

Bedfordshire plums and gages

Bedfordshire has an extensive list of plums and gages, many raised by the Laxton family at their Bedford nursery.

Dessert plums and gages		
Variety	First recorded	Pick and use
Utility	1903	early/mid-August
Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1910. A Jefferson x Prune Peche cross. Medium-large sized with a red skin. Very sweet and juicy. Resistant to bacterial canker and a heavy cropper.		
Laxton's Early Gage	pre 1948	mid-August
Raised by Laxton Bros. before 1948. A Reine Claude de Bavay x Prune Peche cross. Large, yellow-skinned with a distinct bloom. Melting, juicy, yellow sweet flesh.		
Laxton's Gage	1899	mid/late August
Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1922. A Green Gage x Victoria cross. Medium-large in size and yellow skinned. Rich, sweet flesh. Largely self-fertile.		
Laxton's Goldfinch	1906	mid/late August
Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1928. An Early Transparent Gage x Jefferson cross. Large and yellow-skinned with firm yellow sweet flesh.		
Laxton's Delight	1913	late August/early September
Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1945. Parentage unknown. Large, yellow –skinned with very juicy golden yellow flesh.		
Laxton's Ideal	pre 1937	early/mid-September
Raised by Laxton Bros. A Denniston's Superb (probably Imperial Gage) x Coe's' Golden Drop cross. Medium sized and yellow-skinned. Flesh is firm and very juicy. A self-fertile high quality variety.		
Laxton's Delicious	1902	mid/late September
Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1924. A Pond's Seedling x Coe's Golden Drop cross. Large, with a pinkish-red skin and a distinct lavender-blue bloom. Flesh juicy and sweet.		

Dual purpose plums		
Variety	First recorded	Pick and use
Early Laxton	1902	late July/early August
Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1919. Believed to be Jaune Lative x Early Orleans cross. Small, yellow-skinned with a pinkish blush. Juicy, golden yellow flesh.		
Laxton's Blue Tit	pre 1931	mid-August

Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1938. A Czar x Green Gage cross. Medium sized, blue-skinned with a heavy blue bloom. Self-fertile.

Laxton's Supreme	1904	mid/late August
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Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1913. A Denniston's Superb (probably Imperial Gage) x Victoria cross. Large, yellow-skinned with a pink flush. Flesh is soft and sweet. Self-fertile.

Laxton's Jubilee	1905	late August/early September
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Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1936. A Victoria x Czar cross. Medium-large in size, blue-black skinned with a bloom.

Olympia	1904	early/mid-September
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Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1937. A Curlew x Early Rivers cross. Large, blue-black coloured with a bloom on the skin.

Fotheringham	1600s	mid/late September
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Parentage unknown. Mentioned by John Rea in 1665 so could be English. Samples received by the National Fruit Collection from Wrest Park at Silsoe, in the 1940s. Medium in sized, red-skinned with a bloom.

Culinary plums

Variety	First recorded	Pick and use
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Black Prince	1905	early/mid-August
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Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in about 1930. Believed to be a Kentish Black x Damson Bradley's King cross. Medium sized with a bluish-black skin and a light blue bloom. Very acidic juicy flesh.

Bountiful	1900	mid-August
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Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1926. A Victoria x Red Magnum Bonum cross. Medium-large sized with a pinkish-red skin and a fine bloom. Firm fleshed and acidic. Self-fertile.

Laxton's Blackbird	pre 1911	mid/late August
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Raised by Laxton Bros. A Czar x Curlew cross. Medium-large blue-black skinned and with a bloom. Self-fertile

Laxton's Prosperity	1899	mid/late August
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Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1910. A Grand Duke x Czar cross. Medium -large in size, blue-black skinned with a bloom. Flesh is firm and slightly acidic. Self-fertile.

Laxton's Cropper	1906	early/mid-September
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Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1931. A Victoria x Aylesbury Prince cross. Large-medium sized, blue-black skinned and with a bloom. Self-fertile

Bedfordshire apple varieties

Bedfordshire has an extensive list of native apple varieties, many due to the Laxton family at their Bedford nursery. Each list is in picking-date order. After the fruit name is the variety's earliest known recorded date.

Variety	First recorded	Pick	Use
<u>Laxton's Early Crimson</u>	1931	Early Aug	Aug
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Worcester Pearmain x Gladstone. A small to medium sized apple with a dull green skin almost completely flushed brownish purple. The flesh is coarse and sweet.			
Laxton's Leader	1905	Early Aug	Aug
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Worcester Pearmain x Gladstone. Greenish-yellow skin almost completely covered with a purple flush and some broken stripes. Skin has a chalky 'bloom'. Slightly acidic.			
Owen Thomas	1897	Mid Aug	Mid/late Aug
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Named after Queen Victoria's gardener. Greenish skinned, flushed orange with scarlet stripes. Quite greasy. Aromatic, sweet juicy flesh.			
Laxton's Advance	1908	Mid Aug	Mid/late Aug
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Cox's Orange Pippin x Gladstone. Yellowish skinned with a reddish-brown flush and broken red stripes. Sweet and aromatic flesh.			
Duchess of Bedford	1918	Aug.	Aug - Sept
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Cellini x Beauty of Bath. Yellowish-green skin flushed dark orange with some stripes. Very greasy. Sweet and aniseed-like tasting flesh.			
Laxton's Epicure	1909	late Aug	Aug - Sept
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Cox's Orange Pippin x Wealthy. Greenish-yellow skin flushed orange-brown and streaked with red. Fine, crisp, sweet flesh.			
Laxton's Herald	1906	Late Aug	Sept
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Worcester Pearmain x Beauty of Bath. Yellow skinned flushed almost completely bright red with some darker red stripes. Worcester Pearmain-like sweet and crisp flesh.			
Bedford Pippin	pre 1913	Early-mid season	Sept - Oct
Raised by Laxton Bros. by crossing the varieties Ribston Pippin and King of The Pippins. A red striped medium sized conical apple. Thought lost but rediscovered 2011.			
Laxton's Exquisite	1902	Late Aug	Sept - Oct
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Cox's Orange Pippin x Cellini. Medium to large in size. Orange flushed and striped yellow skin. Some russet. Sweet and slightly aromatic flesh.			
Laxton's Favourite	1925	Late Aug	Sept - Oct
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Cox's Orange Pippin x Laxton's Exquisite. Pale yellow skin almost totally flushed and streaked with orange red. Coarse, crisp, sweet flesh.			
Laxton's Fortune	1904	Early Sept	Sept - Oct
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Cox's Orange Pippin x Wealthy. Pale yellow skin mottled and flushed with orange and red. Quite ribbed and with some russet. Sweet, firm flesh. Has resistance to scab and mildew.			

Laxton's Reward	1925	Early Sept	Sept - Oct
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. A Laxton's Epicure cross. Greenish yellow skinned streaked and flushed red. Firm, crisp sweet flesh.			
Queenby's Glory	1949	Early Sept	Sept - Oct
Probably arose at Wrest Park, Silsoe. Yellowish green skinned and flushed and striped orange-red. Some russet on top and base. Slightly greasy skinned. Sweet and juicy flesh.			
Laxton's Victory	1926	Early Sept	Sept - Oct
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Cox's Orange Pippin x Laxton's Exquisite. A medium sized yellowish skinned apple with a brownish flush and occasionally streaked with red. Sweet and aromatic flesh.			
Beauty of Bedford	1913	Mid Sept	Sept - Oct
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Lady Sudeley x Beauty of Bath. A tall medium sized apple with a ribbed body. Greenish yellow with an orange flush. Firm and sweet flesh.			
Laxton's Peerless	1900	Mid Sept	Sept - Nov
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. A large yellow-skinned apple with quite a lot of scattered russet. Occasional red flush. Greasy. Crisp, firm flesh that is more acidic than sweet.			
September Beauty	1885	Mid Sept	Sept - Nov/Dec
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. A medium sized yellowish-green apple mottled and striped with orange. Skin is greasy and slightly russeted. Sweet flesh.			
Laxton's Pioneer	1934	Late Sept.	Oct - Nov
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Large slightly flattened yellow-skinned apple almost completely covered with a dark carmine flush and stripes. Skin has a chalky 'bloom'. Flesh is crisp and quite astringent.			
Lord Lambourne	1907	Late Sept	Oct - Nov
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. James Grieve x Worcester Pearmain. A medium sized greenish gold skinned apple with a maroon flush and a few red broken stripes. Some russet. Very aromatic tasting. Has good resistance to mildew.			
Laxton's Rearguard	1907	Early Oct	Nov - Jan
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Ribston Pippin x Court Pendu Plat. Medium sized with a greenish skin mottled brown and an occasional red flush. Well russeted. Crisp, juicy, aromatic flesh.			
Pam's Delight	1956	Mid Oct	Oct - Nov
Raised by Alfred Hull in Luton from a pip and named after his late daughter. A medium sized red flushed apple. Sweet in flavour with crisp, juicy flesh.			
Laxton's Superb	1897	Mid Oct	Nov - Jan
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Wyken Pippin x Cox's Orange Pippin. A medium sized greenish apple flushed deep carmine and occasionally streaked purple. Firm, crisp flesh that can taste a little like aniseed. Has resistance to canker and mildew.			
Laxton's Pearmain	1897	Mid Oct	Oct - Jan/Mar
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Wyken Pippin x Cox's Orange Pippin. Pearmain-shaped. Medium sized with green skin flushed and striped deep red. Flesh is crisp, juicy and quite aromatic.			
Ballard Beauty	1946	Late Oct	Oct - Dec
Raised by Mr. A. Norman at Bedford. A Cox's Orange cross. A medium to large greenish yellow-skinned apple flushed with red. Firm and slightly acidic flesh.			

Laxton's Triumph	1902	Late Oct	Nov - Jan
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. King of the Pippins x Cox's Orange Pippin. Bright yellow skinned, flushed and striped bright scarlet. Highly aromatic, juicy, firm flesh.			
Laxton's Royalty	1908	Late Oct	Jan - Mar
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford. Cox's Orange Pippin x Court Pendu Plat. Pale greenish yellow skin with a dull red flush and darker red stripes. Some russet on top and base. Firm and quite aromatic flesh.			

Dual purpose apples

Variety	First recorded	Pick	Use
Neild's Drooper	1915/16	Mid Oct	Oct - Nov/Dec
Arose at Woburn Park, from a tree thought to be Calville Blanc d'Ete. Tree has a distinctive weeping habit. Flesh is rich, sweet and complex.			

Culinary apples

Variety	First recorded	Pick	Use
Bedfordshire Foundling	1800	Early Oct	Oct - Dec/Mar
Exact place of origin not known. A large flat-round yellow apple sometimes with a dull orange flush. Coarse, firm acidic flesh.			
Hambling's Seedling	1894	Mid Oct	Nov - Jan/Mar
Raised by Major Hambling of Dunstable. A large yellow skinned apple with an occasional orange flush. Coarse, firm acidic flesh.			

Bedfordshire pear varieties

Bedfordshire has many pear varieties, many due to the Laxton family at their Bedford nursery.

Each list is in picking-date order. After the fruit name is the variety's earliest known recorded date.

Dessert pears			
Variety	First recorded	Pick	Use
Laxton's Early Market	1907	Late July/early Aug	Aug
Raised by Laxton Bros. of Bedford by crossing the varieties Marie Louise x Doyenné d'Été. A small, yellowish green pear. Can have a few broken red stripes. Flesh can be dry if allowed to over-ripen on the tree.			
Laxton's Superb	1901	Mid Aug	Late Aug
Raised by Laxton Bros. by crossing the varieties Williams Bon Chrétien x Beurre Superfin. Medium sized. Yellowish-green with an occasional dull red flush and broken stripes. Flesh is soft and sweet.			
Laxton's Harvester	1932	Late Aug/early Sept	early Sept
Raised by Laxton Bros. Parentage unknown. Medium sized. Dull yellowish green with brownish flush and russet dots. Soft and juicy flesh			
Laxton's Satisfaction	1902	Early Sept	Mid Sept
Raised by Laxton Bros. by crossing the varieties Beurre Superfin x Williams Bon Chrétien. Greenish-yellow but almost totally covered with rough textured russet. Often lop-sided. Sweet firm flesh.			
Laxton's Foremost	1901	Early/mid Sept	Late Sept
Raised by Laxton Bros. by crossing the varieties Maréchal de la Cour x Fertility. A large yellow pear. Can have a reddish flush and a few red stripes. Flesh is buttery and sweet.			
Beurre Bedford	1902	Late Sept	Early Oct/mid Nov
Raised by Laxton Bros. by crossing the varieties Marie Louise x Durondeau. A large sized pale yellow pear with a scattering of russet. Flesh is firm, aromatic and juicy.			
Laxton's Victor	1900	Late Sept	Oct - Nov
Raised by Laxton Bros. by crossing the varieties Seckel and Marie Louise. A medium sized pear with a red flush overlain with russet streaks and dots. Easily bruised and can be lop sided. Flesh is tender, firm and sweet.			
Laxton's Record	Early 1900s	Oct	Oct - Nov
Raised by Laxton Bros. by crossing the varieties Marie Louise x Doyenné du Comice. A medium to large sized yellowish green pear. Flushed red and with some fine patchy russet. Flesh is soft and sweet.			



Early Laxton

Medium-sized, oval, yellow skinned with a pinkish-red blush. Flesh soft and juicy. Raised by Laxton Bros. Introduced in 1919. Believed to be a cross of Catalonia and Early Rivers.

Bedford 1902

pollination group B



Partially self-fertile

in stock



Blue Tit

Medium-sized, round, reddish-purple skinned with a heavy bloom. Flesh firm and juicy. Raised by Laxton Bros. Introduced in 1938. A cross of Czar and Green Gage.

Bedford pre 1931

pollination group C



Self-fertile

in stock



Laxton's Supreme

Medium to large in size, oval to oblong in shape, yellow skinned with an occasional pinkish blush. Flesh soft and juicy. Raised by Laxton Bros. Introduced in 1913. A cross of Denniston's Superb and Victoria.

Bedford 1904

pollination group B



Self-fertile

in stock

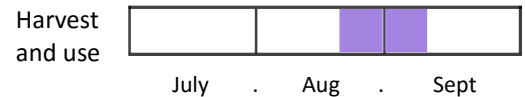


Laxton's Jubilee

Medium to large in size, oval, reddish-purple skinned with a light bloom. Flesh soft and very juicy. Raised by Laxton Bros. Introduced in 1936. A cross of Czar and Victoria.

Bedford 1905

pollination group C



Requires a pollinator

unavailable

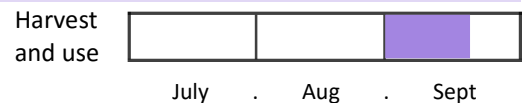


Olympia

Medium to large in size, oval, blue-black skinned with a light bloom. Flesh soft and juicy. Raised by Laxton Bros. Introduced in 1937. A cross of Early Rivers and Curlew.

Bedford 1904

pollination group B



Requires a pollinator

in stock

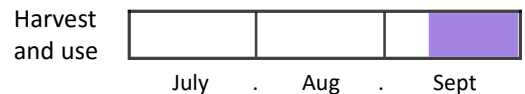


Fotheringham

Medium-sized, oval, red skinned with a bloom. Flesh firm and juicy. Grown at Wrest Park, Silsoe, in the 1940s. Mentioned by English botanist John Rea in 1665 but parentage unknown.

pre 1665

pollination group C



Requires a pollinator

unavailable

Bedfordshire lost varieties

There are around twenty named apple varieties documented as having Bedfordshire origins. It is possible that some of these might still exist today.

The dates after the names are the earliest recorded dates for the variety.

Apples		
Variety	First recorded	Season
Bedford		
Bedford Scarlet		Mid-season
Raised Laxton Bros. No published description. Last recorded in 1904		
Bedfordshire Greening	1898	Mid-season
A green apple flushed with red. Last recorded 1899.		
Bedfordshire Seedling	1894	Season unknown
No published description.		
Clapham Beauty	1896	Mid-season
Raised by Mr. Sheppard. A medium sized greenish-yellow apple with bright crimson streaks across its skin. Flat-round in shape. Last recorded in 1906.		
Laxton's Aristocrat	1936	Second early season
Raised by Laxton Bros. No published description.		
Laxton's Dictator	1937	Mid-season
A mid-season apple raised by Laxton Bros. No published description		
Laxton's Imperial	1907	Mid-late season
Raised by Laxton Bros. A cross of the varieties Allington Pippin and Cox's Orange Pippin. A slightly conical sweet apple. Yellow skinned, flushed orange with a few red stripes. Introduced in 1928.		
Laxton's Jewel	1937	Mid-season
Raised by Laxton Bros. No published description.		
Laxton's Premier	1899	Early season
Raised by Laxton Bros. and introduced in 1913. A cross of the varieties Gladstone and Worcester Pearmain. Heavily striped red. Last recorded 1923.		
Laxton's Rover	1937	Season unknown
Raised by Laxton Bros. No published description.		
Laxton's Sensation	1934	Season unknown
Raised by Laxton Bros. No published description.		
Laxton's Victor	1826	Mid-season
Raised by Laxton Bros. No published description.		

Lord Beatty	1919	Early season
Raised by Laxton Bros. A cross of Cox's Orange Pippin and Lady Sudeley. A greenish yellow-skinned conical variety flushed and striped orange red. Last recorded 1946.		
Ring Pippin	1907	Late season
Grown commercially in the county. An apple with a distinctive transverse grooved ring on its skin.		
Rufus	1898	Mid-season
A green apple flushed with red. Last recorded in 1899.		
The Prince	1934	Season unknown
Raised by Laxton Bros. No published description.		
Wellhead Wonder	1948	
No published description.		
Dunstable		
King of all Apples	1907	Late season
No published description		
Leighton Buzzard		
Lindula Seedling	1865	Mid-season
No published description.		