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By Michael Barker

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60m sales milestone for Malling Centenary

NIAB EMR-produced strawberry variety passes 60m annual plant sales mark just five years after first hitting the market



Sales of Malling Centenary strawberry plants are now exceeding 60 million annually after just five years on the market.

Introduced in 2013, Malling Centenary was developed at the East Malling Breeding Club, based at NIAB EMR in Kent. The organisation says the variety is in demand from growers and major international retailers owing to its very high percentage of Class I fruit and reduced picking costs. It also scores highly in consumer taste trials when compared with the standard Elsanta.

"The rapid growth in Malling Centenary sales also reflects its outstanding performance on the supermarket shelf," said Mario Caccamo, NIAB EMR's managing director. "We recently passed total sales of 70 million plants and we can now confidently expect the variety to pass that figure [with] next year's sales alone."

Malling Centenary is the fastest-selling strawberry variety handled by soft-fruit IP management company Meiosis, whose chief executive Mark Coxeter added: "The growth for Malling Centenary is set to continue as it further establishes

itself as the standard June-bearer variety in the northern hemisphere."

Gross royalties of nearly €1.4 million will be generated for the members of the East Malling Strawberry Breeding Club who originally invested in the development of Malling Centenary, NIAB EMR revealed. The total royalty returns to date have already exceeded the original investment to breed the variety, it added.