Semillas Fitó innovates with an improved Dutch cucumber line, with higher quality fruits and more resistant plant

Semillas Fitó **has developed SmartQ, an improved Dutch cucumber line that provides fruit quality in a more resistant plant. The firm has recently announced this advance in a presentation day held in Roquetas de Mar (Almería), which was attended by 250 technicians and producers of cucumber, both from the coast of Almeria and Granada.**

> The new line of Dutch cucumber SmartQ offers a differential value to the producer, thanks to its high tolerance to diseases, very good plant health, excellent fruit quality and high productivity

Santiago García, Cucumber Breeder Senior of Semillas Fitó, was in charge of explaining the complex process of genetic improvement that has involved getting SmartQ varieties, in which the traditional quality of Fitó fruit is mixed with a healthier and more resistant plant.

> In the SmartQ varieties a polygenic resistance of the plant against the Yellowness Virus

(Cucurbit Yellow Staining Disorder Virus) has been developed, which means that the plant has a higher natural resistance in the field

Thus, the SmartQ lines develop:

- plants with short internodes
- shorter side stems
- smaller and darker leaves
- a more horizontal orientation of the leaves
- smaller flowers and more flowers per internode
- shorter fruits

The consequence of this bet by Fitó for genetic improvement in Dutch cucumber is, as explained by Santiago García, that *the new SmartQ lines can be crossed with traditional lines such as those that intervene in Estrada, which already give a very high fruit quality, obtaining thus new varieties that maintain that quality, but improving plant health, resistance to viruses and production*.

First SmartQ varieties

Semillas Fitó already has two varieties of Dutch cucumber under the SmartQ brand, which are Tejo y Miter. Tejo is focused on plantings from August until September 10 and spring crops from January 15. For its part, Miter is a variety for sowing from February 15 or 20

To learn about these new varieties in the field, the 250 technicians and farmers attending the event were transported by bus to a greenhouse in the area, in which several varieties of Dutch cucumber, both from Fitó and other companies, were planted together with the new SmartQ Tejo varieties. *Thus, all the attendees were able to compare some of their varieties with each other and see the clear genetic improvement provided by SmartQ.*

In the greenhouse, Germán Victoria, Cucumber Crop Advisor Semillas Fitó, explained to the presents the clear differences between the traditional varieties and the new varieties Tejo and Miter. *At first glance, it could be clearly seen that the SmartQ varieties offer a better aeration of the plant, which allows to enter more clarity towards its interior, with a greater luminosity in the fruit, a lower incidence of diseases and viruses, a higher quality of the fruit, a greater effectiveness of the treatments (better distribution of the phytosanitary products) and a clear increase of the production*.

Finally, Germán Victoria explained the meaning of the "SmartQ" logo, in which a drawing of the cucumber DNA chain is mixed, which represents the commitment to Semillas Fitó research, together with the English word "Smart", that translated offers us three very significant concepts,

such as "elegant" "strong" and "super", ending with the Q of quality. *In summary, SmartQ provides fruit quality in a more resistant plant.*

Source: Semillas Fitó

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