



GPG Times

Introducing... Soufiane Lahtati Belkas

Marieke Gortemaker

We are delighted to announce we have a new team member joining us at Global Plant Genetics! Soufiane Lahtati Belkas will take on the role of Business Development Manager Berries EMEA.

Soufiane made a career change some years ago to enter the world of agriculture, motivated by his great interest in gardens, plants, food and growing. He joins the GPG team with a wealth of experience in berry production, propagation and IP management throughout EU, North Africa, and Middle East. We are delighted to have him join our fast-growing business explained Rupert Hargreaves, Co-Owner of Global Plant Genetics.

Join us in welcoming Soufiane to the GPG team. Would you like to know more about Soufiane or anyone else on our team? Make sure to have a look at our "About" page!

<https://www.globalplantgenetics.com/about>

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Strawberry science into practice

Marieke Gortemaker

The North American Strawberry Growers Association (NASGA) meeting took place in early March at San Luis Obispo, California. Over the 2.5 days, the 300-plus international attendees were updated on the extremely high level of strawberry breeding science. Which now underpins strawberry breeding at UC Davis as world-renowned.

Steve Knapp, Distinguished Professor and Director of the Strawberry Breeding at UC Davis, updated a packed auditorium on the development of the SCRI project. He gained grant funding for a collaborative project between the University of California Davis and the University of Florida. Having first identified the strawberry genome, along with other collaborators, UC Davis is now deploying increased high levels of science into their program. This is transferred through to the continual improvement of new strawberry varieties covering all the major important issues such as disease resistance, improvised yields, flavour, and picking speed.

It's clear that this high level of science being continually explored and deployed will help UC Davis, who are at the forefront of this science, to remain Industry leaders in strawberry breeding space.

Internationally we are starting to see the benefits of varieties such as Victor, Warrior, Royal Royce, Valiant, and Moxie. While eyes are on the new extreme day neutrals; Finn and Mojo.

Warren Buffet always quotes that you should view your business like an island and every year widen the moat between you and your competitors.

It's clear to Rupert Hargreaves that the moat is already very wide, and getting much wider quickly. The strawberry industry has an exciting future ahead with the continually improved genetics from the UC Davis program. GPG is hugely proud to be an International Master Licence holder for UC Davis.

Check out the current varieties at:

<https://www.globalplantgenetics.com/varieties>



Major blueberry investment

Marieke Gortemaker

Excitement is brimming in the Global Plant Genetics team with the purchase of the global licences for 3 of the world's most exciting blueberry varieties from the University of Georgia; Sweet Duchess, Maverick and Gladiator. The varieties were bred by Dr Scott NeSmith whose program has firmly established itself as world-class delivering yield, earliness and flavour as the 3 main attributes.

The deal was concluded in early March after a number of years of international evaluation of the 3 varieties.

We are seeing evergreen production on varieties such as Maverick producing an average of 4.78kg per plant in commercial plantations, 16 months after planting. This is simply outstanding and creates huge interest based on yield and flavour from major blueberry companies in low-chill/ evergreen growing regions. We strongly expect this variety to be competing in the top 3 blueberry varieties in the world in the next 3-5 years.

Great flavour, size, and yield, are similarly experienced in the blueberry varieties Gladiator and Sweet Duchess. The limitation to growth is the availability of plant material for all these varieties, however our international licence holders are working hard to overcome this. "Forward planning for growers wanting access will be crucial" said Rupert Hargreaves.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxe_tjK3mzg&t=28s&ab_channel=GlobalPlantGenetics



EXCITING NEWS

GPG Global Licence Holders

Maverick, Gladiator & Sweet Duchess

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Von blackberry update

Jamie Petchell

We are pleased to share more exciting news about Von blackberry. In addition to the already confirmed industry-leading flavour, fruit quality and excellent yields, we are getting reports of very little or no red-cell regression at all in the berries post-harvest.

The topic of red-cell regression has been studied a great deal over the years and to date, it is very difficult to pinpoint its causes and any potential control measures. However, there are certainly genetic factors, meaning that some varieties are affected more than others.

We will continue to monitor Von and its performance in this regard across a range of global territories, but so far, this is exciting news for blackberry growers, marketers, retailers and consumers.

Wine – Solving problems with better genetics

Rupert Hargreaves

The wine industry worldwide is very nervous with increased levels of Fan Leaf Virus, and now the arrival of Pierce Disease in mainland Europe. With 3.2 million hectares in wine production in Europe alone, this is a big deal.

Grape Fan Leaf Virus is spread by nematodes and stunts the growth of vines, seriously affecting yield. The virus is spread by a specific nematode and with the increasing regulation of soil sterilants in the wine grape industry, populations have been building up significantly. Particularly in areas where continual wine grape production takes place. The launch of the GRN1 and GRN 3 rootstocks is significant here for the industry.

Pierce Disease (PD) is a type of Xylella affecting wine grapes. It's had a presence in the Balearics for some time and has now made it to mainland Europe.

Fortunately, Dr. Andy Walker at the University of California Davis had the foresight to predict these problems and channelled plant breeding efforts accordingly. With that in mind, Claire Donkin and Rupert Hargreaves together Guillaume Mercier, from Merciers Nursery in France and the UC Davis team visited vineyards and grapevine nurseries across California this Spring to understand these new scions.

The visit initially took them to Ojai Vineyard, owned by Adam Tolmach, in Southern California. This proved to be extremely beneficial as all were able to see the vine production of the PD-resistant new cultivars. While learning the different growing techniques and experiences per variety. As well as of course, trying the wines.

Here are 3 out of the 5 new varieties namely Paseante Noir, Caminante Blanc, and Ambulo Blanc we tasted.

The Paseante Noir was extremely impressive. Deep red in colour with great floral qualities to the aroma. The alcohol content was 13%, so impressive to be on the lighter side of the alcohol range for a dark/deep red wine. The

vines were extremely high yielding as well which is encouraging.

Caminante Blanc produced an aromatic white wine comparable to Sauvignon Blanc with a hint of Gewurztraminer. Once again large yields producing a wine with 12% alcohol content.

Ambulo Blanc produces wines reminiscent of Sauvignon Blanc. At this particular vineyard, they had a smaller area of this grape variety and were using it successfully in blends.

The second day was dedicated to visiting the leading grapevine nurseries; Wonderful and SunRidge. As we all know, there is no substitute for visiting like-minded companies and getting grower-to-grower discussions taking place to achieve common goals. These visits proved beneficial to all parties in understanding and debating the best techniques to improve callusing and grafting of the GRN rootstocks.

The timing of the trip was important to make sure, we as GPG and our nursery partners, are moving as fast as we can to have enough plant material being tested. In advance of the 2 potentially devastating problems affecting the wine industry. The first trials of the GRNs have now been planted in the Champagne region of France. We should have indications of their ability to control the nematodes and also their acceptability to the limestone soil.

The highlight of the trip, over and above the practical knowledge discussed and shared, was the Peseante Noir. We feel this variety has a place in the wine industry almost irrespective of the fact that it happens to be PD-resistant as well.

The next 2 years will be hugely exciting for Claire Donkin and the team to trial, and test these further with Mercier Groupe in France and Viveros Provedo in Spain, and our other European licence holders.



IP Insights

Iulia Negoita + Marion Durose

It has been a busy couple of weeks here at GPG on the IP front with lots of exciting news since our last issue of the GPG Times!

Plant Breeders' Rights were granted on various crops across multiple territories, as follows: UCD Royal Royce, UCD Moxie, UCD Valiant, UCD Victor and UCD Warrior from University of California, Davis have been granted PBR in Switzerland, Maverick and Gladiator blueberries from University of Georgia have been granted PBR in South Africa and Miss Alice Mae from the same breeding program has been granted PBR in Peru, Titanium blueberry from Oregon Blueberry Farms and Nursery has been granted PBR in Kazakhstan.

Meanwhile, Plant Breeders' Rights have been filed for Tropical Blue & Ambrosia blueberries (University of Georgia) with CPVO and applications following up shortly in other territories such as Morocco, Tunisia and the UK. James Hutton Institute raspberries have been filed for PBR in Chile (Skye, Lewis, Glen Mor and Glen Carron) and Israel (Skye, Lewis).

National Listing has been completed for the Oregon Blueberry Farms & Nursery's varieties Titanium & MegasBlue in both Serbia and Georgia. North Carolina State University's blueberry, Pinnacle has also been registered under National Listing in Serbia.

In addition, various PBR applications are advancing in Australia at the moment for the following varieties:

- James Hutton Institute's raspberries Skye, Lewis, Glen Mor and Glen Carron
- University of Georgia blueberries: Ava, Maverick and Gladiator
- North Carolina State University's blackberry Von
- University of California Davis's strawberries (UCD Royal Royce, UCD Moxie, UCD Valiant, UCD Victor and UCD Warrior, UCD Finn & UCD Mojo)



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Plant Breeders' Rights were granted on various crops across multiple territories

EuroFruit Article

Marieke Gortemaker

In February Marieke Gortemaker Marketing & Communications manager at GPG, had the opportunity to interview Brandon Yott, Chief Executive Officer at Fox Seeds. This interesting interview has now also been published in the March edition of FruitNet Magazine.

To read the full article, click here:

<https://www.globalplantgenetics.com/news/interview-brandon-yott-fox-seeds>



New updated brochures

Rupert Hargreaves

We are constantly strengthening our brand image here at Global Plant Genetics Ltd, and our crop brochures are a big part of this. We are excited to let you know that all of our brochures have recently undergone a big update. Make sure to have a look at them to stay up to date with the latest news regarding all of the varieties in our crop portfolio.

<https://www.globalplantgenetics.com/varieties>

UCDA ROYAL ROYCE
Outstanding Day Neutral for the 21st Century Market

UCDA ROYAL ROYCE BENEFITS

- Exceptionally high yields of marketable fruit
- Consistently produces large visually appealing fruit over a long growing season
- Produces fewer runners in berry production, resulting in lower production costs
- Long shelf life fruit with good flavor and sugar-acid balance

Developed at the University of California, Davis, this day-neutral cultivar was crossed with UCDA Valiant.

is an asexually propagated hybrid. It is an asexually propagated hybrid suitable for production in diverse long- and short-day environments. UCDA Royal Royce is produced in California and other warm climates where it thrives.

Brochure downloads
Leading variety solutions in berries and asparagus for international growers, produce businesses and nurseries

Strawberries

- UCDA Royal Royce**
Outstanding Day Neutral for the 21st Century Market
- UCDA Moxie**
Exceptional fruit and plant characteristics for the warm market
- UCDA Valiant**
High yielding, low input quality day neutral
- UCDA Victor**
Delivering excellence in short day asparagus
- UCDA Warrior**
The next generation short day cultivar
- UCDA Mojo**
Extreme Day Neutral providing superior fruit quality

Plant Habit
Exceptionally large crowns and fewer runners than other cultivars

Seasonality
Consistent yields over the typical day-neutral or ever-bearing growing season

Cultivar
Asexually propagated hybrid

Yield
Exceptionally high yields

Chilling Requirements
400 to 600 chilling hours recommended for maximum yield

Planting Density
50,000 to 60,000 plants/hectare

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Who's who @ GPG

The Global Plant Genetics team has expanded a lot in the last few months. With the team growing, we would like to put our faces to our names. You can find all our information down below. If you would like to read more about everyone on the team, make sure to have a look at our "About" page on the website where you can read all the fun facts about our team!



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And Finally

Jamie Petchell

Greek mythology tells us that raspberries were initially white, and it was only when Ida, a nymph, cut her finger by accident harvesting them and her blood changed the colour of the fruit.

These days, raspberries can be cultivated in a range of colours, including red, yellow, black and purple.



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