



## APRICOT CULTIVARS

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(This Factsheet is one of a series that replaces OMAF Publication 430, *Fruit Cultivars*. See also 02-033, *Peach and Nectarine Cultivars*, 02-037, *Cherry Cultivars — Sweet and Tart*, 02-039, *Pear Cultivars*, 02-041, *Plum Cultivars — European and Japanese*)

This publication provides information that will guide commercial growers in selecting fruit cultivars to plant. Recommendations for planting cultivars and adapted areas within the province have been determined by University of Guelph, Department of Plant Agriculture, Vineland, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF). Valuable assistance was provided in consultation with growers, shipper/dealers, nurseries, processors and the Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board (OTFPMB). It is hoped this information will further assist growers in making choices about cultivars.

The term "cultivar" is used throughout this publication. Cultivar, a contraction of "cultivated variety", replaces the older and confusing term "variety", which also refers to recognizable types within a species that maintain their distinguishing characteristics in the wild state. A cultivar is any horticulturally recognized and named type or sort that can only be maintained through vegetative propagation or the use of selected breeding lines and seed sources.

### A. RECOMMENDED APRICOT CULTIVARS

Apricots are not recommended for "General Planting" (Table 1, *Recommended Apricot Cultivars in Ontario*) because of their extreme sensitivity to spring frosts and bacterial spot. Recently developed cultivars have been screened for improved bacterial spot resistance and late blooming tendencies, so growers now have opportunities to plant commercially viable orchards. Cultivars listed under "Limited Planting" have value within the limitations outlined in the individual cultivar descriptions. Others may only be marginally adapted to a particular region or be marketable at roadside stands.

The "Trial Planting" list identifies promising cultivars and numbered selections that have been under limited observation at various test orchards and require further testing. Cultivar recommendations are general. They do not fit every grower's specific requirements for soil, location, market opportunities, etc. Local conditions must be taken

into account before any variety decisions are made. Apricots are not recommended for production in colder zones where there is a risk of spring frost frequent during bloom.

**TABLE 1. Recommended Apricot Cultivars for Ontario**

District & Zones	General Planting	Limited Planting	Trial Planting
Niagara (Zone 7A)	none	Harcot Haroblush™ Harojoy™ Goldcot Velvagio Goldrich Harostar™ Veecot Hargrand Harogem Harglow Vivagold Harval Harlayne	
Essex/Kent (Zone 7A)	none	Harcot Haroblush™ Harojoy™ Goldcot Harostar™ Veecot Hargrand Harglow Harval Harlayne	

### B. APRICOT HARVEST DATES

Harvest date is an important piece of information for fruit growers, sales agents, processors and nurserymen. Table 2, *Average First Harvest Date for Apricot Cultivars and Selections*, shows average dates of the first commercial harvest of apricot cultivars and selections at the University of Guelph, Department of Plant Agriculture, Vineland. Only the most common cultivars and selections are listed. Throughout

the fruit-growing districts of the province, actual harvest dates will differ due to proximity to large bodies of water, local weather conditions, soil type and crop size.

**TABLE 2. Average First Harvest Date for Apricot Cultivars and Selections**

Cultivar	Date	Cultivar	Date
Harcot	July 25	Veecot	Aug. 6
Haroblush™	July 29	Hargrand	Aug. 6
Harojoy™	July 29	Harogem	Aug. 8
Goldcot	July 30	Harglow	Aug. 8
Velvaglo	July 31	Vivagold	Aug. 12
Goldrich	Aug. 1	Harval	Aug. 14
Harostar™	Aug. 4	Harlayane	Aug. 14

### C. APRICOT POLLINATION

Apricots are normally considered self-fruitful, not requiring inter-planting with other cultivars. However, some selections, notably Vivagold is self-sterile and should not be planted in solid blocks.

### D. APRICOT CULTIVAR DESCRIPTIONS

Apricot cultivars and selections with promise for commercial production are described briefly, listing general characteristics and performance of each cultivar. None of the descriptions signify successful commercial plantings: apricots are still considered only marginally commercial even in the best sites. Unless otherwise indicated, a cultivar or promising selection is considered satisfactory for tree growth, hardiness, cropping ability, fruit size, appearance and quality. Specific qualities and/or limitations are noted. These comments and appraisals apply to Ontario conditions and performance elsewhere may be substantially different.

**Goldcot** An apricot that has had a good production record at Vineland. The colour and quality are fair. Over the years it has proven to be a dependable, hardy standard cultivar but not of the best quality.

**Goldrich** The fruit are large, bright, attractive orange, hang well at maturity and do not split after heavy rains. Flesh quality is fair.

**Harcot** An early apricot with an attractive red blush. It has good fruit quality for roadsides markets and direct fruit sales, but unsuitable for shipping or processing. Harcot has a sweet kernel, but this characteristic has been inconsistent at Vineland.

**Harglow** This cultivar blooms slightly later than most commercial apricots. The fruit are medium in size and bright solid orange in colour. The fruit ripens a few days before Veecot and is firm and flavourful. This cultivar is best suited for the fresh market.

**Hargrand** This cultivar ripens in Veecot season. The fruit are a dull orange but the size is excellent when the crop has been thinned. The flesh is juicy and tasty. Hargrand is suitable for the fresh market.

**Harlayne** Ripens late in August about a week after Veecot and has proven to be very hardy at Harrow. The fruit have a red blush and are bright and attractive in the basket. This cultivar requires careful thinning to attain size. It is best suited to the fresh market but is also suitable for home processing.

**Haroblush™ (formerly HW 441)** An early apricot that ripens 4 days after Harcot. The fruit is attractive, red blush over half the fruit, oblong, medium size, very good flesh quality and freestone. The fruit has firm flesh and is moderately resistant to bacterial spot and skin cracking. The tree is hardier than Veecot, consistently productive, vigorous and canker tolerant.

**Harogem** This cultivar ripens mid-season, a few days after Veecot, but is not as winter-hardy. The fruit have a bright glossy finish with a dark red shoulder. An attractive cultivar for the fresh market, it colours early and must be picked carefully for proper maturity. Bacterial spot has been a problem in some seasons but overall a good cultivar.

**Harojoy™ (formerly HW 446)** An early apricot that ripens 5 days after Harcot. The fruit is very attractive with a good red blush, medium to large sized, slightly flattened, very firm flesh, good eating quality and freestone. The fruit is also very tolerant to bacterial spot, brown rot and skin cracking. The tree has moderate production, is canker tolerant and is hardier than Veecot.

**Harostar™ (formerly HW 436)** Ripens 10 days after Harcot. Exceptionally bright and attractive, uniform ripening fruit of good size, with good red blush on an orange background. The flesh is firm, freestone with medium quality. The fruit is also resistant to bacterial spot, brown rot and skin cracking. The tree is upright, productive and healthy.

**Harval** A late-maturing cultivator that ripens a full week after Veecot but in the same season as Harlayne. It has large, attractive fruit that are bright orange with a red blush. Trees have performed well at Harrow and Vineland.

**Veecot** Still the benchmark cultivar for the mid-season. It has a highly attractive, smooth finish and a deep, dark orange ground colour. It hangs well at maturity, but because of its intense colour, must be picked carefully for optimum maturity. Bacterial spot can be a problem some years, but tree health is excellent. Recommended for the fresh market and home canning.

**Velvago** This cultivar has larger than average fruit with an attractive bright orange colour. Stem-end ground colour tends to stay green even when commercially mature. Velvago is earlier than Veecot by 1 week. Bacterial spot can be serious some seasons. Flesh quality, juiciness and flavour make Velvago very suitable for the local fresh market.

**Vivagold** This cultivar ripens in the late season, about 6 days after Veecot. The fruit have an excellent intense orange ground colour and a velvety finish. Because it colours early, fruit must be picked carefully for optimum maturity. Processing quality is excellent.

The following apricot cultivars described in the previous issue of this publication have been dropped because they are no longer considered commercially important:

Alfred, Farmingdale, Perfection, Viceroy and V60031.

## E. APRICOT ROOTSTOCK DESCRIPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Apricot Seedling** — (*Prunus armeniaca*) The main rootstock used commercially for apricot in North America. Apricot cultivars are fully compatible and trees come into bearing rather early on apricot seedlings. Seedlings of locally grown apricot cultivars such as Alfred, Goldcot, Manchurian and Veecot are the most reliable seedling rootstocks for apricot and are recommended for use in Ontario. Other species such as *Prunus besseyi* usually result in smaller but shorter-lived trees.

**Peach Seedling** — In well-drained, sandy loam soils, peach (*Prunus persica*) seedling has been reported to be as a satisfactory rootstock for apricot. However, peach seedlings will not tolerate wet, heavy or poorly drained soils. Also, some apricot cultivars, such as Reliable, have been found to be incompatible with peach seedling rootstocks. Peach seedlings are not recommended for general use as apricot rootstocks in Ontario.

**Myrobalan Plum Seedling** — These are not normally recommended for use with apricots for several reasons. The graft union between apricot and myrobalan plum (*Prunus cerasifera*) is weak and may break in a strong wind. Slow decline of apricot trees on Myrobalan seedling rootstock has also been reported. Apricot trees on Myrobalan seedling normally come into bearing later than trees on apricot seedling. Myrobalan seedling rootstock is only recommended for areas where drainage is imperfect and apricot seedling will not perform well.

**American Plum Seedling** — Apricot on seedlings of American plum (*Prunus americana*) develop a large swelling at the union and break off rather easily. Native

American plum seedlings should not be used as rootstock for apricot.

## F. APRICOT CULTIVARS AND ROOTSTOCKS

### List No. I — Named Cultivars

Alfred	Beograd
Cacaks Gold	Cegledi Bibo
Cegledi Oria	Debbies Gold
Farmingdale	Goldcot
Goldrich	Harcot
Harglow	Hargrand
Harlayne	Harogem
Haroblush <sup>TM</sup>	Harojoy <sup>TM</sup>
Harostar <sup>TM</sup>	Keckskei Rozen
Reliable	Samarkand
Scout	Sundrop
Sunglo	Sungold
Torosian#1	Torosian#2
Veecot	Velvago
Viceroy	Vivagold

### List No. II — Rootstocks

Alfred	Haggith
M604	Manchurian

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

To view photographs of a selection of the cultivars listed in this Factsheet, visit the Tender Fruit Photo Gallery on the OMAF web site at [www.gov.on.ca/omaf/english/crops/facts/tender\\_fruit\\_gallery.htm](http://www.gov.on.ca/omaf/english/crops/facts/tender_fruit_gallery.htm).

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- Order No. 02-037, *Cherry Cultivars — Sweet and Tart*
- Order No. 02-039, *Pear Cultivars*
- Order No. 02-041, *Plum Cultivars — European and Japanese*.

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