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International Plant Management and Cornell University Release Two New Cherry Varieties

GENEVA, NY: The cherry processing industry now have two new varieties to work with thanks to recent releases by Cornell University's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station (NYSAES), and International Plant Management, Inc.

"These two brining cherry releases provide growers with new well-adapted varieties for the Eastern United States," said Susan Brown, professor of horticultural sciences, who leads Cornell's cherry breeding program.

"Andersen" is a large, stem-on cocktail cherry with long, thick, green stems that tends to bear in singles. It is very well suited for stem-on shaker harvest with an Ethephon treatment. It has good tree hardiness and health and is bacterial canker resistant. The cherry is large with a bright pink blush while the flesh is white. The fruit is very acid and not suited for retail sales.

Andersen was developed at the NYSAES as part of their on-going breeding program. It was bred and tested as NY 9295. Andersen was named in honor of Robert Andersen, professor emeritus at Cornell, who was the cherry breeder at NYSAES until his retirement last year.

Jim Bittner of Singer Farms, Appleton, NY reports, "We have harvested Andersen with a trunk shaker for a number of years now. Even with a treatment of Ethephon, most cherries come off the tree with the stem. This year it was 100 percent with stems. I have never seen a cherry that shakes so easily but still has the stem attached to the cherry."

"Nugent" is the second variety that has been released. It is a completely yellow cherry that ripens at the same time as Gold and is a pollinizer for other mid-early blooming varieties. It has better crack resistance than Gold and is pollinated by other brining varieties, but not Gold. Its average fruit weight is 8 grams, soluble solids are 20 percent. The tree is spreading and bears very heavily. Nugent was selected from seedlings from Amy Lezzoni's program at Michigan State and was tested at the NYSAES as NY 518.

Nugent was named in honor of Jim Nugent, coordinator of the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station, Traverse City, MI. Nugent was named "Cherry Person of the Year" in 2006 and plans to retire at the end of this year.

"These varieties also serve as excellent pollenizers. It is fitting that NY 9295 is named in honor of Bob Andersen, who lead cherry breeding at Cornell from 1990 until his retirement in 2005," said Brown.

Brown pointed out that Andersen was active in having selections tested not only in New York but in other production regions. "Trials in Michigan generated interest in these selections due to their uniqueness and the suitability of NY9295 for stem-on maraschino cherry production," she said.

For further information or availability of these varieties, please contact International Plant Management at 800-424-2765.

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