

REPORT

—South Africa

# Celina heralds new dawn for pears

CAPE TOWN—New blushed pear and novel apple varieties look set to take South Africa’s topfruit industry forward and to markets new.

by Fred Meintjes

**S**outh Africa’s pear industry has for many years been looking for a range of blush pears that will strengthen its presence in the world’s markets. Finally the search is over. New pear, Celina, licensed exclusively to the Stargrow Group in South Africa, will become available within two years, signaling significant progress in achieving this goal.

“We believe that as volumes become available, our blushed pears will also bring new exciting choices for consumers in Asia because they are so attractive and the new ones really eat well,” says Stargrow’s chairman Michiel Prins.

For the first time in nearly 20 years, Celina heralds a viable opportunity for the South African industry to offer international markets a range of blushed pears throughout the season.

“Celina will be the earliest of a range of three pear varieties which South African growers will be able to offer the world,” says Stargrow’s Andries van der Westhuizen. “It will replace the current early pear variety available to growers.

“We have found that Celina does extremely well under South African conditions and its introduction



into the South African industry is a significant step forward to increase the presence of our products on the world’s markets.”

Prins says that most importantly, Celina will be part of an international marketing and branding concept which will ensure that the variety has customer exposure over much longer periods.

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**ABOVE**—Stargrow’s Michiel Prins  
**TOP RIGHT**—Blush pear Celina presents new opportunities to South African growers



“South Africa is ideally placed to become the world leader in blushed pear production,” Prins tells ASIAFRUIT.

Meanwhile, exciting new apple varieties with internal red and pink colour are on the way thanks to cooperation between the UK scientific centre, East Malling Research (EMR), and South African fruit breeders, re:inc innovation.

“We all know that the internal colour in apples is as old as apples themselves. In fact, they all have more or less a creamy colour. This will now be changing because new superior varieties with a red or pink internal colour, with great eating quality, are about to make their appearances,” says re:inc innovation director Riaan van Wyk.

Riaan van Wyk believes that these apples represent the new future of apples. “The apples are really beautiful, sweet and juicy and the snappy sound when biting the very crunchy flesh texture, represents the future eating experience for especially younger people.”

Along with a full range of blushed pears for the future, consumers in Asia can also look forward to some great new novel apples in the future. **A**