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# Hungarian Stamps

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## CULTIVATED FLORA OF HUNGARY: FRUIT



Magyar Posta is issuing new stamps in its series presenting and capturing through philatelic means the cultivated fruit flora of Hungary. Two types of fruit are shown in still life compositions on the postage stamps. The Besztercei plum variety is depicted on the HUF 245 stamp and the Tahi variety of strawberry is featured on the HUF 260 stamp. Other fruit compositions are used for the designs of the first day cover and the special postmark. The stamp was designed by the graphic artist Imre Benedek and produced by the ANY Security Printing Company. The new stamps will be available at large post offices and Filaposta in Hungary from 6 August, but may also be purchased from Magyar Posta's online store.

**Besztercei plum variety** ▪ This plum shows tremendous genetic diversity due to both its strong vegetative and generative tendencies. The diversity of types, shapes and crosses can be attributed in part to its wide geographic distribution throughout almost the whole of Europe. In 1552 prunes of this variety were sold as a medicine by K. Gesner in pharmacies. The export of Tokay wine assisted the spread of the Besztercei plum to a great extent. The variety probably did not originate in the Carpathian Basin but was introduced approximately 800 years ago. Today there are between 100 and 150 clone varieties. A major problem is that it is highly susceptible to plum pox. However, it has superb nutritional content qualities and its use is almost endless (fresh, compote, jam, jelly, juice, wine, palinka, and as savoury or sweet stuffing). Moreover, its wood and stone are both suitable for carving and its sap was once used as a cosmetic for freckles.

**Tahi variety of strawberry** ▪ This variety was grown from the Lujza variety on Szentendre Island. It was distributed by German breeders from stocks of unknown origin in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It does not grow vigorously but produces excellently, bearing medium to large, long, heart-shaped deep red fruit with brick red flesh. It is succulent, fragrant and firm with a shiny, slightly hispid surface. This variety transports, freezes and preserves well. It is hardy but does not tolerate drought well, which is precisely why the local variety developed in this favourable growing area. Tahi strawberries ripen at the same time or 1 to 3 days before Madame Moutot. Today the Tahi variety, which can be forced, has almost entirely disappeared although it can still be found growing wild in long-established gardens on Szentendre Island. It was still planted regularly in the 1960s. (Compiled by Dr Dezső Surányi)

**FRUIT 2014:** Order code: 2014210050211 (stamp series), 2014210060012 (FDC), 2014210010111 (plum), 2014210010211 (strawberry) • Date of issue: 6 August 2014 • Total face value: HUF 505 • Printing method: offset • Number of copies: 250,000 • Perforate size of the stamp: 35 x 35 mm • Printed by ANY Security Printing Company • Designed by Imre Benedek