

Blackcurrant plant protection info now available on www.blackcurrant-iba.com



Of course, every blackcurrant grower wants to keep his or her plantation healthy. And sustainable growing is one of the major concerns of the blackcurrant industry in general. Considering these two facts, the International Blackcurrant Association has decided to act and work on blackcurrant plant protection information.

The newly formed Agronomy & Plant Breeding sector group of the IBA, sponsored by Bayer, has therefore started its work last February. They have collected data from most of the blackcurrant growing countries. This data gives precious information on how these countries handle crop protection: Which products can be used? What do they contain? How much treatments can blackcurrant plantations receive, and when?

Results

Over the past months, the working group has checked the data. We have now finished to put it together for the easy use of our members here. This is only the first project of the sector group, and much more work is under way for the next months in other fields.

Of course, we will update blackcurrant plant protection information every year. We also hope to increase the number of participating countries little by little and add more and more value.

Sector Group members

If you want to know who is behind the sector group, you may check it here!

Blackcurrant in the press worldwide



The IBA keeps on scrutinizing the internet and the press for articles about blackcurrants. They may talk about health benefits, gastronomy, economy or growing methods - and many more. We gather them, save them, and make them available for the visitors of our website.

Yes, you got it: for blackcurrant lovers, any topic related to blackcurrants can be interesting!

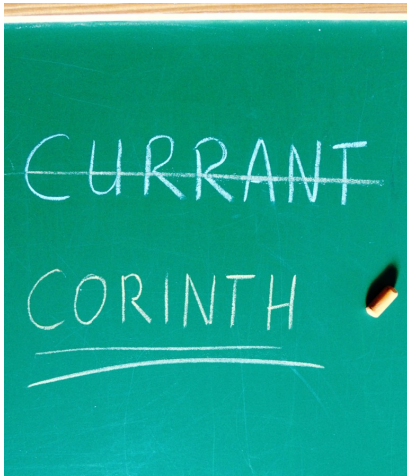
Read articles

You can find these articles and read them in their original language on our website. Of course, this collection is far from being comprehensive.

In order to improve it, we are always happy to publish texts that you may have written, press releases talking about your company, or stories which you have read and found interesting to share with other blackcurrant lovers.

Therefore, feel free to send links, pdf files, photocopies etc. to blackcurrant@free.fr, and we will share them on our website.

Currants and Corinths - about the importance of spelling



How surprised I was, when surfing the internet and coming over another blackcurrant festival which I had never heard about - wow! In a place with a strange spelling, making me think of Russia at the first sight, because Russia grows black currants on a huge scale.

But not two seconds later, I realized it was Greek! A blackcurrant festival in Greece? Can you grow blackcurrants in Greece? Zakynthos... where can this possibly be? Only in Northern Greece, of course - or else it would be too warm to grow blackcurrants.

Another 30 seconds of research (wikipedia, google and the like), a few lines to read and a few seconds to think. And suddenly, I found this black currant festival far less exciting. Because it doesn't celebrate my favorite berry, but small dried, sweet and seedless grapes - the Corinth raisin, from the Greek island of Zakynthos!

Currants or Corinths - what is right?

So, why do people need to call Corinths "black currants"? They are grapes (*Vitis vinifera*), not currants (*Ribes*), and there is a proper spelling for these. Their spelling is "Corinths" - removing any doubt about what they really are! And no doubt even more once you taste them. Blackcurrants have a high acidity content (not to say they are sour), whereas Corinth raisins are so sweet that you certainly do not need to add any sugar in your muesli when using them.

In the USA mainly, people refer to Corinths as "currants". Not amazingly, most of the people in the United States don't even know what "real" blackcurrants are. This fact is due to the ban of commercial blackcurrant growing. For a hundred years, our superfruit has not been grown in American fields on a commercial

level. Actually, their government feared the White Pine Blister Rust, a fungus which can affect blackcurrants. And unfortunately, it can also affect pine trees, and therefore devastate the American forests.

Luckily, the situation has evolved over the past fifteen years. But the American population has forgotten blackcurrants, their taste and their uses over a whole century. It is a pity, and we need a big change in the awareness about blackcurrants - to start from the spelling of Corinthians!

Blackcurrant harvest 2016 - a sad story



The blackcurrant growers of the Northern hemisphere have completed the blackcurrant harvest 2016 in July and August. Unfortunately, we have nothing very joyful to report from any country:

United Kingdom

For some of the growers who have contracts with processors, it was just a normal year. If we look at the United Kingdom, the quality of blackcurrants was good, and the amount of blackcurrant harvested of good average; just what is needed by the processors. In fact, traceability, quality control and a strict replanting policy avoid overproduction and guarantee blackcurrants which meet the quality requirement of the processors.

France

In general, the situation is quite similar in UK's neighbour country, France: tracability, quality control and contracts. But this year, the French growers have experienced the worst harvest ever: they had a very low yield, due to night frost during flowering and unexpected heat before the blackcurrant harvest in July. There is no solution for most of the processors of these currants - who require French blackcurrants, of a specific variety. And they do not grow anywhere else...

USA

If we have a look over the Atlantic Ocean, we can name heat and drought as the major problems for the blackcurrant harvest 2016 in the United States. In fact, the harvest was also unexpectedly bad in America.

Other countries

But most other countries simply faced a recurring dilemma: blackcurrants of good quality, a normal amount of fruit on the bushes, but no market for selling the currants. The growers of uncontracted blackcurrants therefore received, once again, very low prices for their crop.

We can already see the consequences: Some growers have simply decided to stop growing blackcurrants. Nevertheless, everyone would simply prefer a bigger market for our superfruit. Because a higher demand would, of course, partly solve the problem of a high supply level. No doubt, blackcurrants are excellent for our health. No doubt, we can use blackcurrants in many different ways in gastronomy. But unfortunately, not many people know it. We have to work on spreading the knowledge about blackcurrants. This is a priority for growing the market - and growing the market is the only way to get over deceptions like this year.

Our members may view updated information on this year's harvest [here](#).