



HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO RELEASE A NEW CITRUS VARIETY?

There is considerable interest in the “Texas Red” grapefruit variety currently being propagated for evaluation at the Citrus Center (see April 2005 newsletter p.3). Understandably, growers are keen to get it as soon as possible, and we are frequently being asked when it will be available. Before a new variety can be released, it has to be grown for several years to ensure that the fruit is true-to-type, is of acceptable size, shape, internal and external quality, and that the trees bear fruit well and consistently. To get an idea of when it (or other variants currently under test) may be released, we looked back at the time it took to release current grapefruit varieties here in Texas and elsewhere. The following table summarizes what we found:

Variety	Origin	Propagation Method	Year Released	Year Bred	Years to Release
Star Ruby	Texas	Hudson seed	1959	1970	11
Star Ruby	South Africa	TX Star Ruby seed	1972	1986	14
Flame	Florida	Henderson seed	1974	1987	13
Ray Ruby	Texas	Whole tree	1979	1977	8
Rio Red	Texas	A&I 1-48 budsport	1976	1984	8

If this new dark red variety turns out to have commercial potential, it will probably take about 8 years to be ready for release since it is derived from a budsport - 2012 would therefore be a realistic release date. Any variety derived from seed takes longer because the tree has to grow out of the juvenile phase before it starts bearing fruit.

By **Loana & Jonathan Gaa**

AWARDS FOR CITRUS CENTER PERSONNEL

Two events were held in Kingsville recently at which several present and former Citrus Center employees were recognized for the achievements in 2004. At the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences Awards Banquet, **D Vito F** received the Faculty Award for Excellence in Service for his dedicated extension activities in support of the citrus growers, **D B** **Pa** (who since January has been the Director of the Vegetable & Fruit Improvement Center in College Station) received a special award for excellence in research, and the outstanding Graduate Students' Awards went to **S b** **P**, a cooperative PhD student of Dr Patil, and **V** **a A** **a**, an MS student of Dr Louzada and Dr Nelson.

At the University's Service Awards Luncheon, five employees were recognized for long service: **T** (35 years), **A** (30 years), **T** **G** **a** (15 years), **J** **W** (15 years) and **R** **C** **R** (10 years). In addition, **T** **G** **a** received the Employee of the Year Award for the Citrus Center.

Congratulations to everyone.

J **a G** **a**

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Dr Murano was interviewed by reporters from the local media, and then the visitors made a brief tour of the Center. They then visited the J & D Produce vegetable packing shed in Edinburg and the TCX juice plant in Mission. A well-attended evening reception sponsored by the stakeholders was held for her at the Cimmarron Country Club. In a speech Dr Murano thanked everyone, and outlined her vision for the future of the Experiment Station.

Dr Murano worked as professor of animal science and Director of the Center for Food Safety in College Station until July 2001 when President Bush appointed her as Under Secretary for Food Safety in the USDA. She served in this position until January of this year when she returned to College Station to assume her new leadership positions.

J **a G** **a**

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