



ARC INFRUITEC-NIETVOORBIJ

LNR INFRUITEC-NIETVOORBIJ

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Press Release

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ARC and Culdevco release fourteen new stone fruit cultivars

The Agricultural Research Council (Infruitec-Nietvoorbij), together with their commercial partner Culdevco, released fourteen (14) new stone fruit cultivars: 3 apricots, 5 nectarines, 3 peaches and 3 plums to South African growers in the dessert, canning and drying industries.

Research Institute Manager, Dr Johan van Zyl commented on Infruitec-Nietvoorbij's commitment to stone fruit breeding. "During the past 15 years a total of 63 stone fruit cultivars have been released through the ARC breeding programme. Most of them i.e. 59% were released during the past 5 years with the first red flesh plum (Ruby Crunch) being released today." said van Zyl.

It should be noted that:

- Red flesh plums are quick becoming a highly sought after characteristic in the fruit industry as it is connected with high antioxidants.
- The entire peach canning industry is based upon ARC bread varieties.
- More than 95% of the apricot canning, drying and dessert industries are based upon ARC bread varieties.
- More than 80% of the plum industry is based on ARC bred cultivars.
- The earliest nectarine "May Glo" of USA origin has recently been replaced by the ARC's "Ruby Sweet" cultivar.
- The ARC's yellow free stone nectarine "Colorburst™" will replace most of the nectarine varieties used for drying in South Africa.

ARC cultivars are bred under local conditions, thoroughly tested in a variety of climate conditions and in addition, are also tested for keeping quality and market/consumer preferences. Furthermore, in breeding, the ARC is currently using molecular techniques, together with conventional breeding to produce better cultivars. The breeding team consists of six researchers from ARC Infruitec-Nietvoorbij, supported by Culdevco who the ARC signed a commercialisation agreement with 6 years ago.

In 2011/12, the stone fruit programme consisted of 15 projects jointly funded by the ARC, the Deciduous Fruit Industries and the THRIP programme of the Department of Trade and Industry.

This launch followed closely on the heels of the ARC Infruitec-Nietvoorbij / Culdevco table grape cultivar launch and information day in which four (4) new table grape cultivars were released.

Ends

Issued on behalf of the ARC Infruitec-Nietvoorbij by Public Relations Officer: Derusha Rangasamy (021 809 3100 / RangasamyD@arc.agric.za).