## Pear Assessment 2014

Table 17

There is a small pool of pear varieties to choose from for the colder latitudes. The choices are particularly limited when compared to apples. There are some that do indeed thrive at our location, however, with no sign of winter injury. We have also found that the slower and less succulent growth of pears suppresses fireblight outbreak (we have never seen it on our pears in 18 years). What is reassuring when considering pears for commercial possibilities under organic management is that they are much less affected from fruit disease and insect attack as compared with apple. Our orchard is rarely attacked by fungal disease or insects. It has been reasoned that the extreme hardness of the pear flesh may deter ovipositing.

Of issue, however, is blister mite presence. All the European cultivars are susceptible and readily attacked. The Ussurian and Asian specimens are less affected in general.

We have found that in this climate, young pears have a decidedly slow rate of growth at the nursery stage. As the tree ages, this slowed growth rate changes markedly, but not as rampant as in milder growing regions.

There is also very little attack from trunk boring insects. We have found only one instance in almost 2 decades.

Early bloom has been expressed as a potential hardiness concern. However, perhaps due to the variety selections made, we have had little incidence of failure from blossom kill.

Evaluations for pears are listed on several data sheet. A full list of varieties can be found in table 1 and table 17 and recommendations can be found in tables 14 and 15. Some bloom data can be found in table 2.

An additional planting of 50 + varieties exists at our location, but the trees are too young to make any meaningful observations as to their merits.

Pears do have limitations in this climate, including fewer cultivar choices, far fewer rootstock candidates, and trickier growing at a young age. They do, however have a place in an organically managed system in the colder region if proper choices in stock are made. Although we have been disappointed with many varieties trialed here, enough have proved impressive enough to warrant pears as a good addition to the cold climate organic orchard.

Cultivar	Growth	Notes
		Slow growing and small trees. Displaying signs of cold
Beurre Giffard	weak	damage.
		Moderate growth and only occasional cold damage
Cabot	good	displayed.
		Failure to thrive due to cold intolerance. Not blighted,
Clapp's Favorite	weak	but very slow to grow.
Clara Fritj	fair	Slow growing to date, but appear quite hardy.
David	good	Very good form, spreading, and well angled branches. Some resistance to blister mite. Advertised as fireblight resistant, which has been our experience. Fruit can crack, especially in rainy spells following dry weather.
Garber	good	Shows good vigor, but only fair form, needing some management. No evidence of cold intolerance. Somewhat weak in growth here, showing signs of cold
Golden Spice	fair	stress and some dieback. No blight.
Hardy	good	No cold damage. A beautiful tree in form, but unfortunately a terrible form for managing for fruitgrows like a Lombardy Poplar. Very vigorous.

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		First rate all purpose pear. Excessive vigor and upright
		growth make it difficult to form and manage. No
		fireblight. Moderately susceptible to blister mite and
Hill	good	pear scab. Local variety
	died, cold	
Hosni	intolerant	Not cold hardy enough for the region.
Hudar	weak	A poor grower thus far, showing cold intolerance.
		Has done fairly well for an asian strain, but weaker than
Illinka	fair	most here, thus far.
		Vigorous and healthy tree. Shows no cold damage. Form
Krylov	good	is fair.
		Decent form for a pear. Moderate in vigor, adding to its
		ease of managing. Showing good cold tolerance here.
		No blight. Blister mite susceptible. May have ineffective
Luscious	good	pollen.
	0	Has faired quite well in this climate, surprisingly. Shows
Okolo	good	little cold damage. Noblight.
Radchinkskaia	fair	Slow growing to date, but appear quite hardy.
		Moderate cold intolerance, but doing fairly well here.
Shinseiki	fair	No blight.
		Moderate growth and only occasional cold damage
Southworth	good	displayed.
	8000	Healthy tree, with acceptable form. Bearing somewhat
Stacey	good	early in life. No fireblight here.
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		Displays good form, a rarity in pears. Vigorous, but not
		excessive. Advertised as fireblight resistant, which has
Summercrisp	good	been our experience. Blister mite susc.
	8004	Have struggled here for years, never attaining much size
	all specimens	as a tree. Not blighted, simply growing poorly and
Tait Dropmore		suffering cold damage.
	Weak of alea	
		Very good form, spreading, and well angled branches.
		Some resistance to blister mite. Advertised as fireblight
Ussuriensis	good	resistant, which has been our experience.
Ussuriensis	guuu	First rate all purpose pear. Excessive vigor and upright
		growth make it difficult to form and manage. No
Maldon Lar-		fireblight. Moderately susceptible to blister mite and
Walden Large	good	pear scab. Local variety
Mintor Mali-		Coodlings not grafted trace. Covered describered to
Winter Nelis	<b>r</b> ·	Seedlings, not grafted trees. Several dozen have grown
Seedlings	fair	slowly, but show no cold damage. Small trees.

We are testing a pool of another 50+ pear varieties, but they are too young to make an assessment.