

The GPG Times

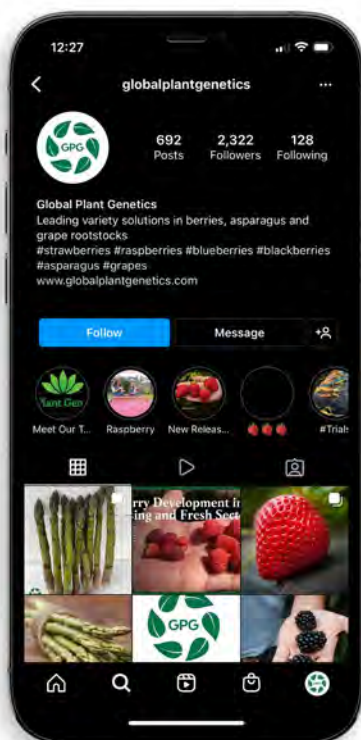
Edition 3
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Introduction

Marieke Gortemaker

We're so glad to have you reading the third edition of the GPG Times! We've been working hard to get you all the latest exciting news updates. Worried that you've missed some news? No need! With the GPG Times, you will make sure that you've all the latest news right in one place. Once you've finished reading, make sure to leave us your feedback on one of our social media channels. This way, we know where we can improve for your own reading delight. So, sit back, make yourself a nice cup of tea/coffee, and enjoy reading the GPG Times!



GPG - New Logo

We've launched our rebrand during Fruit Logistica in Berlin!

Discussing the new branding, co-owner Rupert Hargreaves commented "the company is almost 7 years old now and has come an awful long way in terms of achieving its key aspirations. We are now recognised as being an international leader in the management of intellectual property for world-class breeders of strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, wine grapes and grape rootstocks, asparagus, and nuts.

In each product sector, we are proud to represent world-class breeders and scientists delivering a global footprint for the product portfolios. This could not happen without the support of those breeders, amazing clients, and a superb team of highly professional and dedicated people at GPG. The new branding is a result of considerable feedback from a large number of key stakeholders, who were directly questioned to help the directors positively position the company for the next 6-7 years of anticipated high growth.

The new logo better reflects the global aspect of the company, with a clean fresh look and a greener colouring, depicting the environmental improvements we continually make by being an almost paperless and remote working organisation."

We hope that you will be joining us in our excitement!



Interview Nikki Jennings

Jamie Petchell

1. What industry feedback are you receiving regarding the latest commercial varieties from your programme; Skye, Lewis and Glen Mor?

Feedback from trials is very important. The Raspberry Breeding Consortium (RBC), who sponsor the breeding programme, represents raspberry production within the UK and Europe. In addition, Global Plant Genetics have initiated trials in other territories, allowing the James Hutton varieties to be trialled in key production areas around the globe.

So far, Skye has received the most favourable feedback, with growers and triallists describing the combination of high potential yield and good fruit quality and picking efficiency.

2. What tips can you suggest that will help growers to get the best from the Skye, Lewis and Glen Mor varieties?

We have started a trial with FAST in 2022 to optimise fertigation programmes for the three varieties. This will give the growers some guidelines for a feed programme and a comparison of requirement compared with established varieties.

Begin with healthy plant material with the highest available certification grade. Maintain 2 canes per pot to optimise yield and quality.

3. Looking at the latest trends in the raspberry sector, which traits are you currently focusing on when selecting new varieties?

The main objectives are to breed new florican and primocane raspberry varieties with improved productivity and fruit quality and pest and disease tolerance. The sponsors (RBC) review the objectives on an annual basis to keep us focused on the current needs of the industry. Over the last five years, reducing labour costs has become

more important and we are focusing on traits that will help reduce picking costs, ie, large fruit, displayed well to the picker and easily plugged from the receptacle will help reduce picking costs. We are already selecting a higher proportion of genotypes with the root rot marker and recently the RBC want us to increase focus on other pathogen tolerance to reduce reliance on chemicals. Varietal differences can be seen in post-harvest rots, two spot spider mite and powdery mildew infection. This means that we can breed and select for increased tolerance to these pathogens which will help the growers continue production during the withdrawal of available chemicals.

4. Raspberry production and marketing is truly a global affair these days, how are you able to breed new cultivars with adaptability to this wide-range of climatic types?

A breeding programme has to maintain a broad range of genetics in order to select for suitable and robust traits in a shifting climate, geographical location or production system. Chill requirement is an important trait. Fluctuating winter temperatures have affected bud break and this has led to comparative experiments with new varieties and advanced selections to assess chill requirement and we found that we have a surprisingly broad range of chill within our germplasm. In climates with little or no chill, knowledge of chill requirement is important to optimise cold storage.

5. How do you see your breeding work developing over the next 5-10 years?

- New molecular markers are in the pipeline to identify important traits other than Phytophthora root rot. Markers for size and shelf-life have been deployed recently into the programme. Also, markers for yield and crumbly fruit are in the process of validation to be deployed into the programme in the future to identify suitable selections quickly.
- The Associated Mapping Population is a large collection of raspberry germplasm consisting of a diverse group of genotypes and small, related families. A long list of traits will be scored within this population (known as 'phenotyping'), which will help validate future molecular markers to further shorten the breeding timescale.
- James Hutton will have the science and facilities to recreate different environmental conditions The Advanced Plant Growth Centre (APGC) is one of two plant innovation centres currently under construction at the James Hutton site. This comprises state-of-the-art science, field and glasshouse facilities and will bring together industry and world-leading science to focus on solutions for the food and drink industry regarding climate change. We must make our fruit production systems more efficient, sustainable, and flexible. The combination of science and breeding will be needed to address this and must adopt an integrated approach which involves genetics, breeding, conservation and technology. We are well placed to do this at JHI and this will be greatly enhanced with the opening of the APGC.



Training - Sadie Petchell

I have just finished a 12 week Help to Grow course at Derby University Business School.

The course was a government backed and majority funded course, and I took part through webinars, face to face sessions, peer group sessions and ongoing mentor support.

The course aimed to support managers, teams and leaders of small and medium sized businesses to boost their business's performance, resilience, and long-term growth.

There were 12 modules I worked my way through, including Strategy & Innovation, Digital Adoption, Vision Mission and Values, Organisational Design, Employee Engagement and Leading Change.

The businesses enrolled on the course included care homes, car repair workshops, recycled garden furniture makers, steel producers, I.T providers, to name a few.

We were highly praised for our values. There were only a few companies there that actually had their values written down. We were also nearly the only company to actually give them out to staff when they join us.

There were approximately 18 of us on this course and a small group of us have stayed in contact. Although the businesses involved were very wide-ranging, we all seemed to face similar day to day challenges. We have been able to talk through some of our challenges and help each other to solve them.

We have all been assigned a mentor that we are able to work with. My mentor has been a huge help to me in talking through issues I face daily and together, we find resolutions.

I'm very thankful to Global Plant Genetics for giving me the chance to take part in this. I even passed the course and got a certificate.



HELP TO GROW
MANAGEMENT COURSE

Berry Meetings in South America

Jamie Petchell

I recently took a trip to South America where I was able to meet with a range of our licensees and prospective clients in Chile and Peru. It was my first long haul travel since pre-pandemic times and it was great to see people in person again after such a long time.

There have been some great developments with the genetics that we represent over the past couple of years. Chilean blueberry growers in high-chill regions will soon be planting the first commercial blocks of the MegasBlue and Titanium varieties. In Peru, a wide range of the low-chill genetics within our portfolio will also be harvested for the first time. We and our partners are excited to see and taste these berries in the next couple of months.

As far as raspberries and blackberries are concerned, we are also making strides in South America with the new varieties within our range. The importation and quarantine process takes some time, but we are looking forward to seeing new and improved genetics being offered to commercial growers in South America very soon now.

In addition to the above, there is a range of other developments in the crops that we represent. We will be reporting on these in the coming months.



The webinar has been recorded, please get in touch with us if you would like to receive the download link to view it.

Webinar

Marieke Gortemaker

On the 29th of March, Rupert Hargreaves and Marieke Gortemaker hosted a webinar regarding MegasBlue & Titanium blueberries, two high-chill varieties. They were joined by the following panellists: Doug McCann for Oregon Blueberry, Leon Schrijnwerker for Schrijnwerkers Plants, Marcin Wyka for Kusbibab Wyka and Stefan Belakov for Plants 365. It was a great, informative event that was well attended.

Carolina Hlland - Asparagus

As the 2022 Asparagus season gets underway, despite the challenges of labour and continually increasing costs of production, at least there is one positive - we know we can still produce a fantastic crop of asparagus with consistently high quality, which brings our customers back year on year!

Having seen fantastic results from Guelph Millennium over the past few years, with its distinctive appearance, straight spears and tight tip, we are looking forward to seeing our latest Guelph varieties; Equinox and Eclipse, reach their prime production years too. We're already seeing the same consistent high quality from both varieties in the early stages, and even under a protected system, both varieties appear to be performing well.

Quality is certainly key to keeping production costs down these days, and if we can harvest a better quality, straight spear with a tight tip, not only does it help to keep harvesting costs as efficient as possible, but also keeps production costs in pack house lean too.



Californian Strawberry Rockstars

Rupert Hargreaves

Californian Strawberry Rockstars

It used to be said that if California were a country, it would be the largest strawberry producing country in the world. While that statement may not stand today, it certainly has the overall reputation of being a global strawberry Rockstar. California has almost perfect growing conditions for strawberries in three principal areas along the coast, Oxnard (2400 hectares), Santa Maria (4600 hectares) and, of course, Watsonville (5150 hectares) totalling 12,150 hectares. Now, like all industries there are many moving parts that are required to make it a success. Californian strawberries are no exception. There are first class plant nurseries, exceptional growers, highly professional marketing companies and sophisticated supply chains, all playing a role in the success story.

There are two other strong components though, the California Strawberry Commission and the strawberry breeding programmes.

Let's talk about the Californian Strawberry Commission. This wonderful organisation offers support to growers, press, researchers, and a whole lot more. The California Strawberry Commission also supports the breeding efforts of the University of California, Davis and has done so for fifty years. This long-lasting relationship as I witness has achieved many great things in a number of directions. One principal function

is the sharing of industry information and trends. This up-to-date information collated by the Commission and shared with the industry and of course, the University of California, has allowed the breeders the opportunity to focus on today's industry requirements through an ever-changing landscape. It is this collective relationship that looks to me, somewhat as an outsider, that has underpinned and supported the Californian strawberry industry for multi generations.

Outside of the USA, many other strawberry growing industries are able to reap the benefits too. We have licence holders for these new varieties in place in the EU, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Australia and Latin America, all launching these new varieties over the coming months.

So, if you are a grower, make sure you take a good look at the new varieties and gain a competitive advantage that they will surely bring you. Like the California Strawberry Commission, UC Davis strawberry breeding programme, world class nurseries and packers, we need you, the growers, to be here for the next 50 years too.

For more information on the varieties or to contact one of the licensed nurseries, visit www.globalplantgenetics.com - but most importantly make sure you have these new Rockstars on your radar, your competitors will.



What You've Missed

Marieke Gortemaker

Did you know that once a month we have a news post on our website that gives you updates about anything related to strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, asparagus, grapes and nuts? Here are all the news posts from the previous 3 months in case you've missed something!

"Blueberries: A Southern African Perspective"

Top Fruit, an internationally renowned varietal development company based in South Africa, has been representing Global Plant Genetics' blueberry varieties from the University of Georgia, USA since 2017. Pieter Zietsman is the Berry Portfolio Manager for Top Fruit and has been fortunate enough to have visited the breeding programme a number of times over the years with Rupert Hargreaves. Together, they have identified selections to trial and ultimately commercialise successfully throughout Southern Africa.

www.globalplantgenetics.com/news/blueberries-a-southern-african-perspective

"Californian Strawberry Rockstars"

It used to be said that if California were a country, it would be the largest strawberry producing country in the world. While that statement may not stand today, it certainly has the overall reputation of being a global strawberry Rockstar.

www.globalplantgenetics.com/news/californian-strawberry-rockstars

"Raspberry Development in Processing and Fresh Sectors"

On a recent trip to Chile, I took this photo in a raspberry production field. For me, it very neatly summed up the progress that has been made in raspberry breeding in the recent past. The variety on the left has been the industry standard type in the country for the last few decades. On the right is a newer cultivar that represents modern day genetics.

www.globalplantgenetics.com/news/raspberry-development-in-processing-and-fresh-sectors



And Finally

Rupert Hargreaves

In 2020 world wine production was 260 million Hectolitres (1 hectolitre = 100 litres). This figure can vary up to 8-9% per year depending on global weather patterns. This huge market gives us, at Global Plant Genetics, optimism to be bringing new wine grape varieties to market.



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Where Quality Breeds Success