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NEWSROOM

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Fruits of UNH Breeding Research: New Fruit, Vegetables Available for 2019

Monday, March 18, 2019

(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2019/03/18/fruits-unh-breeding-research-new-fruit-vegetables-available-2019)

DURHAM, N.H.—Gardeners preparing to plant their fruits and vegetables have several new pumpkin, squash, and melon varieties to choose from this year that were developed at the University of New Hampshire by a researcher who leads the longest, continuous squash and pumpkin breeding program in North America.

Brent Loy, emeritus professor of plant genetics, continues his ground-breaking plant breeding work as NH Agricultural Experiment Station researcher. His most recent work has resulted in the commercial release of several new cucurbit varieties. The new varieties are well suited to state and regional growing conditions, have improved marketing qualities, and exhibit intermediate resistance to powdery mildew disease.



SMOOTH CRIMINAL SUMMER SQUASH (LEFT) AND FIRST LOVE MELON. CREDIT: SENECA VEGETABLE RESEARCH AND HIGH MOWING ORGANIC SEEDS.

“Development of new varieties is a key underpinning for production of abundant and

nutritious vegetables,” said Loy. “Improved variety performance in terms of yield, quality and ease of culture is paramount. Better appearance and improved nutrition and eating quality increase consumer acceptance and demand for locally produced vegetables, thereby providing more income to growers, and for regional seed companies marketing locally adapted varieties, helps maintain their profitability.”

Three new pumpkins, a summer squash, a butternut squash, and a melon have been released and are available in 2019 seed catalogues.

Johnny’s Selected Seeds has released Renegade pumpkin (<https://www.johnnyseeds.com/vegetables/pumpkins/jack-o-lanterns/renegade-pmr-f1-pumpkin-seed-3437.html>) with powdery mildew resistance, both treated and untreated seeds. Renegade is a reliable producer in the medium to large class size with a striking, rich orange color. It is thick-walled and blocky round. Pumpkins average 14 to 18 pounds and have a strong handle and medium vine.

Rupp Seeds, which carries several UNH-developed pumpkin varieties, has released Carbonado Gold pumpkin (<https://www.ruppseeds.com/Vegetables/Products/New-for-2019/Carbonado-Gold>). It is an attractive pumpkin in the 15 to 20-pound class with a sturdy and slightly smaller handle than Renegade, but with earlier maturity. As with Renegade, the handles hold up well after harvest, giving growers a higher percentage of marketable pumpkins.

Mellow Yellow (<https://www.johnnyseeds.com/vegetables/pumpkins/jack-o-lanterns/mellow-yellow-f1-pumpkin-seed-3391.html>) is available from several seed companies. It is a unique, large yellow pumpkin filling an attractive niche for new pumpkin pigmentation. It follows in the footsteps of Owl's Eye (<https://www.highmowingseeds.com/organic-non-gmo-owl-s-eye-f1-pumpkin-a.html>), a light yellow UNH release carried by High Mowing Organic Seeds. Mellow Yellow's unique bright yellow color is striking, especially when displayed next to white pumpkins.

Seneca Vegetable Research released the fourth summer squash variety in the Slickpik® series, Smooth Criminal (<http://www.senecavegetable.com/products/summer-squash---yellow.html>), and is available in several seed catalogs. Slickpik® varieties carry the *gl-2* mutant for reduced spines on stems and leaf petioles, thus reducing fruit abrasions that develop into unattractive brown discolorations, well as reducing skin irritation to workers during harvest.

Hybrid Seed of New Zealand released the first butternut variety, Gabrielle, resulting from a collaborative breeding program with UNH. An F1 hybrid, Gabrielle is similar to the open pollinated variety Waltham Butternut, but with resistance to powdery mildew disease and having higher carotenoid content, giving darker flesh color and higher nutritive value to squash.

True Love melon (<https://www.highmowingseeds.com/organic-non-gmo-true-love-f1-melon-a.html>), released by High Mowing Organic Seeds, is an eating melon with exceptionally high sugars and near-perfect texture designed to complement its sister variety, First Kiss F1. It is resistant to fusarium wilt and powdery mildew.

In addition to the new seeds, there are a number of seeds available in catalogues this year that were developed by Loy, in collaboration with him, or include UNH breeding lines. Loy's experiment station-funded work has resulted in more than 80 new varieties of squash, pumpkins, gourds, and melons sold in seed catalogs throughout the world.

According to UNHInnovation, UNH has executed 58 exclusive licenses with nine partners for inbreds and hybrids developed by Brent. Throughout his career at UNH, more than 200 hybrids and inbreds have been licensed or utilized in trial and germplasm agreements. Royalties generated by this portfolio continue to increase each year, including an expected 10 percent increase from last year. Royalties have generated more than \$2 million since commercialization began of these varieties.

This material is based upon work supported by the NH Agricultural Experiment Station, through joint funding of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under award number 1016574, and the state of New Hampshire.

Founded in 1887, the NH Agricultural Experiment Station (<http://colsa.unh.edu/nhaes>) at the UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (<https://colsa.unh.edu/>) is UNH's original research center and an elemental component of New Hampshire's land-grant university heritage and mission.

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Editor's Notes:

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Smooth Criminal summer squash (left) and First Love melon. Credit: Seneca Vegetable Research and High Mowing Organic Seeds.

<https://colsa.unh.edu/nhaes/sites/default/files/media/images/renegade.jpg> (<https://colsa.unh.edu/nhaes/sites/default/files/media/images/renegade.jpg>)

Renegade Pumpkin. Credit: Johnny's Selected Seeds

<https://colsa.unh.edu/nhaes/sites/default/files/media/images/renegade.jpg> (<https://colsa.unh.edu/nhaes/sites/default/files/media/images/renegade.jpg>)

Mellow Yellow pumpkin. Credit: Johnny's Selected Seeds

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