

The international marketing magazine for fresh produce buyers in Europe



By Fred Meintjes

Tuesday 13th August 2019, 12:19 GMT

## Landmark year for RSA Fujis

Branded as Fuji Royal, significant numbers of the new, truly South African strains will be planted this year



Fuji Royal apples

Ever since the Fuji apple was first bred in 1939 in Japan, there has been a search for better-coloured red apples. Now, South Africa has its own locally developed full-red Fujis that will be planted in significant numbers from this year on.

Local sources have said that the assumption that 'redder is better' also rings true for Fujis.

"All the better-coloured mutations of this variety planted in South Africa have their origins in other parts of the world," said South African exporter Tru-Cape Marketing in a statement. "This was until 2011 when both farmer Robert Zulch of Wakkerstroom in the Witzenberg Valley of Ceres, as well as Buks Nel of Tru-Cape Fruit Marketing, found two full-red mutations."

Zulch found his mutation in a Fuji orchard on his farm, followed by Nel's discovery of another mutation in the Elgin Valley, and they both applied for Plant Breeder's Rights (PBR).

Tru-Cape Marketing explained that, after

the required testing period of at least two years by the Department of Agriculture, both clones were found to be significantly different from any other Fuji strains.

"This, in itself, qualified them for potential Plant Breeder's Rights," Tru-Cape continued. "Most interestingly, it was also found that both these clones did not differ significantly from each other. It was then recommended that the PBR application should be applied under one name only, namely Fuji Royal. Plant Breeder's Rights were granted for Fuji Royal in 2018."

The joint owners of Fuji Royal are Robert Zulch and Tru-Cape Fruit Marketing. "The first large-scale commercial plantings will take place this spring. Fuji Royal is similar to the standard Fuji strains we know, except for its full, non-striated red fruit colour."

It is interesting to note that Messrs Zulch and Nel also found two improved red Gala strains in South Africa. Zulch found Royal Beut in the early 1990s, while Nel's Bigbucks was a more recent discovery.

"Interest in new apple varieties started in 1989 when Buks and I went on an 'extensive' European visit to investigate just that," said Zulch.

Tru-Cape Fruit Marketing managing director Roelf Pienaar said that the company's new varietal development programme, headed by Nel, is one of the company's competitive advantages.

"We are proud of the contribution that Robert Zulch, Buks Nel and our other growers have made to secure Tru-Cape as the leading apple and pear exporter," said Pienaar.

According to Tru-Cape Marketing, the SAPO Trust based at Stellenbosch is the local South African licensee for Fuji Royal.

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

© Copyright Market Intelligence Ltd - Fruitnet.com 2014. The copyright on this article and all content published on Market Intelligence Ltd - Fruitnet.com is held by Market Intelligence Ltd - Fruitnet.com Limited, a joint venture between Market Intelligence Limited and Dr Rolf M Wolf Media GmbH. All rights reserved. Neither this article nor any part of it may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form, including print-outs, screen grabs and information retrieval systems, without the prior permission of the copyright owners.

FRUITNET.COM