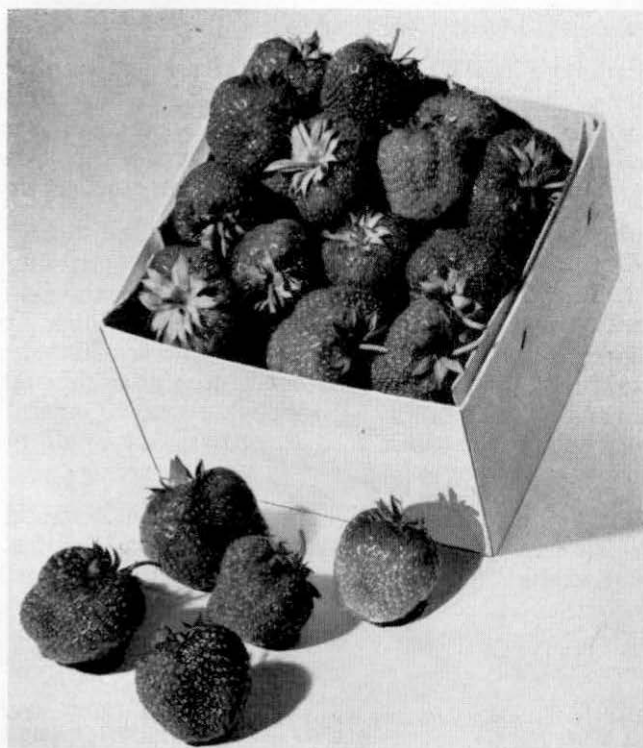


# *A New Fruit Introduction for 1959*

## THE 'EARLIMORE' STRAWBERRY



A new early and productive variety.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*Agricultural Experiment Station*

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# A NEW FRUIT INTRODUCTION FOR 1959 THE 'EARLIMORE' STRAWBERRY

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The 'Earlimore' is a June-bearing strawberry which ripens extra early, then continues its high production through a longer than average season. The fruit size, medium large at the start of the season, is well maintained. The berries are attractive, with a bright red color which holds well in the boxes. They are firm but juicy and have a pleasant, aromatic flavor.

A number of commercial growers, especially in the Excelsior area, who have tested this variety in comparison with other selections and with Howard 17 (Premier), Dunlap, and Robinson, have reported a special satisfaction with the 'Earlimore.' Its total crop has been high and its early yield has given it a price advantage since it is the first home-grown berry on the market. Its brightness in the boxes, even after shipping, has had sales appeal and its dessert quality has brought repeating orders. The growers have expressed surprise that such an early variety would maintain its satisfactory size of fruit for so long.

In spite of a similarity of name, do not confuse the 'Earlimore' with the 'Evermore,' an everbearing variety that was introduced by this station in 1945. The 'Evermore' found its principal favor westward from Minnesota to Washington.

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<sup>1</sup>The first two of these authors have been primarily concerned with the breeding and field testing of this variety and the latter two with the processing tests. The Department of Horticulture of the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station acknowledges the cooperation of the United States Department of Agriculture through its Fruit and Nut Crops Research Branch in the Minnesota fruit breeding project, which is also a part of a national fruit breeding program. Through this cooperative arrangement the part-time services of a federal agent are available to assist in the fruit breeding work in Minnesota. Grateful acknowledgment is also made to the Agricultural Extension Service, to the branch experiment stations, and to the private individuals who have cooperated in the testing program.

The 'Earlimore' has been tested only under the matted-row system of culture, which is standard in Minnesota with the June-bearing varieties. The plants are set in early spring, usually 2 feet apart in rows that are 3½ to 4 feet apart. The plants are allowed to develop runners and the rows are usually, but not always, restricted in width late in the season. They are mulched over winter.

The 'Earlimore' develops a wide row of vigorous but not unusually tall plants, which tend to be well spaced. Plant survival the following spring has been consistently high. 'Earlimore' has been remarkably free from foliage diseases. In spite of the early season of fruit ripening, the blossoming season is not unusually early.

The fruit of the 'Earlimore' is most suitable for fresh dessert use. It has been fair to good for freezing—better than many commercial sorts but not equal to the Marshall and Burgundy varieties nor to the best unnamed selections that have been tested for this purpose. The growers have considered it firm enough for shipping moderate distances but it has not been tested for long-distance shipping.

Plants of this variety can be bought from nurseries in the spring of 1959. They will not be sold by the University of Minnesota.

## BREEDING HISTORY

The 'Earlimore' strawberry was developed at the University of Minnesota Fruit Breeding Farm from a cross made in 1940. The maternal parent was a selected seedling, SYS305-46, from self-pollinated Campbell (Campbell's Early). The pollen parent was Howard 17 (Premier).

A program of inbreeding and selection for the purpose of developing better parents for use in strawberry breeding was begun on a small scale at this station late in 1922 and was considerably enlarged in 1927. The variety Campbell was added later and its self seed was planted in 1930. One selection was made from its progeny and this, like other inbred selections, was crossed with Howard 17 for progeny-testing purposes. The cross progeny was generally characterized by early ripening fruit of high flavor. The average for firmness was not high. Three seedlings, however, were considered suitable for further testing as potential new varieties, and one of these, Minnesota No. 1636, is now being introduced under the name 'Earlimore.'

This selection has been under test as a clone at the Fruit Breeding Farm since 1941. Tests for freezing quality were begun in 1949 at the Food Processing Laboratory. The selection was first distributed for trial in other parts of Minnesota in 1950.

## TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

The 'Earlimore' is June-bearing. The plants make a wide row, well spaced; are vigorous but not unusually tall; are hardy; apparently have very high resistance to leafspot and high resistance to scorch. The fruit production is high.

The foliage is medium size, the leaflets are elliptic, serrate with medium size serrations, and there are 8 to 10 on each side of the terminal leaflet. The upper surface is medium green, rather smooth, with scant pubescence, and depressed veins; the lower surface is gray-green, with pubescent veins. The petiole is green, of medium length and medium slender, occasionally with leafy bracts, and pubescent especially toward the leaflets. It blossoms in midseason with perfect flowers.

The fruit is attractive; medium large to medium in size and it holds well through season; the shape is a blunt rounded wedge-shape to rounded conic, not necked; the primaries are sometimes slightly creased. The outside color is bright red, and the flesh color is red. The achenes are small, set in depressions, but the outer surface is usually raised slightly above the surface of the berry. The calyx is medium small, rather deeply set, partly recurved, bright green, with entire sepals; the pedicels are long, slender, and green. The berries are firm to medium firm; the flesh is juicy, slightly acid, and aromatic; the flavor is very good.