

This was released on 4th November 2005

Information Source on Soft Fruit

Did you know that the antioxidant capacity of blackcurrants is greater than red wine? I found the answer on the Scottish Crop Research Institute's new portal www.FruitGateway.co.uk.

Hugh Barker in launching the Gateway at the Scottish Society for Crop Research meeting said "A lot of the soft fruit research at SCRI has been funded from the public purse and we want to make sure the public can see the fruits of the research paid for by their taxes"

Four individual sites make up FruitGateway. One describes all the fruit breeding activities at SCRI including descriptions of the fruit cultivars. Another has information on the pest and disease research. FruitNutrition is where I found the information about blackcurrant antioxidants and the established site, FruitHealth gives growers and producers the chance to get their fruit material tested for a range of diseases.

Dr Nigel Kerby, Managing Director of Mylnefield Research Services, who maintain SCRI's plant variety rights, said "SCRI's Fruitgateway is an innovative and informative website and SCRI is to be commended for its development and launch. This site should create considerable traffic and is key to the SCRI Group's strategy in knowledge transfer and meeting end-user needs"

Notes for editors

The individual sites within FruitGateway are:

FruitBreeding.co.uk that describes breeding, genetics and genomics work on soft fruit at SCRI. It also contains descriptions of all SCRI's fruit cultivars, including the renowned 'Glen' raspberries and 'Ben' blackcurrants.

FruitDisease.co.uk describes research work on soft fruit pests and diseases. It also includes the new and innovative 'FruitDisease Information' database that is currently under development and that will be launched early in 2006.

FruitNutrition.co.uk provides up-to-date information on the health benefits of berries and berry components. Current research and the exciting findings on the link between berry components, polyphenol antioxidants and the prevention of major diseases is highlighted.

FruitHealth.co.uk is the site for UK and International soft fruit pathogen testing and maintenance of high-health germplasm. The tests are based on world-leading procedures many of which were developed at SCRI. Users of this service can submit details of samples and view test results on line through this secure site. The

FruitHealth web site was launched in October 2004, and has already attracted a lot of national and international interest.

SCRI Research focuses on processes that regulate the growth of plants and their responses to pests, pathogens and the environment. It includes genetics to breed crops with improved quality and nutritional value as fast as possible. By understanding the plant's response to pests and diseases and how they react to the soil, air and water around them, environmentally friendly and sustainable methods of protecting crops from the ravages of pests, diseases and weeds are developed.

SCRI is grant-aided by the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD) and has charitable status. It is one of five Scottish Agricultural and Biological Research Institutes (SABRIs) which, together with those of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, form the agricultural and food research service of the UK

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