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By Mike Knowles

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European customs seize South African berries



Dutch authorities stop consignment of premium blueberries reportedly grown without permission of plant breeder OZblu

Dutch customs officials in Rotterdam have reportedly seized a consignment of premium imported blueberries from South Africa after an apparent complaint from Australian plant breeder OZblu.

The berries, which Fruitnet understands were shipped by a South African fruit exporter for distribution and sale in the European Union, are said to have been produced without the required licence, prompting the authorities to raise a red alert.

Plant variety rights for

the trademarked blueberry varieties, originally developed by an organisation called Nature Select, are held by United Exports Group.

Two years ago, [Fruitnet reported how a South African farmer risked losing their rights to grow premium blueberry varieties marketed under the OZblu brand](#) after continuous breaches of a license agreement.

According to a statement issued by United Exports, the European Union Customs Authority has now commenced proceedings involving the South African exporter, the shipper and the European wholesaler for the destruction of the fruit.

It added that the authority would "monitor the future import of all OZblu blueberry varieties into the European Union".

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