

'Delicious' new grape debuts

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Researchers at the University of Florida have introduced 'Delicious', a new muscadine grape cultivar. 'Delicious' ripens early, produces high yields, and is disease-resistant. The black fruit features exceptional taste and texture with an edible skin, making it well-suited for fresh fruit consumption and the potential for wine production. The name 'Delicious' was selected based on the comments of vineyard visitors who sampled the fruit.

According to Dr. Dennis J. Gray, who led the research study published in the February 2009 issue of [HortScience](#), 'Delicious' (*Vitis rotundifolia* Michx.) originated from a cross between AA10-40, a self-fertile, bronze-fruited selection with medium-sized berries, and CD8-81, a self-fertile, black-fruited selection with larger berries. The researchers noted that black berry color of 'Delicious' likely originated from 'Southland' and the self-fertile trait came from 'Carlos', 'Southland', and/or 'Welder'. The original seedling was planted in 1993.

The berries of 'Delicious' are oval shaped and reddish, turning dark purple/black when ripe. [Fruit](#) ripening dates vary seasonally, but tend to occur in early August at Apopka, Florida, remarkably 2 to 3 weeks earlier than other muscadine cultivars evaluated. Early ripe fruit have a semicrunchy flesh and an [edible skin](#). Fruit allowed to ripen further tend to have a softer flesh, become noticeably juicier, but retain an edible skin. The berries have a dry stem scar and harvest readily with mechanical shaking.

Although 'Delicious' is being released primarily as a fresh eating grape, it

has some potential for wine. Based on preliminary trials, the flavor of the wine (2006 vintage) rated equal to those of 'Carlos' (a popular cultivar for wine) by a panel of 30 winemakers. The color is a medium to light red, generally lighter than many red muscadine wines.

More information: The complete study and abstract are available on the ASHS HortScience electronic journal web site:

[hortsci.ashspublications.org/c ... ontent/full/44/1/200](http://hortsci.ashspublications.org/content/full/44/1/200)

Source: American Society for Horticultural Science

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