'MALLING CENTÉNAR'

SHOWING POTENTIAI

Kent. The centre was founded in 1913 by an association of over 600 fruit growers, and is most famous for its work on apple rootstocks.

As well as soft fruit the research centre was also responsible for breeding a whole host of fruit cultivars including apples, pears, cherries, and hops.

Extending the strawberry fruiting season was a primary driver for the strawberry breeding programme. The strawberry cultivar 'Pandora' was released in 1988. This bridged the gap between the main and late season cultivars. Some of these included the raspberries ('Malling Jewel' and 'Malling Juno') and strawberries ('Elegance', 'Judibell', 'Sunrise', 'Vibrant' and 'Sweetheart').

On the day of the Centenary celebrations a bowl of

JUNE BEARING STRAWBERRY

BENEFITS TO THE GROWER

Dr **Eamonn** Kehoe, Teagasc soft fruit specialist

making it suitable for early and extended season production.
The main benefit is the very high percentage of Class 1 fruit with more

CROP HUSBANDRY

It's important to remember also that this is a new strawberry cultivar. We have been growing 'Elsanta' predominantly in Ireland for almost 40 years. We are still learning new things about 'Elsanta' so we are not going to learn everything about 'Malling Centenary' overnight.

This also goes for the strawberry plant propagators,

WILL THE CROP OVERWINTER?

FRESH PRODUCE / 12



mildew (*Podosphaera aphanis*) infection. This was demonstrated in our strawberry cultivar trial in Teagasc Kildalton College during the summer. This is a huge benefit for growers from both an agronomic and an economic perspective.

TEAGASC RESEARCH

The work in Teagasc Kildalton continues. Whilst the results of the research are important for the industry, what is even more important here is the 'diffusion of knowledge' to the current horticultural students. Most will never have seen applied research at work. Now they have their chance to see how horticultural research is undertaken and to participate in the process.

We have recently completed a new state of the art

glasshouse unit (5.5m high) in the Teagasc Horticultural

Centre at Ashtown in Dublin. I will start a new strawberry

research trial here beginning in January, focusing on possible ways of extending the season of production of 'Malling Centenary'. Even though 'Centenary' is a SD plant its flowering characteristics are quite different to that of a typical SD plant. In fact, some of the plant's genetic makeup includes crosses from the east coast of the United States. These genes may be switched on in certain environmental conditions. I will

manipulate the environment and try to extend the plants flowering and thus fruit production. This is an Aladdin's cave for a horticultural scientist!

EAMONN KEHOE is a soft fruit specialist based at Johnstown Castle, Co Wexford, whose research is conducted at Ashtown Research Centre, Co Dublin. His primary focus is on providing a technical and business advisory service to Ireland's soft fruit growers and conducting an applied research programme for the industry. He can



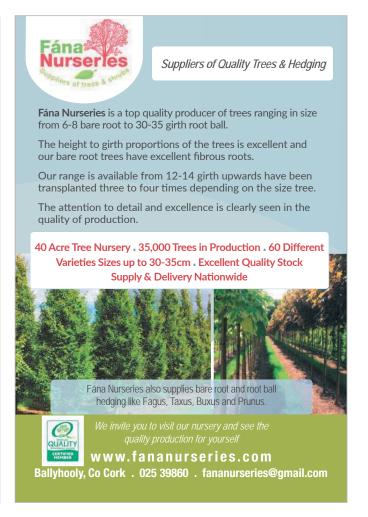
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