

No other varieties could be compared with it in color, size, and quality.

Lewis H. Rumph, also of Marshallville, developed the Georgia Belle and E.W. Hiley of Fort Valley had the largest orchard in Georgia as well as the world during that time. There were approximately 350,000 trees covering a land area of over 2000 acres. He employed over 800 pickers during the season.

Unfortunately, Georgia was not the only state expanding in the industry. Similar expansion across the nation resulted in overproduc-

tion and low prices. The Depression of 1929 only made matters worse.

Following the Depression, production fell sharply due to a series of bad crop years and bad weather. In 1950, production fell to 845,000 bushels, the smallest harvest recorded by the Georgia Crop Reporting Service since it was established in 1908.

Georgia has since recovered from the bad years. Although no longer the nation's top producer, it is still known as the "Peach State" and the fruit remains one of Georgia's top horticultural crops.