

# NORFOLK HEALTHY PRODUCE

## Press Release for Norfolk Healthy Produce and the Empress Tomato

June 12, 2024

Davis, California

Norfolk Healthy Produce announces the successful launch of the Empress Limited Edition Tomato, a novel purple tomato bioengineered for health and nutrition. The Empress has been in select grocery stores in the southeast and has shown strong sales and reorders.

The Empress is a new cherry tomato variety that contains high levels of purple antioxidants called anthocyanins, the same healthy purple nutrients that are in blueberries, blackberries and eggplants. The purple antioxidants are made thanks to plant-based bioengineering, which combines tomatoes with two genes from an edible flower, snapdragon. Norfolk's tomatoes are the only varieties that have purple antioxidants on the inside *and* in the skin.

The company reported that surveys with American consumers showed that 80% are interested in eating the purple tomato, knowing that it uses plant-based bioengineering, while only 5% of consumers were not interested. NHP also completed their first season selling seeds of purple tomatoes to home gardeners last month, selling over 13,000 orders. This robust response from the gardener community further demonstrates that many people are embracing bioengineered foods to support their wellness centric eating.

Professor Cathie Martin, who developed the first and only purple-fleshed tomato, works to improve the health benefits in everyday foods. Her first peer-reviewed scientific report describing the development and benefits of increased anthocyanins in tomatoes was published in 2008. In this report, the data clearly show that mice fed a diet rich in anthocyanins lived 30% longer than those on a standard diet. Since then, the scientific community has been collecting data, which continues to support the positive effects of antioxidants such as anthocyanins in our diet. The Empress tomato is another option for people searching for wellness-centric food choices, according to Harold Paivarinta, Vice President of Sales and Business Development for Red Sun Farms, who are producing and distributing the product. "Consumers and grocery stores are excited to include this tasty, healthy and beautiful new addition to their produce offering," said Paivarinta.

Norfolk's plant-based bioengineered tomato has cleared all USDA and FDA regulatory reviews, both required and voluntary. More information can be found [here](#).

"We live in a time with many options in produce, including organic and bioengineered," said Nathan Pumplin, CEO of Norfolk Healthy Produce. "Consumers looking for something better and different, enabled by science, have very few options to choose from. Norfolk Healthy Produce is proud to offer an additional choice to interested consumers and suppliers."

The Empress Tomato will continue to be available through the spring and summer at stores in the southeast and mid-atlantic. More information can be found at [www.norfolkhealthyproduce.com](http://www.norfolkhealthyproduce.com).

#### About the Companies

**Norfolk Plant Sciences**, Ltd. was founded by Prof. Cathie Martin, a group leader at the John Innes Centre and Professor at the University of East Anglia, who developed the high anthocyanin purple tomato through her basic scientific research program. Anthocyanins are antioxidants associated with a host of health benefits and are important to an anti-inflammatory diet. Inspired to increase nutritious and sustainable food options for consumers, Prof. Martin founded the spin-out of John

Innes Centre and The Sainsbury Lab, together with her colleague Prof. Jonathan Jones, to enable commercial availability of their scientific discoveries.

**Norfolk Healthy Produce**, Inc. develops and markets innovative varieties of fruits and vegetables that deliver excellent health benefits, taste, and differentiation to consumers and suppliers.

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NHP CEO **Nathan Pumplin** and COS Gerty Cori Ward hold a box of Empress Limited Edition tomatoes at Food City in Radford VA.



*Empress Limited Edition Tomatoes at Food Lion, Durham NC*