

## 2002 FALL NANTES CARROT CULTIVAR OBSERVATION

\*William H. Shoemaker,  
University of Illinois

While carrots are not grown in large acreage in Illinois, many market farmers include them in their farmers market offerings or CSA shares. Fresh carrots have excellent culinary qualities that add value to a growers product line. In particular, Fall plantings generally are superior due to the cool, moist conditions during root maturation. This trial evaluates nantes type carrots for bunching in a raised bed system.

### *Materials and Methods*

This trial was conducted at the St Charles Horticulture Research Center in St Charles, IL, in a Proctor Silt Loam soil. 20 nantes type carrot cultivars were evaluated. The field was prepared by applying 0.75 lb aia trifluralin and discing in. In April, beds were raised and then shaped to be 18" across and 6' apart on center. They were left fallow until August. No fertilizer was used. Just prior to planting, Round-up was used to eliminate existing weeds. The bed surfaces were then tilled to a depth of 2". Carrots were seeded on August 9 with a push-type Planet Jr seeder set on hole 8 and equipped with a scatter shoe attachment. Each bed had two rows, each 4-6" from an edge of the bed. Seeds were planted about 1/2" deep in rows 20' long. T-tape drip irrigation tubing was laid down the center of each bed. Irrigation was applied as needed to avoid moisture stress during any stage of growth. As carrots reached the 4-leaf stage, Sencor was applied post-emergence for control of broadleaf weeds. No insecticides or fungicides were used. Harvest consisted of digging a 10' sample of roots from each cultivar on 10/30/02. Roots were evaluated for number, weight and qualitative characteristics.

### *Results and Discussion*

See Table 1 for harvest data. This trial was relatively trouble free. Soil conditions were somewhat dry at planting but the irrigation system kept the trial from suffering drought stress. Cool conditions began to dominate in mid-September, just as roots began to size up. Cooler than average conditions in October meant slow growing but the carrots still made progress and were at peak harvest stage by the end of October. No insect or disease problems emerged and plant health was very good throughout the life of the trial.

Carrot quality at harvest was very good. Roots were crisp but tender, had very good orange color and were sweet. Because of the raised beds and drip irrigation, roots were generally straight and uniform in most varieties. A few cultivars had low numbers of roots due to lower germination rates. But few defects were seen in any of the varieties. **Bolero** stood out as a great choice for an early cultivar with very few defects, as did **Earlibird Nantes**. **Atlanta** was productive with good length. **Bejo 1887 and 1888** looked like promising new lines with good uniformity. **RCR 1851**, though more of an emperor type, looked very good, with long, slender roots. **SNX 7099** had low germination but was a perfect mid-season nantes type. **Finaro** had

good uniformity and was attractive. Carrot quality across cultivars in this trial was excellent.

*\*Sr Research Specialist, Food Crops, Dept of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences*

**\*TABLE 1. Carrot Harvest Data**

Cultivars	Source	Total Root		Qualitative Traits			
		No.	Wt.	Forks	Crooks	Splits	Nubs
Bolero	VL	136	11.2	0	1	0	0
Earlibird Nantes	ST	93	9.8	0	0	0	0
Atlanta	BE	138	9.1	0	0	1	4
RCR 1851A	RG	118	8.9	0	0	0	0
Mokum	JS	74	8.9	2	5	1	2
Napoli	BE	83	8.8	4	0	0	0
Alamo	BE	101	8.4	2	1	0	1
Finaro	SU	88	8.1	5	1	0	1
Bejo 1887	BE	74	7.8	0	0	0	1
Bejo 1832	BE	109	7.8	2	3	0	0
Evora	SU	92	7.5	2	2	0	0
VAC 30	VL	102	6.8	5	3	0	0
Bejo 1888	BE	104	6.7	0	0	0	0
Ithaca	JS	74	6.4	0	2	1	0
Navarino	BE	8.5	5.9	0	0	3	1
Nelson	BE	56	5.8	3	0	1	0
Jeanette	SI	54	5.8	1	1	0	2
SNX 7099	SU	64	5.7	0	0	0	0
Napa	SU	35	4.1	1	0	0	0
KXPC 044	SI	41	3.7	1	2	0	0

*\*Ranked in descending order of weight. All weights in pounds.*