Peaches are normally grown in areas with milder temperatures. In Canada, these areas include the Niagara region of Ontario and the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. Milder temperatures are also needed for grape growing and commercial greenhouses, both of which are expanding. As a result, there is less land available each year for planting peach crops, leading to an increased demand for fresh and canned peaches. It is possible that global warming may allow peaches to be grown in other regions. This research measured the success of growing peaches and nectarines outside of traditional areas.

**Keywords:**
Peaches, apricots, agriculture, fruit cultivars, cool climate, cold tolerance

**What is this research about?**

Peaches grow in Ontario outside of the Niagara Region

**What did the researchers do?**

An orchard of one-year old trees was planted of each of fifteen peach varieties and two nectarine varieties in soil that was suitable for growing fruit trees in Simcoe, Ontario. Trees were managed in a similar manner as in commercial peach farms (e.g. watering, fertilizing and thinning of fruit). Researchers monitored the trees for seven years and measured how well the trees grew and survived, how many years it took each tree to produce fruit, and the amount of fruit produced by each tree.

**What you need to know:**

Some regions in Ontario, not typically known for growing peaches, may be able to successfully grow this crop and increase the supply of fresh and canned peaches.
After seven growing seasons, only two peach varieties, V85684 and HW271, had more than 50% of trees die. HW271 and Redhaven (both are peach varieties) grew best, while HW273 and Vivid, also peach varieties, grew the most slowly. The bloom dates for all varieties (April 19 to May 13) occurred at a time when frost was possible in the Simcoe region. Temperatures were below -28 degrees Celsius during two years of the experiment, which killed the flower buds in those years. The nectarine trees were more vulnerable to bud and leaf damage and produced less fruit. Of the peach varieties, Redhaven, HW272 and V84061 were the most productive, while Harrow Beauty, V85384, HW273 and Vivid produced the largest fruits.

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How can you use this research?
Fruit Growers and Canners can use this research to select varieties of peaches to grow in slightly cooler regions.

Plant Scientists can expand on this research and look at the possibility of growing other “mild temperature” crops outside of their typical zone.

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Plant Scientists can expand on this research and look at the possibility of growing other “mild temperature” crops outside of their typical zone.

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