



GPG Times

Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade 2022, Award Ceremony

Marieke Gortemaker

We were thrilled to be presented with the Queen's Award prize by Lady Dannat, Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk at a special lunch ceremony in October 2022. The prize was presented on behalf of her late Majesty the Queen, to the company, as winners of the Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade 2022.

In attendance was General Lord Richard Dannatt, who presented the official certificate signed by the late Queen and the then Prime Minister, Boris Johnson.

Lady Dannatt spoke of the tremendous achievements Global Plant Genetics has made in recent years and particularly during the global covid pandemic. Export trade now contributes to more than 70% of the company's revenue through licensing new varieties of strawberry, blueberry, raspberry, blackberry, asparagus, grapes and nuts to a growing international market.

Commenting after the presentation, co-owner Rupert Hargreaves said: "Achieving this award has been incredible for our team, clients and breeders. The Queen's Award is the most recognised and prestigious award a company can achieve so it is a huge honour."

To view the ceremony, please click on the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aynoCy8WGW4&ab_channel=GlobalPlantGenetics



Communications & Marketing Department

Marieke Gortemaker

We have recently expanded our Marketing department to Communications & Marketing and increased our team to include Eloise McDowell, who joined the business in October 2022 as marketing assistant, and overall we are spending twice as many hours on these areas now and hope you are seeing the difference in our comms on social media.

In recent weeks, you should have seen a step change in our marketing as we are continuously strengthening our brand element, for example with our graphic design.

We believe targeted contact directly with our licensees/growers, the press, and retail is critical so we see these groups as our 3 key pillars. Informative and more interesting communications are an important output and resource for our future growth and development and of course, our relationships which are a core value. By working collaboratively as a wider team, advances can be made and more successes achieved through high-quality content, the latest news regarding our world-class crop portfolio, inspiring interviews with international licence holders and breeders, updates about our team, and providing you with the best marketing tools.

We're looking forward to seeing these exciting developments unfold! Make sure to follow us on all our social media channels to not miss a single update!



Marieke Gortemaker
Communications & Marketing
Manager



Eloise McDowell
Marketing Assistant



Visit to Mercier Group, France

Marieke Gortemaker

In December 2022 Rupert Hargreaves and Claire Donkin, our technical lead on grapes, grape rootstocks, nuts, and asparagus, had the opportunity to see the Mercier Group in France. They have been commercial partners for thousands of winegrowers in France and throughout the wine world since 1890. Mercier are our French project partners; they are our licence holders all things grapes. Together they had a look at the latest developments regarding their trial on Rootstock Grape GRN1 and GRN3. Exciting times are ahead in our viticulture program. We want to thank everyone at Mercier Group for their warm welcome and we are looking forward to the future.

Interview Brandon Yott, Fox Seeds

Marieke Gortemaker

Global Plant Genetics is proud to be working with Fox Seeds as the breeders for the asparagus varieties; Guelph Millennium, Guelph Eclipse and Guelph Equinox. Marieke Gortemaker, Marketing & Communications manager at GPG, had the opportunity to interview Brandon Yott, Chief Executive Officer at Fox Seeds.

MG: Can you give us a background on Fox Seeds and the breeding program?

BY: The Fox Seeds Breeding program has been in existence for over 4 decades. Originally started in the 1980's with the Asparagus Farmers of Ontario (AFO) and the University of Guelph (UofG), a mandate was launched to develop new all-male, cold hardy asparagus hybrids suitable to North American climatic conditions. With a new breeder by the name of Dr. David Wolyn and support for local asparagus farmers in Ontario, the quest was launched and after several years of research, Dr. Wolyn developed the blockbuster asparagus hybrid now called "Guelph Millennium". The commercial launch of Guelph Millennium was hugely successful and asparagus producers in Ontario, Michigan and Washington quickly embraced this new cold hardy, high yielding hybrid as their go-to planting standard. Millennium quickly became the leading asparagus hybrid used in North America.

MG: How has the general asparagus market been in North America over the past season?

BY: Production levels have been phenomenal over the last several years; however, strong market competition from South American imports into the USA and Eastern Seaboard markets have led to heavy downward pressure on pricing at the distribution & terminal level. Vegetable consumption at the retail level was at all time highs throughout the covid lockdown periods; however, since restrictions have opened, year over year vegetable consumption (Canadian consumers) has averaged a 14% decline, with asparagus being no exception. All this has led to overly challenging market conditions for North American asparagus producers. Couple in record high oil/gas/diesel pricing and significant increases (and challenges with) in labour costs which have led to many producers who struggled to maintain profitability over this recent season.



The production regions in the northern American asparagus regions are similar to other areas in the world, including several green asparagus production zones within the EU and the UK, in numerous Baltic states, and in countries like New Zealand, China and Japan to name a few. Fox Seeds Inc. started working with Jamie Petchel to explore the potential fit for Fox asparagus hybrids within the EU market in 2015 and in 2016, FOX Seeds and GPG entered a sales and marketing distribution agreement for markets outside of N. America.

Our relationship has been built on trust and a mutual passion to help asparagus producers all over the world in producing a high quality, flavourful and nutritious asparagus product on a sustainable basis. We are proud to call GPG our partner!

MG: What are the main varietal highlights that are being picked up by the industry in North America?

BY: All of our commercial hybrids (Millennium, Eclipse and Equinox) are currently positioned in the green asparagus production zones. Fox Seeds hybrids demonstrate superior yield performance when compared to other competitive varieties. Our hybrids demonstrate superior spear consistency and tip quality. The taste profile of our hybrids is second to none, and the longevity or production capacity of our hybrids is ultimate, with numerous production fields in N. America producing profitable yields 20 years after planting.





MG: As a relative newcomer to the industry what have been your top 3 take aways in your new role?

BY: 1/ How much of a superfood Asparagus is! The health and nutritional benefits are second to no other vegetables!

2/ I find the 20 year perennial production unique to agriculture (with the exception of some berries and stone fruit)

3/ How asparagus is planted, pollinated and harvested at the same time...Other than rhubarb, I can not think of any other commercial crops where these three activities happen at the same time!

MG: What elements from your previous roles in horticulture/agriculture do you think could be adopted by the asparagus world?

BY: Failing to plan is planning to fail! Work the numbers and use them in your business to make better, informed decisions. How do we avoid the commodity price trap and find new ways to bring value or looking to efficiencies in scale and operational excellence? Collaboration and teamwork are imperative to success; agriculture is a belly business, it's about the people! Telling our story to the urban marketplace...the rural marketplace is already part of the choir...the modern city dweller is whom we need to engage!

Thank you Brandon Yott for this interview opportunity. For more information regarding the asparagus varieties; Guelph Millennium, Guelph Eclipse and Guelph Equinox or any other varieties in our crop portfolio, please email us at solutions@globalplantgenetics.com

MG: How do you enjoy eating your asparagus?

BY: As fresh as possible please, I personally like it seared on the BBQ or oven roasted with a dash of oil and salt. As a kid, I enjoyed eating it fresh while picking it along the country road sides.

MG: What are the feature aims of the breeding program?

BY: Use better (and more) data to look at traits that producers value and the market is asking for. Look at new hybrids from a yield consistency perspective as opposed to just total yield (more quality spears with less spear to spear variation). Looking for new novel traits in disease resistance and drought stress. Enhanced focus on flavour and nutrition profile to name a few.



Australia travels November 2022

Rupert Hargreaves

Springtime in Australia was the perfect time to visit Toolangi Certified Strawberry Runners Co-Operative, Sweet Strawberry Runners, and JCLM Farming, the 3 strawberry nurseries in Australia for the licensed for the new UC Davis strawberry varieties Moxie, Royal Royce, Valiant, Victor and Warrior

Each of these 3 quality plant nurseries is growing a mixture of bare root plants and plug plants for the Australian strawberry industry. The nurseries are well established with quality certification schemes taking care of plant health and hygiene - impressive by any international standards.

The market is excited to find improved eating quality strawberries with better yields for the growers and higher levels of disease resistance. There are high hopes for the new short-day varieties UCD Victor & UCD Warrior as well as the day neutrals UCD Royal Royce, UCD Valiant, and UCD Moxie.

Some very small trials of fruit were seen in 2022 with expanded trials in 2023.

The 3 major growing regions of Victoria, Queensland, and Western Australia plant approximately 100 million plants per year. Mostly soil grown but increased interest in tabletop/ substrate production as well as development in tunnels.

It's an exciting time for Global Plant Genetics to be entering the Australian strawberry market with new genetics. The UC Davis strawberry program has a long-established history in Australia. It is anticipated by many people throughout the strawberry category that these new varieties will add great value to all stakeholders.

Thank you everyone at Toolangi, Sweet Strawberry Runners and JCLM Farming for the warm welcome, we are looking forward to the future together!



Grower trip to South Africa

Rupert Hargreaves

In the middle of October, Global Plant Genetics hosted a grower trip to South Africa to look at exciting new blueberry varieties. The trip was organised together with Top Fruit, who are Global Plant Genetics licence holders in South Africa for the University of Georgia blueberry program. The program has seven commercial varieties and a large number at the testing stage across multiple locations throughout southern Africa.

“The evergreen and low chill varieties are demonstrating superiority for flavour, as well as ticking all the boxes for size, colour and yield. The program at the University of Georgia has long been associated with great flavour profiles a result of a very diverse gene pool and a very experienced breeder in Dr Scott NeSmith” explained Rupert Hargreaves, Global Plant Genetics.

Together, the group represented 7 countries and visited five trial sites across several different growing regions in South Africa. The visit certainly excited those present helping expedite the international roll out of many of these new generation genetics.

Highlights of the week were the following:

Sweet Duchess

Evergreen/ low chill Sweet Duchess proved to be extremely early in season, 2 weeks earlier than many of its main competitors. With its large berries, exceptional flavour, firm, and high yield Sweet Duchess is positioning itself as a future bright star in the blueberry world.

Maverick

An evergreen variety with incredibly large yields. Maverick achieved 500 grams per plant 7 months after planting. The same plant 16 months later after planting, produced in the region of 2.5 kilos per plant. This is highly impressive for the South African growing model.

The fruits of Maverick are large and firm, crunchy, and have a unique sweet flavour with a good acid balance. The plant is straightforward to grow with fruit well displayed for ease of harvesting.

Gladiator

Gladiator is slightly newer than sweet Duchess and Maverick in its development plan. The fruit are very large, excellent bloom, incredible flavour huge yield profile. We feel sure this variety along with the 2 above are set to take major roles on the international blueberry stage.

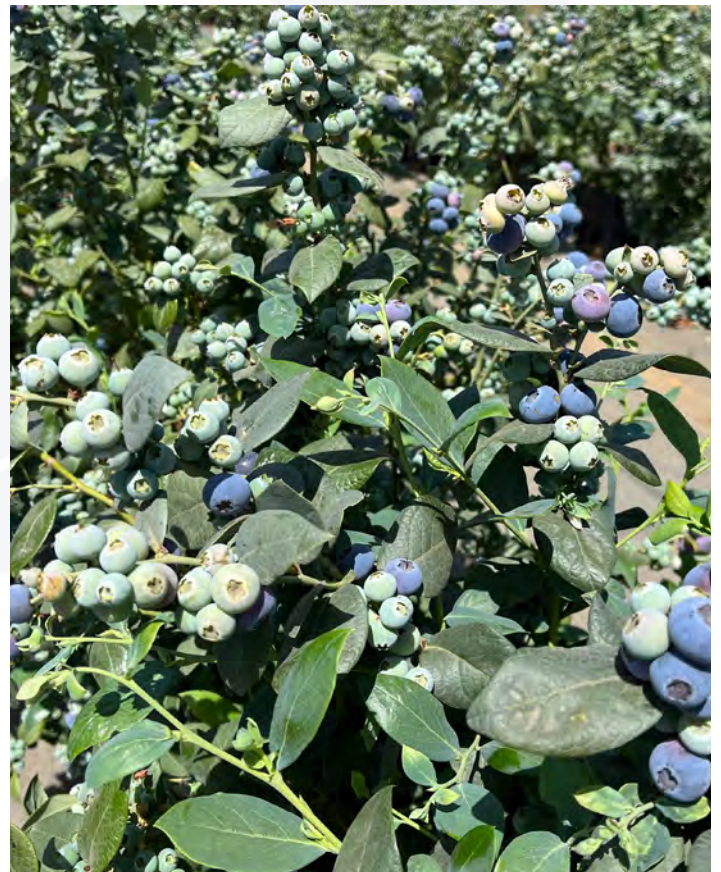
In the pipeline

There were several other varieties and selections seen, including Early Duchess, Blue Duchess, Ava, and Tropical Blue. The international grower trialists that joined us on this trip were highly enthusiastic about what they were seeing. The commercial volumes and trials that we saw generally mirror what we have already seen in the selection blocks in Georgia USA. The plan now is to roll these out commercially as soon as possible on a global scale.

Marieke Gortemaker from Global Plant Genetics spoke to Stephen Belakov, Plants365, who commented that the varieties far exceeded his expectations. He is already seeing the excitement in southern Europe and North Africa from the trials that he has in place in these regions. He discussed looking forward to seeing the commercial planting which is taking place in the short term and noted that some of the other varieties (mentioned above) are looking superb in the regions he represents.

The team at Global Plant Genetics would especially like to thank everyone involved at Top Fruit, South Africa, for welcoming us. It was a first-class trip visiting some superb growers. We consider them a first-class company and partner.

If you would like to receive more information regarding any of the Evergreen and Low Chill varieties, please don't hesitate to email Rupert Hargreaves at rupert@globalplantgenetics.com



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The plan now is to roll these out commercially as soon as possible on a global scale.

Fruit Logistica

Fruit Logistica is right around the corner, 8-10 February, and GPG will be there! We are looking forward to seeing and meeting with many of you in person and to catching up with the latest developments in our crops and the produce sector in general. Feel free to get in touch with us if you will be there and no doubt we will bump into many of you at the Messe Berlin so do stop and say hello. If you will be exhibiting at Fruit Logistica, let us know the location of your stand so we can track you down!

**FRUIT
LOGISTICA**

**8TH 9TH 10TH
FEB 2023**



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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Intellectual Property Update

Marion Durose & Iulia Negoita

Plant Breeders Rights registrations and applications are a significant part of the work GPG undertakes and completes for our breeders around the world. Applications can take many months to be processed and the DUS (distinct, uniform and stable) testing that runs alongside many applications increases the length of time of the process by 2 to 4 to 6 years depending on the crop, unless territories are willing to adopt a DUS test completed in another UPOV member country.

There are still some territories that require an additional National Listing process to be completed in order to allow a variety to be exploited commercially. This process may require their own DUS test to be completed and/or to have a commercial partner in country and the public listing in a National Gazette. As a result, National Listing creates the need for additional time to be included to complete the full PBR process.

University of California Strawberry Varieties Protected

GPG are pleased to confirm that CPVO has granted PBR status for the following 5 varieties:

UCD Moxie

UCD Royal Royce

UCD Valiant

UCD Victor

UCD Warrior

Plant material is available from GPG licensed nurseries in the EU – please contact GPG directly for more information on who you can order plant material from.

PBR applications for all the varieties have been registered and are in process for the following territories:

Argentina	Australia	Brazil	Chile
Colombia	Ecuador	Egypt	Jordan
Israel	Morocco	Peru	Switzerland
Tunisia	Uruguay		

In addition, the University of California have released 2 new varieties UCD Finn and UCD Mojo which GPG will be licensing from January 2023 and protecting in a number of territories.

James Hutton Ltd Raspberries - PBR in process

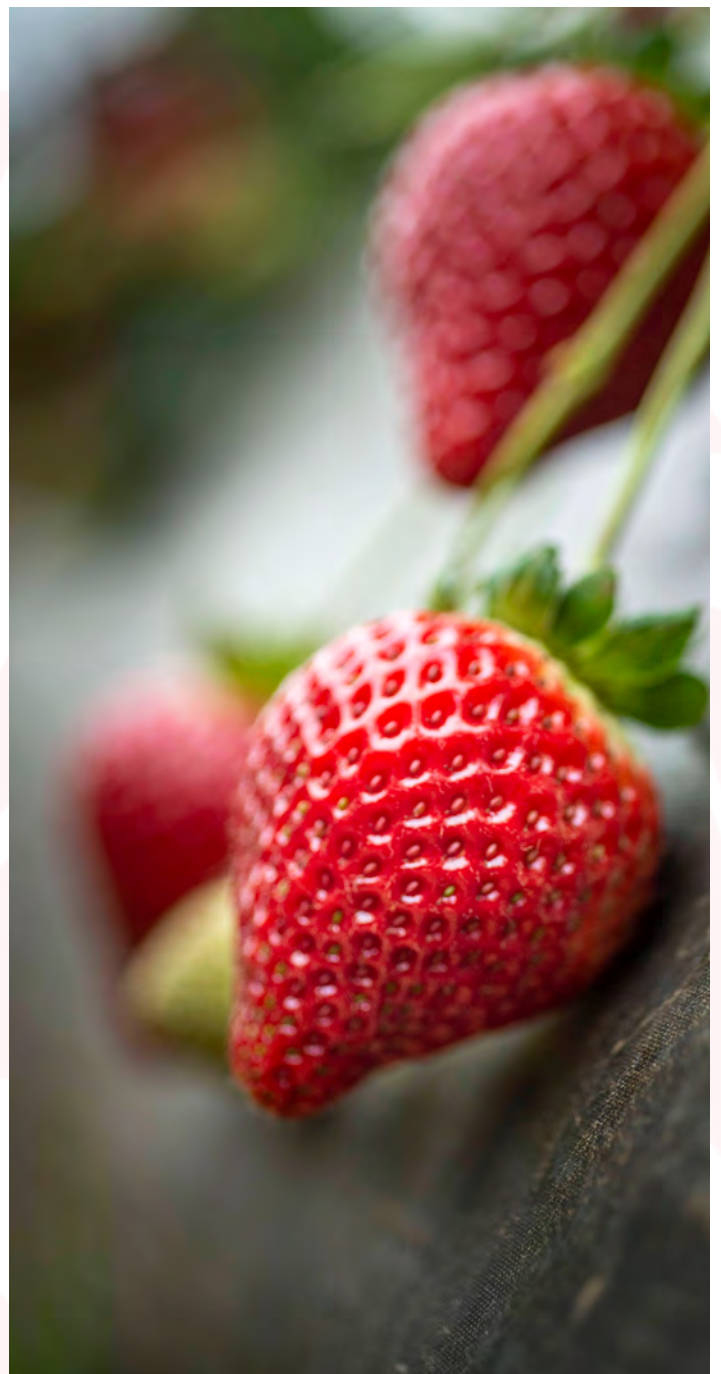
Progress is also being made with the James Hutton Ltd raspberry varieties, Glen Carron, Glen Mor, Lewis and Skye PBR applications in

Australia Israel Chile Morocco

The PBR applications have been granted in South Africa for all of the varieties.

At this moment in time GPG are working on 81 PBR applications in at least 17 different territories. Our relationship with our counsels across the globe are vitally important to our business and so we take the opportunity to thank them for their support and assistance with the process.

Going forward we will highlight various breeding programs and our progress with PBRs across the globe to keep you up to date, this edition we are focusing on strawberries and raspberries.



And Finally

Jamie Petchell

A blackberry is not a single fruit, it is actually an aggregation of several individual berries. Each of these "bobbles" is known as a "drupelet" or "drupe" and contains a single blackberry seed.



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