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Geneva Releases Two New Raspberries that Extend the Harvest Season

by Linda McCandless

Liverpool, NY - Two new raspberry varieties were released by plant breeders at Cornell University during the annual meeting of the New York State Berry Growers on February 10.

'Encore' raspberries.
PHOTO: Rob Way, Cornell University



"'Prelude' and 'Encore' red raspberries offer growers a unique opportunity to extend the harvest season, both early and late," said Kevin Maloney, who manages the Small Fruit Breeding Program at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, NY, where the fruit was developed. "These varieties are adapted to u-pick, retail farm sales, and wholesale distribution." He and project leader John Sanford are excited about the two new cultivars which should significantly increase the red raspberry harvest season in the Northeast, the Great Lakes regions, and along the East Coast.



'Prelude' raspberries.
PHOTO: Rob Way, Cornell University

"'Prelude' matures seven days earlier than standard early-season cultivars, in late June and early July," said Maloney. It originated from a cross of NY 817

[Hilton x NY600 (Durham x September)] x 'Hilton', and was

previously tested as NY 1009. Winter hardy in Zone 5, the plants of 'Prelude' are vigorous and sucker freely. 'Prelude' fruit average 2.2 grams per berry, are positioned openly with good placement, and are very easy to harvest. 'Prelude' also bears fruit on primocanes in the fall. The total average fall production is slightly less than 'Heritage' and the average fruit size is slightly higher. In test plots conducted at the Geneva Experiment Station, Maloney reports that plant vigor and fruit production of 'Prelude' has not declined when summer cropping annually.

"'Encore' matures late, peaking in production late in the season, and extends the red raspberry harvest into August," said Maloney. 'Encore' originated from a cross of 'Canby' x 'Cherokee', and was previously tested as NY7. 'Encore' has excellent winter hardiness in Zone 5, has very good root suckering and vigor, and produces above average commercial fruit yields. Fruit average 2.9 grams per berry, are attractive, with firm texture, and have a good balanced flavor.

Fruit breeders at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station seek to develop superior fruit cultivars characterized by fruit quality (for both fresh and processed markets), insect and disease resistance, tolerance to cold weather, productivity and growth habit. Releases are particularly well adapted for cultivation in New York. Scientists have introduced 241 new fruit varieties since the Station was founded in 1880, including 37 raspberries.

Photograph available.

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