


The challenges of developing new berry varieties that meet the demands of growers, retailers and consumers will be among the topics discussed at the Global Berry Congress in the UK this week. 

Ekland Marketing Company of California (Emco Cal) trial manager José Jon Garcia Allen, will talk about the features required for new varieties and demands placed on growers.

Garcia Allen, whose company is the master licensee for the University of Florida's strawberry cultivars, told *www.freshfruitportal.com* research at the moment wasn't providing the necessary solutions.

"It's all very well concentrating on shipping and post harvesting characteristics but berries don't need to be so firm they are able to get to Siberia."

He said the ability for fruit to travel could either be a strong or a weak point, highlighting the fact that UK varieties that didn't ship well were extremely tasty.

Garcia Allen also said it was important to look at total sugars, rather than just brix levels, as this gave a better base to fully evaluate the true sugars and acids which contribute to flavor and aroma.

Striking the balance between high flavor berry varieties that tend to be low on production, and providing growers with varieties with good yields would be one of the challenges for the future.

Driscoll's of Europe, Middle East & Africa managing director Theo Houwen, will talk about developing new markets. He told *www.freshfruitportal.com* the key to success was getting the connection right between demand and supply, and delivering close to the consumer.

"If you are able to look at the different items - the condition, how is the product packed and how it is delivered, its appearance and how it tastes; if you are able to execute this, you are able to grow the market."

Other topics discussed at the Global Berry Congress tomorrow, held in London, include finance, sales promotion techniques and the latest consumer trends.

The [event](#) is being sponsored by British Summer Fruits and the Chilean Blueberry Committee.

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