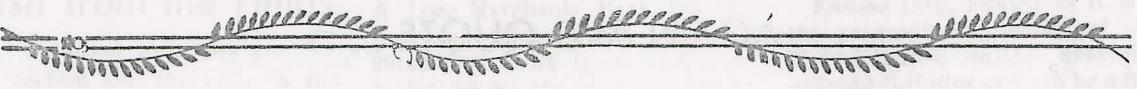




THE BLUEBERRY GROWER



Red, White and Blue "Blueberries"

One Washington Variety These Colors—
Another Picked As Late As Christmas

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We have two species of blueberries growing in this section that are very interesting and very very different to those of the east.

The *Vaccinium parvifolium* (Red Huckleberry) bears beautiful red berries, it is an exceedingly variable plant, bearing berries all the way from a clear white or cream color to dark red, and in shape from pear shape to a flat round. This makes it very interesting to hunt for superior specimens and I have spent days doing so, I have found them as large as five-eighths of an inch in diameter, which compares very favorably with the best of the wild berries of the East.

The flavor of this berry is very poor, it is very acid, and the berries are seldom gathered, however I think it has breeding possibilities, the vigor of the plant and the beauty of the fruit are worth preserving in a better variety if that is possible, furthermore they grow very well on dry soil, nearly every stump on cut-over lands will sprout one or more of these red huckleberries, the roots grow down under the bark of the stump and finally reach the ground before the bark rots away and drops from the tree, plants have been found growing on top of 40 foot stumps, with their roots reaching all the way to the ground.

This species has 12 chromosomes,

the same as cranberries, it will therefore not hybridize with the commercial varieties of the East which have 24 chromosomes, I have succeeded in crossing it with the low bush blueberry of Maine, *Vaccinium canadense*, these species are so very different and I am wondering what the result will be, the hybrids will not fruit until 1937.

Another native is the *Vaccinium ovatum*, an evergreen plant of great beauty, it reaches perfection in the country between Puget Sound and the Pacific Ocean, in the deep shaded woods there, it is at home, great quantities of the branches are sold in the Cities for store greens, it is a common sight to see large truck loads of it being delivered to the stores, its fruit is small and blue or black, and quantities of them are gathered and sold for pie making, they ripen very late, I have picked them around Christmas time, this plant is sometimes called the Box blueberry or Box huckleberry because it so much resembles the Boxwood plant. This species too has 12 chromosome and I often wonder why we find no hybrids between it and the first mentioned, as they grow in the same places.

The two species just mentioned grow at low altitudes, up in the mountains there are a number of species quite different.