



ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP



Hargreaves Plants Ltd

Based in Hillington in West Norfolk, Hargreaves Plants Ltd are a leading producer of rhubarb, asparagus, soft fruit plants and ornamental plants.

Identifying how popular rhubarb has become in Britain in recent years, (the rhubarb business has grown from being worth £15 million in 2007, to £23 million in 2010) Hargreaves Ltd decided to invest in research to develop new varieties of rhubarb to meet demand and capitalise on this lucrative product.

Hargreaves applied to the Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative for a grant of £47,000, to grow new varieties of rhubarb that will improve the marketability of the product in terms of aesthetic appearance, whilst also improving the production and quality of rhubarb varieties to suit both consumer and grower demands.

Vision

To develop new varieties of rhubarb that will not only be being more flavoursome and look more appealing to consumers, but will be a better quality plant and be more cost-effective for growers to produce.

Results

The project is now complete and has been a great success. After selecting plant varieties and selection trials, Hargreaves Plants have introduced two new varieties on the market: Apple Delight and Timperley Early +.



These new varieties are in big demand as they have longer harvest times, and The Timperley Early + consistently produces appealing red stalks. They have also increased the productivity and sales for the company.

Hargreaves Plants plan on introducing this new Rhubarb variety to the Fruit Logistica trade show in Berlin on the beginning of February.

Garth Baxter, Managing Director of Hargreaves Plants Ltd, said: “We are absolutely delighted to have been awarded this grant. Hargreaves Plants have been involved in the supply chain of rhubarb plants for the last few years but it is evident the industry is crying out for some product development.

“There has been no formal research done on rhubarb since the 1990's and rhubarb has gained tremendous popularity since then. This grant application will add benefits to all sectors involved in the ever expanding Rhubarb industry.”

To find out more about the Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative, please visit www.gcgp.co.uk.