

Consumers bite into new Bravo red apple

April 11 2016, by Jo Fulwood, Sciencenetwork Wa



The new Bravo apple. Credit: DAFWA

It's a bold vintage red that is set to take the WA market by storm, but it's not a Grange Hermitage.

And, thankfully for WA consumers, the asking price on the supermarket shelf will be slightly different too.

But for WA fruit growers, the release of the new Bravo™ red apple is

even more special than a taste of the infamous wine.

In fact, this new apple has been 23 years in the making and researchers are tipping it to be a massive hit with consumers, with its dark burgundy skin and crisp succulent taste.

Released earlier this week, Bravo™ is the successful genetic cross between WA's Cripps Red (sold as Sundowner™) and Royal Gala varieties.

Dr David Windsor from the Department of Agriculture and Food says the apple-breeding program, based at Manjimup, has three stages, each taking up to eight years.

"That's why it has taken so long for us to produce a new line for the market," he says.

"It's been a lot longer process and more expensive in the making than a bottle of Grange, and although I might be a bit biased, but I think it's a lot more tasty too."

He says in the early stage of the program, researchers plant out hundreds of thousands of crossed lines as seedlings with only a handful of plants making it through to the second stage.

"Any apple that looks interesting is then reproduced onto root stock, and observed under different seasonal conditions, and the fruit regularly tasted," he says.

Finally, in the last stage the remaining few lines are planted into a commercial environment to determine if they have any fatal flaws.

Apple trees require a certain amount of vernalisation, or chill factor, to

set flowers and then fruit, Dr Windsor says.

Higher temperature ensures burgundy colour

"Also, apples require a variation between day and night time temperature to develop their colour," he says.

"Apples that come out of our programs develop colour at higher night time temperatures because Manjimup is a relatively warm apple growing region compared to other regions in the world."

Dr Windsor says DAFWA's main objective was to produce an [apple](#) with a point of difference, desired by the consumer.

For farmers we believe this new line will have a 90 per cent pack out rate because it has a thicker skin resulting in reduced bruising, he says.

It will be cheaper to harvest given its tighter maturing period compared with other varieties, he says.

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