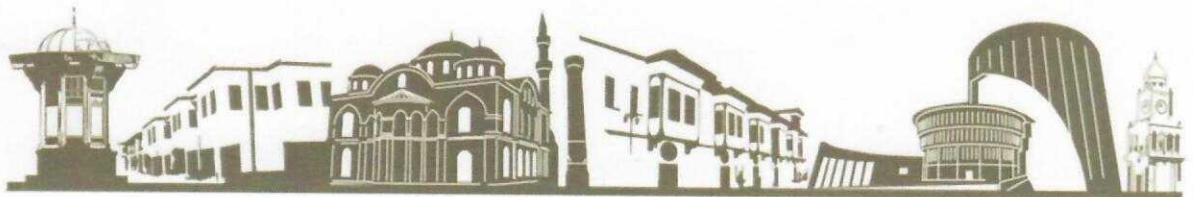




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Evaluation of selected apricot cultivars based on many years of research in the collection of RIH in Skierniewice, Poland

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Accordingly to the Central Statistical Office of Poland, in the year 2016 harvested production of apricots in Poland was 4 thousand tons, what constituted 0.11% of total fruit production from trees only. In an unfavorable year 2017 the production of apricots was half as much as in 2016. Generally, in the last five years no progress in yielding of apricot trees was recorded. The importance of apricot growing in Poland is small, because of harsh climatic conditions. The cold winters with temperature drops even below -20°C occur quite often, causing significant damages to apricot flower buds, and even to branches and young twigs from time to time. In addition, cold weather during flowering very often limit the fruitlet formation. After such winters/springs, as a result, apricot trees do not produce any fruits or the crop load is often very low. Taking the above under consideration, in countries located in colder climatic regions, such as Poland, the only some varieties having flower buds adequately resistant/tolerating to harsh winters and blooms adequately resistant to late spring frosts, and producing high yield of good-quality fruit can be recommended for growing. Therefore, in the Polish National List of Fruit Plant Varieties there are 9 cultivars only

The apricot field collection in possession of the Research Institute of Horticulture in Skierniewice, Poland, is not as rich as those in the countries of Southern Europe well-known from apricot production. Over 100 cultivars, selections and seedlings of apricots are now being evaluated in the collection established in 1995. The research carried out in the collection are main source of information on apricot varieties value for Polish fruit growers.

The paper presents agronomical efficiency and fruit attributes of apricot cultivars well-tolerating conditions of Polish climate, positively evaluated in last ten years - 'Darina', 'Dobrzyńska', 'Harostar', 'Kijewskij Krasen', 'Krojczyńska', 'Morela z Ukrainy' (Apricot from Ukraine), 'Pietropawłowski', 'Poleskij Krupnopłodny', 'Veharda', 'Węgierska Wczesna' (Hungarian Early).

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Keywords: apricot collection, resistance to frost, agronomical value, fruit attributes

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