

ORIGINAL PEACH GERMPLASM FROM THE EBRO MIDDLE VALLEY IN THE CITA PEACH BREEDING PROGRAMME

J.M. Alonso, M.T. Espiau, J.M. Ansón and M. Carrera

Unidad de Fruticultura, CITA de Aragón, Apartado 727, 50080 Zaragoza, Spain

During the late 80s a prospection of clingstone and flat peaches was carried out in order to wider the CITA germplasm collection. Special attention was paid to the samples from the Ebro Middle Valley and to white fleshed clingstone peaches.

As a consequence of the evaluation of this germplasm, two genotypes were selected in 1997, 'Montaced', a white fleshed clingstone peach, and 'Montejota', a flat peach. Both selections showed good yields, a very large fruit size and an exceptional sweet taste.

These selections have been introduced in the CITA peach breeding programme. At present some elite selections coming from F₁ crosses of 'Montaced' and 'Montejota' with other cultivars are under final evaluation. Also the evaluation of the F₂ generation from some of these selections has been started.

The CITA peach breeding programme aims to release of yellow fleshed clingstone peaches with late ripening dates, between the end of August and the end of October, as well as a range of white fleshed clingstone and flat peaches, both with a consecutive ripening date. All types must show good fruit size, a characteristic sweet taste and attractive fruit appearance, showing good adaptation to the ecologic conditions of the Ebro Middle Valley.

The CITA of Aragón has a peach germplasm collection with more than 400 peach cultivars, including international and Spanish commercial cultivars and autochthonous genotypes of interest, where the horticultural behaviour of the new genotypes can be easily compared in order to select the most promising ones offering a real improvement for peach growing.