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By Fred Searle

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New grapes to vie with Thompson and Crimson in Greece



The Arra 15 variety is being touted as a replacement for Thompson in Greece

British breeder and grower Jupiter Marketing joins forces with Grapa Varieties to grow new late-season varieties

Shropshire-based Jupiter Marketing has teamed up with Israeli breeding company Grapa Varieties to grow new Arra table grapes, which it hopes will challenge the dominant Thompson and Crimson cultivars.

As the master licence holders for Arra in the country, the British breeder, grower and supplier is working closely with farmers in Kavala, in the north of Greece, to cultivate four new varieties. Arra 15, Arra 19, Arra 28 and Arra 32 will yield from 2019 onwards, with Jupiter acting as sole marketer.

The company said the venture with Grapa Varieties, which represents reknowned Californian table grape breeder ARD, “not only offers global export opportunities to Greek production, but also the benefit of extended supply windows.”

According to Jupiter, the improved

eating quality of the new table grapes is what sets them apart from Thompson and Crimson, which Greece grows in the biggest volumes.

Arra varieties breeder Shachar Karniel said: “Entering the Greek growing areas with the late-season Arra varieties is a significant leap forward, providing a great competitive edge..

“The four late season varieties that Jupiter carefully chose for the Greek growers are characterised by their yield, beauty and eating quality, each with its colour and uniqueness.”

The Arra 15 white variety is intended to replace Greek Thompson, giving growers a new mid-late season white variety with lower growing costs and, according to Jupiter, better quality.

Following later in the season will be the mid-late season red variety Arra 19, the late-season red Arra 28 and late-season black Arra 32.

Rafi Karniel, general manager of Grapa Varieties, said: “We are very pleased with the positive developments in Greece as part of the expansion of the Arra varieties throughout Europe.

“We were delighted with the opportunity to collaborate with such an esteemed company as Jupiter and it was agreed that Jupiter would step into AVI’s shoes as the marketing agent for the Arra varieties in Greece as well as to expand cooperation on the growth and marketing of Arra varieties worldwide and in Europe in particular”.

The varietal breakthrough will compliment Jupiter’s planting of multiple new varieties across more than 500 hectares of land in three continents. Jupiter’s chief executive Mark Tweddle said: “Working with Grapa to do something exciting for the grape industry like this is really refreshing.

“Our family nature and core values are

key to our success – similar to the culture at Grapa. This has been a real benefit to our relationship and we are particularly excited to celebrate our first harvest with them.”

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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