

The GPG Times

Edition 4
July 2022



Introduction

Marieke Gortemaker

Welcome to the fourth edition of the GPG Times! With exciting news constantly coming to the service regarding plant genetics, it's a great way to stay up to date with all the latest updates so you don't miss out! We hope you enjoy reading the GPG Times, please let us know on our social media channels your thoughts or if you have any questions regarding any of the articles. Enjoy!

Celebration Queen's Awards for Enterprise: International Trade 2022

Marieke Gortemaker

On the evening of Monday 18th of July, Global Plant Genetics hosted a formal celebration dinner for winning the Queen's Awards for Enterprise: International Trade 2022. The black tie event took place at the magnificent hall of the Worshipful Company of Butcher's Hall based in the heart of the City of London.

The evening started off with champagne, followed by a three-course meal that was beautifully served by the Butcher's Hall, after which the evening was closed with a final celebratory drink. Rupert Hargreaves and Jamie Petchell both gave speeches, telling their story of how they started the company, the wins and struggles throughout the years, and of course the route towards winning the Queen's Awards for Enterprise: International Trade 2022.

The amazing beadle Ted Prior ensured that the evening ran smoothly and was kept on schedule.

The entire team at Global Plant Genetics wants to thank everyone who attended the event. With the pandemic, a record-breaking heatwave and declined visas, travelling to London wasn't made easy. Thank you so much to those who joined us in our celebration, and for making the evening as beautiful as it was.

We would also like to thank Her Majesty the Queen for the generous sponsorship of the United Kingdom's most prestigious business award.

Nursery trip to UC Davis

Image from left to right: Glynn Rence (Sweets Strawberry Runners), Andrew Green (Sweets Strawberry Runners), Cindy Lopez (UC Davis), Rupert Hargreaves (Global Plant Genetics), Glenn Cole (UC Davis), Isaac Rainwater (UC Davis).

Rupert Hargreaves & Andrew Green



1. Can you please give us a background of your business?

Sweets Strawberry Runners is a well-established Australian nursery providing quality strawberry runners to fruit growers nationally across Australia. The business now owned by Wally and Glenys Sweet transitioning from a stone fruit and produce farm in 1998 to a strawberry runner nursery. Sweets Strawberry Runners quickly established itself in the industry as a nursery that provided their customers with quality plants. This reputation of service to our customers has maintained for the 24 years we have been established and continues to be our focus as we look to the future. I have been with Sweets for 10 years this coming September and have seen if grow into the well renowned family business it is today. We are industry leaders with a processing shed that provides mechanisation not seen anywhere else in Australia this along with our location at 1000m above sea level provides the optimal location for growing runners in Queensland. Sweets prides itself on looking at new ways to optimise growing and processing plants to provide the best possible plants to their customer. This is why we took the opportunity to learn more by attending the recent California trip in May this year.

2. What did you think of the trip to California?

Glynn Rence and I attended the California trip in May this year. It gave us an opportunity to view and gain information on new varieties that we were trialling on our farm and to see where these 3 day neutral and 2 short day varieties may sit within our market. Viewing each of the varieties within different growing areas of California helped us to determine this.

Not being a seasoned traveller myself, I enjoyed many parts of the trip, seeing new areas of California I had not seen before, hearing the history of the growing areas and meeting industry experts from all over the world were just a few highlights. The managers of each growing area we visited welcomed us, I was very impressed and thankful of the willingness of the farm owners and managers to share their experiences they have had with growing these varieties, their feedback was very valuable. They not only shared their experience of how each variety grew along with their yield, but they also shared feedback from pickers to give a full picture from growing to packing. One thing, among many, that stood out was the relationship Glenn Cole, Cindy Lopez, Isaac Rainwater and the rest of the UCD team had with each of the farmers. It showed that they had a great working relationship built on respect for each of their work, respectively.

As mentioned before another highlight was meeting industry experts from all over the world. Each person established a great relationship in a short time through a mutual interest of strawberries this friendship quickly extended to offers of help to each other wherever we could in the future. We continue to have a group that we post updates semi regularly to let people know how things are going in each of our countries.

The trip was not all work, with Glenn and Rupert's knowledge of local landmarks, restaurants and eateries gave us a relaxed atmosphere to establish connections with each other. Advice to travel off the main freeway was invaluable as we were able to see different growing areas and find out more of the structure of farming in California.

3. Where do you see the UCD varieties fitting into the Australian market?

We are in the very early trial phase in Australia with varieties being trialled in different growing regions. As different growing regions start their seasons we will be also trialling the UCD varieties in these areas. Growing conditions have been difficult this year, however we are quite excited to hear the feedback from growers as results come in. As new varieties emerge on the market having a wider selection of short day varieties with disease resistance such as the new UCD Victor and UCD Warrior would be a benefit to the market with Australia.

4. What were the highlights of the program for you?

The highlights of the UC Davis program for me is the focus on targeted gene isolation to assist with combat of disease, salinity, and fruit viability. The knowledge shared by the UCD's team for gene isolation within new plants was exciting to here. Seeing the UCD laboratories and facilities and hearing from graduate students guided by Professor Steve Knapp, of the work they are doing showed UCD as a very professional market leader.

5. Are there any specific comments on the varieties that stood out to you?

Each variety we viewed showed a place in the market. With Australia being in the early stages of it growing season we are yet to see major differences from any one variety. We are continuing to trial the varieties across all different regions and are looking forward to the results. We are hoping to see similar yields to what has been experienced in California.

6. Would you like to comment on the future of the program and the opportunities it might bring?

Seeing some of the new numbered varieties being trialled in field and having an opportunity to hear their results from the growers was encouraging. These new varieties seem to be showing a yield that rivals the standard Monterey yields. As these varieties become available commercially we would be looking out for them in the Australian market.

7. Are there any other comments you would like to bring regarding this trip, the varieties, your business and/or about the Australian market?

I found that this trip was very helpful in providing access to the industry to hear about varieties and how they are performing. Meeting people and establishing connections within this industry I feel is a must and this trip allowed that to happen. Along with industry connections, I think a collaborative effort to share information on performance of current and emerging varieties from all growing regions across the globe would allow targeted variety selection and information for growers world wide. I would like to thank Rupert and the GPG team along with Steve, Glenn, Cindy, Isaac and the whole UCD team for sharing their knowledge and providing this opportunity for Glynn and I. We look forward to seeing the new emerging new varieties UCD Victor, UCD Warrior, UCD Royal Royce, UCD Valiant and UCD Moxie as well as joining you on the next trip.

Rupert Hargreaves concluded that the trip was a great success. It is the openness and collaboration between nurseries and all stakeholders that is helping drive the market penetration of these exciting new strawberry varieties. We at GPG would like to express our thanks to everyone that came on the trip, to UC Davis for hosting us over the week and Greg France and others for sharing the exciting growers perspective we witnessed for these new cultivars.



James Hutton Open Day

Marieke Gortemaker

We recently organised a raspberry open day at the James Hutton Institute for some of our international licence holders.

We were shown around the grounds by Jamie Smith and Nikki Jennings. The spotlight on this day were the raspberry varieties Skye, Lewis, Glen Carron, and Glen Mor.

There are some exciting developments surrounding these varieties and we received some exciting feedback regarding fruit quality and flavour.

The open day was well visited by our international partners from Australia, Bulgaria, Morocco, Spain, Israel, and the United Kingdom. Throughout the day there was plenty of time to taste and inspect all the amazing varieties that are on offer.

After which we made our way to Angus Soft Fruits. There we were able to have a close look at the blackberry variety Von. We saw both fresh and existing fruiting plantations where the variety was showing strong performance in terms of yield and fruit quality.

We would like to thank everyone at James Hutton and Angus Soft Fruits for a wonderful day! Thanks also to our international partners for making the effort to travel to Scotland for this informative day.

Introduction New Team Members: Anna & Rebecca

We are excited to announce that our team at GPG has expended once again! We're delighted to tell you that Rebecca Banton and Anna Spencer have joined our team in the following rolls.

Rebecca Banton has joined the GPG team in the Admin, PA & HR Coordinator role! Becky's career has been spent working in customer-facing and OEM manufacturing environments, administrating, coordinating, auditing, and team-leading across various industries, including the NHS. She is a natural coordinator and effective communicator who is happy to go the extra mile, always looking for ways to improve process and quality.

Anna Spencer has joined the GPG team in the Licensing Assistant role! Anna has a background in recruitment, company administration, and leading various project roll-outs. With management experience in Retail and FMCG, including in export and shipping, she has developed a determined can-do attitude and an eye for detail, both useful attributes for running her own various businesses.

Please join us in welcoming Rebecca and Anna to our team! Would you like to get to know them better, or anyone else on that time? Make sure to have a look at our "about" page on our website to read more about our team.

www.globalplantgenetics.com/about



The Latest on Von Blackerry

Jamie Petchell

At the end of May, we visited our exclusive Von blackberry licensee in The Netherlands to take a look at the early season crop this year. It was being grown in a glasshouse, planted with long cane plants produced last year. The crop looked in excellent condition and the variety is being grown on a wider commercial scale this year. Some of the highlights are as below:

- Excellent flavour, a significant improvement over traditional blackberries. The berries are going to be marketed under a premium banner to retailers
- Picking rates of 15kgs / hour so far this season, again a large improvement over normal expectations
- Consistent fruit size and shape
- Extended shelf-life compared to the industry standard. I kept berries at home for a week and there was very little sign of red cell, while the flavour and firmness were maintained to a high standard.

Asparagus Season 2022 in The Northern Hemisphere

Jamie Petchell

As we reached the end of another asparagus season in the Northern Hemisphere at the end of June, we took the time to pen a blog on how it panned out in a range of territories. A summary of this is here and full details can be seen on: www.globalplantgenetics.com/news/what-is-the-latest-in-the-asparagus-market

From a market perspective, we continue to see a rise in the consumption of green asparagus. On the other hand, white asparagus remains a staple in parts of Northern Europe. It will be very interesting to see how the consumption of white asparagus develops in these locations over the next 5-10 years. There have been recent market developments has been with respect to packaging. Indeed, there have been visible differences this year in terms of how some asparagus is being packaged and presented on retailer shelves. The most "radical" of these is the re-emergence of asparagus bundles with no more packaging materials other than two rubber bands.



As in many areas of the contemporary fresh produce business, the availability and quality of labour continues to be a global issue in asparagus. Labour shortages only exacerbate issues in fluctuating seasonal harvest levels. There continues to be good work taking place in the research and development of mechanised harvesters, both in green and white asparagus production.

We also attended the 15th International Asparagus Symposium held in Córdoba, Spain. It was a great opportunity to both connect again with many members of the global asparagus community, as well as to learn of the latest developments in scientific research going into the asparagus crop.

Stay tuned to us here at Global Plant Genetics to hear of our upcoming developments when it comes to asparagus hybrids and seeds.

What you've missed

Marieke Gortemaker

Did you know that once a month we have a news post on our website that gives you interesting updates 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!

"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

"Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade 2022"

Thrilled was the word used by Rupert Hargreaves and Jamie Petchell, co-owners of Global Plant Genetics, on hearing the news that their Norfolk based company had won the Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade 2022. www.globalplantgenetics.com/news/queen-s-award-for-enterprise-international-trade-2022

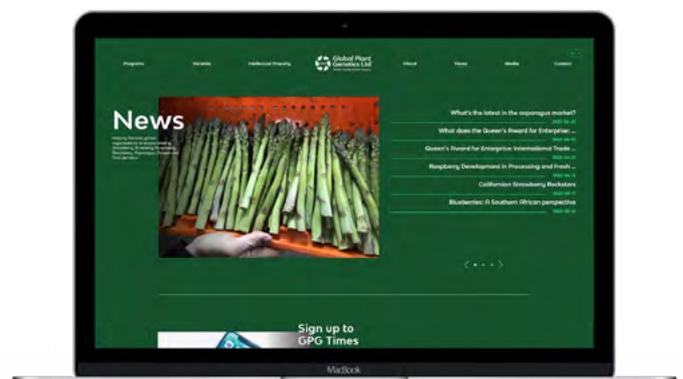
"What does the Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade 2022 actually mean?"

Winning the Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade 2022 will inevitably be one of the major highlights of the year for Global Plant Genetics. To achieve this award, a company has to be recognised as being a leader in international business, demonstrating continued overseas growth over the previous years. www.globalplantgenetics.com/news/what-are-the-latest-trends-in-raspberries

"What's the latest in the asparagus market?"

As we approach the end of another asparagus season in the Northern Hemisphere, now seems like a good time to reflect on the latest developments.

www.globalplantgenetics.com/news/what-is-the-latest-in-the-asparagus-market



And Finally

Jamie Petchell

Research that took place in South Korea in 2009 demonstrated that asparagus consumption may ease hangovers. Asparagus is well known as something that goes well with certain white wines, so this research only further reinforced this pairing tip!



**Global Plant
Genetics Ltd**TM
Where Quality Breeds Success