



SUMMERLAND VARIETIES CORP
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December 15, 2014

Dr. Jeff Jacobsen

North Central Regional Association, Director
446 West Circle, room 408
Justin S. Morrill Hall of Agriculture
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824

Dear Dr. Jeff Jacobsen,

RE: Support for the Excellence in Multistate Research Award to NC-140 Regional Rootstock Research Project.

Summerland Varieties Corp (SVC) (formerly Okanagan Plant Improvement Corporation) is a variety rights management company that tests and licenses new varieties of tree fruits. Given SVC's emphasis on the successful introduction of new fruit varieties, particularly apples and cherries, we strongly support the research efforts of the NC-140 Regional Rootstock Research Project. We believe that this work ensures the horticultural success of our new varieties and contributes to the vitality and sustainability of the BC fruit tree industry.

NC-140 provides a means of sourcing new rootstocks from breeding programs. Those rootstocks are then tested over a wide geography and the most promising selections are rapidly introduced to the tree fruit industry. The major advantages of this process for SVC and the BC Tree Fruit Industry is that the rootstocks are tested in BC and, in that way, we gain access to product and information that we would have difficulty obtaining given our relatively small and fragmented industry. Additionally, NC-140's professional team is invaluable because they have the expertise to evaluate the bewildering array of rootstock options, focus industry on the best choices, and thereby make more efficient use of our limited research funding.

From the perspective of new variety introductions, the results from the NC-140 trials offer SVC horticultural options for varieties that may otherwise prove too difficult to grow. For example, SVC has a number of non-selfing cherry varieties with excellent eating qualities; however, growing these selections in a conventional widely spaced planting system with high-vigour rootstocks would result in lower yields compared to selfing varieties. The semi-dwarfing rootstocks that are locally tested in the NC-140 trials offer an alternative because we know they are suitable for the BC climate and soils and that they will encourage a better balanced tree with more fully developed flowers that will ultimately produce more fruit. Likewise, we have an

to grow in areas with replant disease complex. Since fumigation is seldom an option in BC, this new variety will require a rootstock that is resistant to the soil pathogens that cause replant disease. The NC-140 trial will be the only proven source of reliable local information for this type of rootstock.

We support the NC-140's application for the Excellence in Multistate Research Award and look forward to the results of the current and future rootstock trials. Our vision is to use the NC-140 information to make informed decisions about rootstock selections that will improve our varieties' performance and support the vitality of the BC apple and cherry industries.

Yours truly,
Summerland Varieties Corp.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Ibuki', written in a cursive style.

Nick Ibuki
Acting General Manager
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Direct Line: (250) 494-5167

/ew
Encl.