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Globe, Crimson, Autumn King are mainstay varieties for Fruit Royale

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Fruit Royale Inc. in Delano, CA, offers a wide array of grape varieties for the fall season, including several new proprietary varieties. In fact, the period from September on is “basically my whole program” except for Flames, said Louie Galvan, a partner in the company.

But the “mainstay” varieties for the company are Red Globe, Crimson and, “later in the deal,” Autumn King, Mr. Galvan said Aug. 7. “We will have promotable volume ... all the way into December,” with an emphasis on those three varieties.

Red Globes are “the biggest part of our program,” he continued. “That is a big chunk of what we do here. We will have plenty. “The fruit is hanging, and plenty of it.”

Sweet Surrender, Sweet Celebration, Sweet Jubilee and Cotton Candy are the names of some proprietary grape varieties developed by International Fruit Genetics in Bakersfield, CA, grown by The Grapery in Bakersfield, and marketed by Fruit Royale.

The Grapery, one of four California grape growers licensed to grow the IFG varieties. “Jack Pandol [owner of The Grapery] is the grower” of the ones marketed by Fruit Royal, “and he has put in some considerable acreage here in the last couple of years,” Mr. Galvan told The Produce News in a previous interview.

Sweet Surrender, an early black seedless variety, “will be done” by September, he said Aug. 7. “By then I should be packing Cotton Candy [a large green seedless grape] and The Sweet Jubilee, which

is a large black seeded [grape] similar to a Globe in structure.” Both are in their first year of commercial production and are available this year only in limited quantity, but significant increases are expected over the next couple of years.

“Then I will have the Sweet Celebration, which is a late, late red seedless,” he said.

Fruit Royale will be harvesting Princess in late August and September, and “we should be into Autumn Royal by then” as well as Scarlet Royal and Crimson, he said. He expects “huge numbers” on crimsons. “We pack a decent amount of Autumn Royals,” and “it seems like every year more and more of that goes overseas.”

Autumn Royal production should be better than last year, Mr. Galvan said. “The Autumn Royal is not a heavily producing grape” even on a good year. “I wish it was, because the demand far exceeds the supply.” But last year, “we had some fields that we were lucky to get 300 to 400” boxes per acre, with 400 to 500 boxes being the average. “This year, if we increase that by 20 to 30 percent, we should be OK.”

The advantage of offering some of the new proprietary varieties from The Grapery in addition to the mainstay varieties is that “it allows a medium sized company like us to present something to our customers” that few other shippers can offer. “So it gets our foot in the door and allows us to basically open up the conversation with something they may not have heard of, or maybe had heard of but didn’t know how to get to it,” Mr. Galvan said. “At the very least, it’s a conversation piece,” and it “allows us to sell all our other wares along with it.”

The Grapery is “doing some really great stuff with flavor,” Mr. Galvan said. “They let the grapes hang longer. “We are packing [Sweet Surrender] right now,” and it is measuring 22 to 24 Brix, “where most guys pack a black [seedless grape] around 16 to 18 Brix.” Being able to offer a grape that is 25 percent sugar “is fun,” he said. When customers give it a try, “it seems like flavor wins.”

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