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Cultivar Corner

PRIME-ARK[®] TRAVELER TESTED AS APF-190T

Inventor: John Clark, University of Arkansas



John Clark answers some questions about this blackberry, released from the University of Arkansas in 2014.

What makes Prime-Ark® Traveler special?

It is the world's first commercial fresh market blackberry cultivar with excellent shipping quality combined with thornless canes that produce fruit in the first year. This ability to produce fruit on current-season canes as opposed to second-year canes, like most other cultivars, is called primocane-fruiting. Primocane fruit are harvested in the late summer and fall, allowing growers to plant cultivars targeting the late-season market, increase mechanization of their operation since primocanes are mowed down in the fall, and avoid winter injury since canes aren't overwintered. With its other attributes, excellent shipping quality, thornless canes, and high productivity, Prime-Ark* Traveler broadens options for season of production and management strategies in global production.

What is the pedigree of Prime-Ark® Traveler?

Prime-Ark* Traveler resulted from a cross in 2004 between A-2293T \times APF-49T, two Arkansas breeding program selections with similar ancestry.





How were you able to combine thornless canes and primocane-fruiting in Prime-Ark® Traveler?

Both attributes are recessively controlled by one major locus. As Arkansas germplasm is tetraploid, obtaining progeny with the targeted recessive alleles takes time. I crossed parents with contrasting attributes to achieve this unique combination. The female parent, A-2293T, had two alleles for primocane fruiting and also had quality derived from normal-fruiting parents. The male parent, APF-49T, was thornless and primocane-fruiting but had small fruit size and limited yield potential.

What is the size of the family from which Prime-Ark®Traveler was selected?

The original plant was selected in June 2008 from a large-sized population of 619 to obtain the combination of targeted attributes. It is the only commercial release from this population.

Will this cultivar be used in RosBREED and how?

It's a parent of a population used in RosBREED to identify genetic loci controlling fruit sweetness.

When will this cultivar be in the market?

The first commercial plantings were in fall of 2015, so fruit will be on the market in 2017.

Are there other primocane-fruiting cultivars released from the University of Arkansas?

Yes, Prime-Ark[®] Traveler is the fifth public release of the primocanefruiting type plant. The most popular is Prime-Ark[®] 45, which has high productivity, large berry size and high fruit quality; however, it has thorny canes, which is undesirable for production.



United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture

RosBREED is a Coordinated Agriculture Project composed of a multi-state, multi-institution, and multi-disciplinary team of scientists dedicated to the accelerated genetic improvement of U.S. rosaceous crops using diagnostic DNA tools. This project is funded through the USDA-NIFA Specialty Crop Research Initiative by a combination of federal and matching funds.



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