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GROW YOUR OWN

T&M gears up to meet fruit demand

SEED AND young plant firm Thompson and Morgan has taken the wraps off new varieties of fruit in response to growing demand from gardeners growing fresh produce at home.

T&M examined national statistics which claimed sales of strawberries and raspberries are increasing by 12 to 15 per cent per year. Blueberries were up by 40 per cent last year while blackberry sales this year alone have risen by 55 per cent.

Over the last seven years, sales of all berries have jumped by a staggering 400 per cent.

New from T&M is blackcurrant 'Ebony,' a desert variety with big, sweet berries. It crops in the first week of July and is resistant to powdery mildew, boasting high yields. The company will also offer raspberry 'Glen Fyne,' noted for its sweet, aromatic fruit while blackberry 'Loch Maree' is thornless with pink double blossom and firm,



(above) T&M's raspberry 'Glen Fyne' and (right) blackberry 'Loch Maree' are noted for sweetness and flavour of their fruits



well-flavoured fruits.

T&M's Clare Dixey said: "T&M started selling fruit by mail order in 2006 at around the same time as the grow-your-own and five-a-day concepts were growing in popularity. We have experienced a

significant growth in sales over the last couple of years."

Clare revealed T&M will launch organic apple trees next month. For a free T&M fruit catalogue call ☎ (01473) 695224 or visit thompson-morgan.com/fruit.

News in Brief



HE'S DONE IT AGAIN! The Eden Project's star horticulturist Tim Grigg has nurtured another *Titan arum*, the world's biggest and smelliest flower, into bloom. It's the fourth time Tim has persuaded a Titan to flower and the stench filled Eden's Rainforest Biome.



TOP JOB In other news from Eden, Rob Brett moved from Cambridge University Botanic Garden to become curator of Eden's Mediterranean biome. Rob will also tend an area that's home to almost 5,000 species and cultivars.

COMMUNITY GARDENING

Tension mounts as RHS judges meet to decide Britain in Bloom winners



Judges believe floral displays improve the quality of life in towns and cities

THE QUEST to find this year's Britain in Bloom winner is underway after Royal Horticultural Society judges scrutinised floral displays at 69 towns, villages and cities.

"They sought evidence that grot spots had been transformed"

A team of 14 judges spent two weeks examining green spaces and parks while seeking evidence that local grot spots had been transformed into floral spectacles.

They chewed over which area is worthy of this year's RHS Local Roots

award, presented to the community that encourages links with its local history or cultural diversity within the wider community.

Chair of RHS Britain in Bloom

judges, Roger Burnett, said: "We were looking at how local issues, which affect everyday life, are being addressed 365 days a year through community horticulture."

Winners will be revealed at a ceremony on 24 September.



HOMES SURVEY Despite the dire state of the UK's property market, the size of a back garden remains high on home buyers' wish lists, according to a survey by property website fish4homes.co.uk. It found that 61 per cent of buyers demanded a large plot.

Gardeners' Question Time



PIPPA GREENWOOD, Anne Swithinbank and Bob Flowerdew join GQT chairman Peter Gibbs in Dorset. Tune in to BBC Radio 4 at

2pm on Sunday 24 August (the programme will be repeated at 3pm on Wednesday 27 August). GQT's gardening fundamentals

series continues with Pippa Greenwood and Chris Beardshaw explaining how to create a lawn from scratch.