



Agriculture



HyRed Gives Cranberry Growers a Competitive Edge

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Color and yield are everything if you're a cranberry farmer. Traditionally, farmers have relied on the deep red pigment of ripe cranberries to signal that it was time for harvesting. But in cold weather states like Wisconsin, the world's largest cranberry producer, the intense red color may not develop until late fall. That delayed ripening can damage cranberry crops if winter weather sets in.

Now, after 10 years of development by University of Wisconsin-Madison plant breeders Eric Zeldin and Brent McCown, Midwest growers can better compete with growers in other areas of the country who have longer growing seasons.

The new, intense red cranberry named HyRed, ripens two to three weeks earlier than the leading Stevens cranberry cultivar, and early tests show the new cranberry produces a larger yield. Development of HyRed was supported in part by the Wisconsin Cranberry Board and Ocean Spray, Inc.

UW-Madison scientists developed HyRed by crossing the Stevens variety with the Ben Lear cranberry. In 2001, when HyRed was released to growers, it was the first cranberry hybrid available to the public in over 30 years. The patent on HyRed was issued in 2003 to the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation.



Photos courtesy of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation

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