



Northern Berries

Domestication of Northern Berries

Northern Berries aims to develop and improve cultivation techniques for berries that are native to northern periphery areas, particularly cloudberry. The aim is to increase consumption and use of these native berries by improving growing and handling techniques, and by promoting the positive health attributes of the berries. A number of studies are being carried out across the project area to assess the impact of various climatic and soil conditions, in order to assess optimum growing conditions and seed varieties. A central focus of the project is the sustainable use of nature and the natural heritage of the area. Cloudberry and arctic bramble, for example, only grow in Northern areas and are thus exotic to the rest of the world. The berry products may be marketed with a Northern image of purity and healthiness; however further research is required to develop this potentially important market. Another marked benefit of the project is the renewed use of old peat-lands, helping to overcome some of the problems now being experienced by owners of these peat-lands. This element also helps to develop the important concepts of 'sustainable care of the environment' and 'sustainable agriculture'.

Objectives

The main objective is the advancement of cultivation and use of northern berries, particularly cloudberry, respecting sustainable use of nature and natural heritage.



Project activities

Research, networking of complex partnerships, and exchange of experience and good practice will generate new cloudberry business and trade in an innovative way. The success of the commercialisation depends greatly on the image of the berries, as health image has become an important criterion in the choice of food. The project will approach this by developing indicators for the beneficial effects of the berries.

Expected results

The project's expected results include such outcomes as the establishment of a commercial cloudberry nursery and the testing of suitable machinery for large-scale berry production. The project will also evaluate the effects of pollinating insects on cloudberry fields and the effects of downy mildew resistance on arctic brambles. A crucial aspect of the project will be promoting the positive health benefits of the berries and this will be achieved through further research into the positive anti-oxidant properties of berries, which will involve the development of an animal model that shows the health potential of cloudberry and a profile of the phenolic and antioxidant compounds of several berries. All information on project outcomes and results will be transmitted through a wide transnational network.

The results will be of benefit to environmental authorities, farmers and owners of peatlands, who will be able to obtain further information on new possibilities for revegetation and reuse of old peatlands through new crop alternatives. The whole trade sector (pickers, dealers, retailers, processing industry) will also benefit. There may be additional use for by-products which can be beneficial, as exemplified by a recent introduction of cosmetic products containing cloudberry seed oil.

Partners

Norwegian Crop Research Institute - Norway
Holt Research Centre Norway (HOLT) - Troms
Scottish Crop Research Institute (SCRI) - Scotland
Högskoleförbundet Östra Norrbotten (HÖN) - Sweden
State University of St. Petersburg - Russia

Project website

<http://www.uku.fi/northernberries>



Measure
1.2

Total Budget
943 750

NPP Award
566 250

Project Period
01/06/2002 – 31/05/2005

Countries Involved
Finland, Norway, Scotland,
Sweden, North-west
Russia

Lead Partner Organisation
University of Kuopio, Finland
+358-17-16-30-58

Project leader
Harri Kokko
hkokko@messi.uku.fi