For more than fifty years eastern Virginia has produced potatoes for the second early or summer market. In the twenties plantings reached a peak of more than 100,000 acres in the 4 or 5 coastal counties, and all farming activities centered around the potato crop. At that time the most productive land was reserved for potatoes, and the fertility was guarded by suitable rotation systems, the use of winter cover crops, and the application of liberal amounts of stable manure. These treatments on the sandy loams of these counties resulted in the production of bright-looking, high-quality tubers, and their appearance classified them as "new" potatoes as differentiated from the storage potatoes of the North. The new potatoes readily found receptive and widely scattered markets in June and July.

At present about 25,000 acres are planted to potatoes in eastern Virginia. The Virginia crop meets strong competition from the crops of Western States. The present problem, therefore, is to find more efficient means of producing and marketing potatoes. Machine handling, irrigation wherever possible, more effective marketing procedures, and especially the production of higher yielding disease-resistant varieties will do much to meet the competition from other states and keep the industry on a profitable basis.

For many years the Irish Cobbler has been the standard variety in eastern Virginia. It has produced many profitable crops, but under adverse climatic conditions its yields are relatively low, its market quality is often below average, and it is very susceptible to the late blight fungus.

In recent years the Virginia Truck Experiment Station has cooperated with the United States Department of Agriculture in the National Potato-Breeding Program in an effort to find a variety to replace Irish Cobbler. Such a variety should mature its tubers early or medium early and they should have good market and cooking qualities. It would be more valuable if it outyielded Irish Cobbler under adverse conditions and if it were resistant to some of the more serious diseases of potatoes, including late blight.

Late blight does not attack consistently the early crop, but it does occur often enough to cause serious trouble, and the losses from it seem to be increasing, especially in fields that are irrigated. Potatoes planted in July are attacked nearly every year, and frequently the plants are killed before satisfactory yields are made. Few potato growers have the proper equipment to apply fungicidal treatment to control blight, and therefore it seems essential to develop resistant varieties. Many
seedling varieties have been tested, but few of them meet the requirements. One of the most promising was named Pungo and released to growers in 1950.

**Origin**

Pungo was tested under the pedigree number B 76-43. It is a selection from the cross of two unnamed seedlings of the United States Department of Agriculture, 96-44 and 528-170. The cross was made and the seedlings were grown in 1940 in the greenhouse of the Plant Industry Station, Beltsville, Maryland. Tubers were sent to Maine for increase. B 76-43 was selected in the fall of 1941, increased further, and sent to various State agricultural experiment stations for trial in 1943. The complete pedigree of Pungo follows:

```
Pungo (U.S.D.A. Seedling B 76-43)  x 528-170  x 96-44
   Katahdin  x  Richter's Jubel  x Chippewa
   Earlene  x 3825-13
```

**Description**

**Plants.**—Large, spreading. **Stems:** Medium thick, prominently angled. **Nodes:** Slightly swollen, green. **Internodes:** Green. **Wings:** Slightly waved to straight, green. **Nodes:** Slightly swollen, green, scantily pubescent. **Leaves:** Medium long, broad, open type, medium green. **Midribs:** Green, scantily pubescent. **Petioles:** Medium-thick, green, scantily pubescent. **Primary leaflets:** Ovate, medium, 3 pairs, mean length of blade 57.4 ± 0.53 mm. (2.26 in.), mean width 34.6 ± 0.36 mm. (1.36 in.), index 60.3 ± 0.33. **Secondary leaflets:** Few, between primary leaflets. **Tertiary leaflets:** Few. **Inflorescence:** Medium-branched. **Leafy bracts:** Few. **Peduncles:** Medium long, green, scantily pubescent. **Pedicels:** Medium to short, green, scantily pubescent.

**Flowers.**—**Calyx lobes:** Tips medium long, green, scantily pubescent. **Corolla:** Large or medium (diameter 35 mm.), white. **Authors:** Orange yellow. **Pollen:** Scant. **Style:** Straight. **Stigma:** Globose, multilobed, green.

**Tubers.**—Elliptical to elliptical round, mean length 83.2 ± 0.63 mm. (3.27 in.), mean width 78.1 ± 0.41 mm. (3.07 in.), mean thickness 61.5 ± 0.41 mm. (2.42 in.), index of width to length 94.3 ± 0.94. \(^1\) of the tubers were sent to Maine for increase. B 76-43 was selected in the fall of 1941, increased further, and sent to various State agricultural experiment stations for trial in 1943. The complete pedigree of Pungo follows:

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\(^1\)Calculated by dividing the width of each of 100 leaflets by the length and multiplying the average of these ratios by 100. The leaflets were taken from the fourth leaf from the top of a stem, one leaflet, the distal left lateral, being taken from each leaf. Since the potato leaflet is asymmetrical the length was determined by taking the average of the measurements from the apex to the base of each respective lobe. This is a modification of the method described in Salaman, R. N.: Potato Varieties, pages 153-170. Cambridge, 1926.

\(^2\)Average of measurements of 74 tubers each weighing approximately 8 ounces (223-233 gms.).

\(^3\)Calculated by dividing the width of each of 74 tubers by the length and multiplying the average of these ratios by 100. The data used for calculating the index were taken from the measurements used to designate the dimensions of the tubers.