The Georgia Peach

Imprinted on license plates, plastered on billboards, stamped on the tail side of the state quarter, and inscribed on the state map, the peach is easily Georgia’s most visible symbol. Yet *Prunus persica* itself is surprisingly rare in Georgia, and it has never been central to the southern agricultural economy. Why, then, have southerners – and Georgians in particular – clung to the fruit? *The Georgia Peach: Culture, Agriculture, and Environment in the American South* shows that the peach emerged as a viable commodity at a moment when the South was desperate for a reputation makeover. This agricultural success made the fruit an enduring cultural icon despite the increasing difficulties of growing it. A delectable contribution to the renaissance in food writing, *The Georgia Peach* will be of great interest to connoisseurs of food, southern, environmental, rural, and agricultural history.

William Thomas Okie is Assistant Professor at Kennesaw State University, where he teaches American history, food history, and history education. Trained in environmental and agricultural history at the University of Georgia, he has produced work that has won prizes from the Society of American Historians, the Southern Historical Association, and the Agricultural History Society. He has written for the journal *Agricultural History* and the Southern Foodways Alliance’s quarterly, *Gravy.*
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The Georgia Peach

Culture, Agriculture, and Environment in the American South

WILLIAM THOMAS OKIE

Kennesaw State University
For Mom and Dad

And, as always, for Kelly
Take from me apples of cider flesh,
Rob me of plum and pear,
Lose every orange of juicy gold,
Let not a vineyard bear:
Apricots’ rose from its cheek may fade,
Melons may dry and bleach.
If thick in the low green orchard hangs
That beautiful Georgia peach!

Mabel Swartz Withoft,
“The Georgia Peach,” 1903
Contents

List of Figures  x
List of Tables  xii
Acknowledgments  xiii
  Introduction: An Invitation  1
  A Wilderness of Peach Trees  11
  A Baron of Pears  32
  Elberta, You’re a Peach  59
  A Connecticut Yankee in King Cotton’s Court  88
  Rot and Glut  112
  Blossoms and Hams  143
  Under the Trees  180
    Conclusion: A Benediction  219

Notes  229
Index  297
Figures

1.1 The Cotton Belt in 1860  page 15
2.1 Frontispiece of Prosper Berckmans’ *Indicateur Generale*  41
2.2 “Le Petit Parc” (The Little Park) from Prosper Berckmans’ *Indicateur Generale*  42
3.1 Samuel H. Rumph’s home at Willow Lake, near Marshallville, Georgia  78
3.2 Samuel H. Rumph’s “Suburban Fruit Farm” Packinghouse, near Marshallville, Georgia  79
3.3 The great fruit exhibit at the 1895 Peach Carnival in Macon, Georgia  81
4.1 “Profitable peach-growing …”  89
4.2 “Land was cheap, and good Negro labor abundant …”  101
4.3 “Bridal couples, both black and white …”  108
4.4 “Meals are furnished at cost …”  109
4.5 “Mr. Hale explained that … some of their parents were slaves on the place before the Civil War …”  110
5.1 Then comes the spraying …”  115
5.2 “It was a great sight to see the work going on …”  116
5.3 “White labor is used entirely in the packing house …”  122
5.4 “As soon as covers are nailed on the crates, they are rushed into the refrigerator car …”  122
5.5 “These cars are ‘iced up’ twelve to twenty-four hours before loading begins …”  123
5.6 Georgia weekly carlot shipments of peaches, 1928–1931  139
6.1 Middle Georgia before the creation of Peach County  149
6.2 Middle Georgia after the creation of Peach County  149
6.3 Fruit dancers in the 1925 pageant, *The Trail of Pink Petals*  156
### Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>“President [Hunt] and matron in pantry …”</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>“Peach pickers being driven to the orchards”</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Peach trees in Georgia, 1889–1924</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Peach trees in Georgia, 1929–1969</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Peach trees in Georgia, 1978–1997</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>A Dickey Farms guestworker crew</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1</td>
<td>The Lane Southern Orchards packing line</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.2</td>
<td>The Lane Southern Orchards “Mexican Café”</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tables

5.1 Peach acreage and farms in Georgia, 1890–1925  
5.2 Potential value of peaches and cotton in middle Georgia, 1909–1929  
5.3 Peach acreage and farms in Georgia, 1925–1930  
6.1 Comparing Houston and Peach Counties in 1930  
6.2 Houston, Macon, and Peach Counties peach and cotton acreage, 1889–1929  
7.1 Peach acreage, production, and value, 1954–2012  
7.2 Hispanic population of Georgia and middle Georgia, 1980–2007
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