trade and to Ludlow for the glove trade.

The Shropshire Prune is no longer used for dye which has meant that for decades, Shropshire Prune trees have not been planted on a large scale.

Sweet Damson

One common theory is that damsons were first cultivated in pre-Christian antiquity in the area around Damascus, capital of modern-day Syria, and introduced into England by the Romans. Different from other damsons, ripening earlier and being sweet, this variety is elliptical in shape and the dark purple skin has sweet greenish-yellow flesh beneath.

