

# FRESH FORWARD INTRODUCES NEW JUNE BEARING STRAWBERRY

On 7 May, at the opening of their new offices, Fresh Forward introduced their new strawberry variety "Zumba".

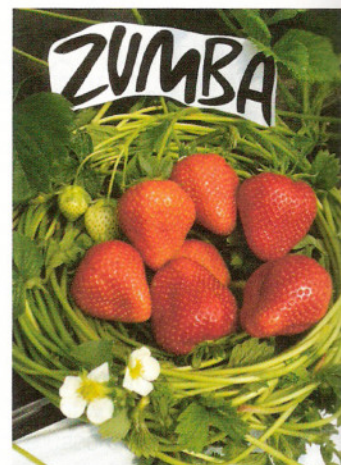
It has been a tradition for the plant breeding company (formerly Plant Research International) to give strawberry varieties names synonymous with music and dance. Former varieties have been named Lambada, Polka, Salsa, Sonata and Figaro. Fresh Forward has selected Zumba due to its current popularity amongst aerobic and dance schools. The event at which the variety was launched featured a Zumba dance class. It is hoped that

the new name will communicate a message of health and well-being to all strawberry consumers.

#### Growing area

Zumba has been tested under selection number FF-0601 at growers' sites and research stations in central Europe. Based on their

experiences it is believed that this short day variety has potential in the cooler areas of Europe and could substitute Honeoye in Germany and Scandinavia. The variety has a high chilling requirement to get sufficient canopy development. Its main advantage is its high tolerance



#### Results on loamy soil in a polytunnel (Fragaria Holland, 2008)

VARIETY	kg/plant	kg/m <sup>2</sup>	% large	% small	% misshapes	begin harvest	mid harvest	end harvest
Zumba	0,945	3,78	70,8	26,6	2,6	30 Apr	15 May	27 May
Darselect	0,871	3,48	77,4	16,2	9,5	6 May	17 May	31 May
Honeoye	0,975	3,90	45,5	53,4	1,0	6 May	13 May	31 May
Diana	0,536	2,14	69,3	26,9	3,8	30 Apr	12 May	24 May
Donna	0,672	2,69	74,9	20,4	4,7	3 May	14 May	24 May
Clery	0,483	1,93	82,9	10,8	6,3	30 Apr	12 May	24 May

to frost, making the variety well suited for outdoor production.

#### Plant type

Zumba is distinguished from Sonata by the dark trifoliate leaves. It has a desirable plant habit with long inflorescences and well displayed fruit. Zumba has a simple inflorescence structure (5 to 7 berries per truss) which is conducive to good fruit size and ease of harvest. The flowering period is extended, which results in a long picking season. Zumba has the same picking season as Honeoye and commences a few days after Clery. Yields for Zumba are higher than Clery and comparable to Honeoye.

#### Fruit quality

A characteristic of Zumba, like Sonata, is the good fruit set and uniform fruit shape. Primary fruits tend to be long and conical but the majority of berries are round and conical. Fruits are attractive and glossy with strong red colouring both internally and externally. The

taste in the early season is sweet and gets better during the harvest season. The berries are not overly susceptible to fruit rot and have a good shelf life. Whilst berries can colour during storage, they do not darken as much as Honeoye and retain their flavour.

#### Experiences

According to the first tests, Zumba is predominantly suited to outdoor production in Northern and Central Europe. However, there have been positive experiences with greenhouse and tunnel trials. The fruits are large and glossy with competitive yields. Under tunnels or row covers Zumba can be mildly susceptible to Rhizoctonia. So far there has been experience with root disease. However, in warmer environments (e.g. greenhouse or tunnel) the berries can, as with Sonata, lose firmness. Appropriate climate control, adequate fertigation and early morning harvesting can help to prevent softness. ♦

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