



Winter 2018 Edition

IFG insider

Bringing something special to the table.™



CEO

Andy Higgins

Welcome to the IFG Insider! We hope you find our new newsletter format valuable and informative.

2018 brings continued changes at IFG – from new staff to new varieties. Our primary goal remains the same. We want to inspire consumers with incredible fruit and support all our growers and help marketers realize the most potential from each variety. Yes, this is a tall order. But we are working hard towards achieving that goal.

What can you expect in 2018 from IFG?

- Of course, more varieties. First and foremost, we are a breeding company dedicated to your success. In 2018 we are launching 7 new cherry, and 17 new table grape varieties!
- More communication. In addition to this newsletter, we intend to increase our email blasts, working to inform you more about our varieties, people, policies and our exciting future. We are also enhancing our photo library and variety sheets. We are expanding our website and online services to provide you with round the clock access to help all our resources.
- More support. We are dedicating more staff and resources to our technical and variety support programs. Expect to see more variety technical information as well as more frequent ways to learn from IFG, including our enhanced website and educational webinars. We are also investing more in our post-harvest research, with a goal to really understand the fine points of each of our varieties.
- Clarity in licensing. We intend to release new licensing policies in 2018 that will provide clarity in how and where we will test and license new varieties. These policies, together with a comprehensive variety roadmap, should make planting decisions easier. Additionally, we intend to share updated test agreements and brand use guidelines that match our expanding variety offering and licensee base.

On behalf of the entire IFG team, thank you for your support. I look forward to this next year as we revolutionize the world of table grapes and sweet cherries!

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Grape Spotlight: Sweet Nectar®

By David Cain, PhD

The variety 'IFG Eighteen' better known under its trademark name Sweet Nectar® is one of IFG's rising stars. It ticks all the right boxes for growers, retailers and consumers. The fiery red round seedless berries have a deliciously sweet flowery muscat flavor that delights connoisseurs of muscat flavored grapes. Muscat grapes have been highly prized throughout history and are widely grown. They are especially prized in Europe and Asia.

Growers find Sweet Nectar® easy to grow. It has loose clusters with natural berry size of 21 mm or 13/16 and it responds well to both thinning and sizing treatments. It colors well in most climates; however, in very hot regions like Bakersfield, it may benefit from ethrel applications. It has excellent storage and shipping characteristics. The berry attachment is good, stems stay bright green and it retains its muscat flavor for at least eight weeks in cold storage. We recommend that it be harvested above 20 brix sugar to allow the fruit to develop its rich flavor.

We already have commercial plantings in Spain, Peru, Australia and Brazil and it is performing very well in trial plots in South Africa and Namibia. It is finding an enthusiastic reception by retailers, especially in the UK. We expect its acreage to continue to increase as demand for this great flavored grape grows.



Fun Fact:

From 2001 to 2016 we've grown and evaluated 191,641 grape seedlings. That represents a total row length of 72.5 miles of seedlings – all walked by Dr. Cain.



TM

Cherry Spotlight: Cheery Grand™

By Chris Owens, PhD

The IFG sweet cherry breeding program was initiated in 2001 with the primary aim of developing early ripening, low-chill cherries adapted to climates with mild winters such as the southern portion of the San Joaquin Valley of California. Cheery Grand™ is one of the first cultivars developed from this effort, with a chilling requirement of approximately 500 chilling hours. Initially tested under the number 28-148, it is now being commercialized internationally, with major plantings in Chile and Australia.

Cheery Grand™ ripens on average 3-4 days before Brooks or Chelan in California. The cherries are firm and large, with Firmtech values of 280-320 without the application of gibberellin and an average cherry size of 30-32 mm (8 to 9 row size). Cheery Grand™, like all of the IFG releases, has been evaluated for post-harvest storage. It has shown strong storage potential, with good stem retention, little stem discoloration and few fruit defects.

As a fruit breeding company, IFG is focused on flavor of all its releases. It has shown excellent flavor following 40 days of cold storage, with good texture and cherry aroma.

The IFG cherry breeding program is based in an environment in which summer high temperatures routinely rise above 40°C, causing significant fruit doubling in many varieties. The rate of doubling for this variety is significantly lower than standard varieties such as Brooks.

Cheery Grand™'s technical attributes combined with strong retail appeal make it an excellent choice for an early ripening cherry.





Meet Our Global Technical Production Research Manager:

Pietro Scafidi

Regional Manager Italy & Portugal

Pietro Scafidi, a native of Sicily, Italy, spent every summer growing up in his grandfather's vineyards. His favorite part of being in the fields was during harvest time where eating the grapes carefully nurtured by his grandfather was so special. This is where the roots of his passion for grapevines began. Studying viticulture later in life was an easy decision. Pietro began his studies in 2006 and later in 2012 received a PhD in Viticulture. His research was performed at the University of Palermo where his studies focused on irrigation management and microclimatic modifications at bunch zone on polyphenolic and aromatic composition of grapes. His final work was well received and published in several national and international scientific journals.

Pietro subsequently consulted for growers all over the world primarily in Italy, Australia, Portugal and Turkey. He advises growers on planting decisions, plant management, nutrition, irrigation, pest and disease management, plant grow regulator (PGRs) applications, and cultivation under plastic covers.

“ Don't copy what other growers are doing. Instead, understand it and look if it could work in your vineyard. ”

-Pietro Scafidi

With his talents and expertise, IFG was very pleased when Pietro joined IFG as Regional Manager of Italy and Portugal in late 2016. Since then, 2017 developed into an exciting year for both Pietro and his family. In July, 2017, Pietro and his wife, Valentina, welcomed their very first son, Andrea. Following this, IFG appointed Pietro as our IFG Global Technical & Production Research Manager - Grapes – definitely a skilled leader for our IFG technical team.

Pietro is very enthusiastic about his new position and his first year with IFG. It allows him to continue his passion for grapes and helping our licensees become excellent growers at the same time collaborating with our very talented tech team. Eating grapes is historical for him – part of his upbringing – part of his being – he especially loves Sweet Celebration® and Sweet Nectar® ... so beware during harvest!



Zappia Innovations

One of the focuses of our newsletter is to highlight our lesser-known growers from around the world. In our community of world-class growers, we want to take an opportunity to showcase the hidden gems who are innovative and move the needle in their category.

Zappia Innovations is a family-owned business that has grown table grapes in the Mildura region of Australia for over thirty years. Founder Pat Zappia was born in Italy and moved to Australia when he was 11 years old. His three sons John, Nino, and Frank, all work in the business. “We have been growing table grapes since 1986,” said John Zappia, a third-generation farmer and Manager of Zappia Innovations. Currently Zappia Innovations only grows table grapes but previously farmed grapes for dried fruit. They employ 15 to 60 people, depending on the season. Running like a well-oiled machine, the Zappia’s grow and market their own produce and sell under the “SolarFresh” brand.

Since joining the IFG team, the Zappias expressed their gratitude to have met and worked with Tersia Marcos, IFG International Business Manager, and others and to participate building a successful program in Australia. With the recent addition of Jennifer Hashim-Maguire as the Australian regional manager, they have seen the program come full circle and believe the addition compliments David's ground-breaking work and stimulates IFG's vision for the future.

The unique selection of varieties is initially what attracted the Zappia family to Dr. David Cain and IFG. "The market place is always looking for something different and exciting and no one does it better than David" John said. He explained that IFG gives them the opportunity to create their own path into different markets by selecting unique varieties they can develop, and use them to expand their market presence. In addition, they see the communication with IFG as easy, with information flowing in both directions.

We asked John's opinion on what makes Australian table grape growers unique compared to other growers around the world. "It's hard to differentiate us as growers from the rest of the world," he said. "We all appreciate and understand the level of risk and commitment that is needed to be successful in this industry. Each country has different climates and different harvest periods, but we all face the same number of challenges and obstacles that arise with growing table grapes." At IFG we understand the requirements and challenges of our licensees. Our mission is to provide access not only to exciting new varieties, but to ongoing expert planning, support and technical advice because we understand that IFG is only successful if our partners are successful.



Australia has about 1,000 acres of Sweet Sapphire® planted. Australia, a country known for having the highest labor costs in the world, found a shining star within IFG varieties. Sweet Sapphire® is extremely easy to grow in AU, requires very little labor, and is very well liked in Asia. With the low input costs and high acceptance, Australia has a win-win situation.

-Tersia Marcos, IFG International Business Manager



"Opportunities to work with new varieties gives us a certain responsibility to make a variety work and give honest feedback where necessary. It also gives us incentive and responsibility to put the effort in to achieving the highest quality standards for each variety, because we understand how much effort and detail IFG has put into breeding and developing the selections. Knowing our local licensees and having met others on the IFG team, it's evident that we share one common goal—striving to be the best within our industry" John said.

Currently, Sweet Sapphire® is their favorite variety. "Its appearance is a standout and different than a standard grape. The flavor matches the appearance, which I think has surprised some in the market place," John said. He explained that its natural large size is a plus and it's easy to grow. He went on to say that Sweet Sapphire® has re-energized the marketplace and gotten their consumers and marketers excited about eating grapes.





IFG's World-Class Cherry Team is Gearing Up!

By Lynn Long

This past year IFG has welcomed several new cherry team members. In November, all gathered in Chile for training, team building, and to sponsor our very first IFG Cherry Field Day.

The event was successful, with over forty prospective licensees attending, where we saw for the first time several of IFG's new and exciting cherry varieties. Timing of the visit was organized during the early season harvest of the IFG selections. Our new cherry team had the opportunity to see the cherries as they ripened and compare them to established varieties already grown in Chile.

Traveling north of Santiago, the team saw regions where our low-chill cherries would perform consistently well. Both Cheery Crunch™ and Cheery Blush™ will crop with just 150 to 300 chilling hours. These varieties have the potential to open up new production areas, not only in Chile, but also in places like Peru, Mexico, South Africa and Australia.



In the more traditional early area of Chile, we saw how IFG varieties Cheery Treat™, Cheery Burst™, Cheery Grand™ and Cheery Glow™ ripened with, or a few days earlier, than Royal Dawn, one of the earliest commercial cherries now grown in Chile. We also saw that even the high chill variety, Cheery Moon™, ripened with Santina, a standard for early cherries in Chile as well as other areas. It also displayed less cracking and a larger size than Santina – both very important attributes for the cherry market.

The team also visited IFG's first two commercial plantings of cherries – A Rio King block of Cheery Grand™, planted on Gisela 12 rootstock, and at Almahue where Hernan Garces has planted nine hectares of Cheery Moon™ on Gisela 12. Garces is also planning a new block of Cheery Grand™ on Gisela 12. The Cherry team thanks Antonia Sanchez, the new Chilean Field Service Engineer for IFG who organized a fantastic week-long event. We experienced wonderful Chilean hospitality and great learning and team building opportunities. Their goal is to use this experience to further benefit all of our cherry licensees around the world.

Technical Tip:

“ Understanding soil and climate is the most vital part of growing healthy grapevines. Every year we face a new set of challenges all around the world. A good farmer will always improvise. ”

-Heidi De Villers, Regional Manager, South Africa



Fun Fact:

Since 2004, we have prepared more than 1,261 separate contracts (353 since 1/1/2017), in duplicate, which equals approximately 88,270 total pages, consuming an estimated 29 trees, and requiring 83,226 initials and 5,044 signatures hand-written by David or Andy, wherein the name IFG is referred to at least 595,192 times, and which contracts have logged over 15,975,494 miles to 15 countries, all to facilitate the welcoming of our current 787 Licensees to the IFG Family.

-IFG Legal Department

Key Dates



JUN

Thursday, June 14, 2018

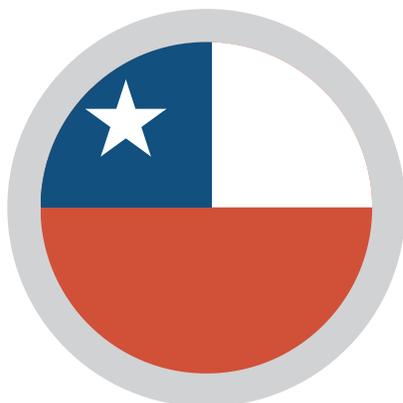
Regional Summit
Australia – Mildura, Victoria



AUG

Thursday, August 16, 2018

Global Summit
Central Valley, California



NOV

November 2018

Cherry Open Days
Central Valley, Chile

Annual Dinner Party





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