

Ray's Figs Ray's Figs

A Review of the Year 2003 and 2004 in my plantings.

2003

The year 2003 was another good year. There were no devastating late freezes. My collection continued to recover. I am very pleased with the drip irrigation system. It saves a tremendous amount of work with all the containers I have. Next year I plan to set some of my plants in the ground and install emitters to those plants. Perhaps I can finally get my collection in the ground where it belongs.

2004

No bad freezes, but I was a little late getting my pots in the storage shed. I lost a few plants, but no varieties in the winter of 2003/2004. It has been quite wet this year and I have not had to place total reliance on the drip system. I set out four plants in the ground: Hunt, Chicago, Atreano and Nero during a dry spell. Soon after I set them out it began to rain very heavily. It drowned both the Hunt and the Atreano. As soon as I could, I dug them up. I put the Hunt in a container and it recovered very nicely; I re-set the Atreano a little higher and it too recovered nicely. I put a Sal's Fig in the hole where Hunt had been (the root ball much higher than the Hunt had been). All four plants are showing good to excellent growth.

I also had fruit from some varieties which had not fruited for me in past years: Barese Violet, a greenish-yellow fig with brilliant violet pulp and very good flavor and richness; Barese White, also greenish-yellow with a pale strawberry pulp and good flavor; Sal's Fig, a bronzy-brown fruit with strawberry pulp and very good flavor (rich, better than Chicago); and, LSU Gold, a yellow, rather flattened round fig with pale strawberry pulp, excellent flavor, a real winner. The fruiting season typically ends in late October in south Georgia and very little fruit still on the plants ripens before first frost in late November. This year I decided to try a French technique for stimulating figs to ripen which consists of placing a drop of vegetable oil in the eye of each fig. I had tried this a number of years ago and thought it rather effective with some varieties. This year it seemed to have little effect. I did get a few ripe Negronne, Tena, Osborn and Golden Celeste, but I am not sure that it was due to the oiling..

Please e-mail your comments, questions and suggestions to me at thegivans@planters.net.

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