

Maori, Crown to breed unique berries for global market

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The Government-owned science institute Plant & Food Research and Miro signed a 50-50 joint venture agreement at an event hosted recently by Ngati Haua at Rukumoana Marae in Morrinsville. Hon Willie Jackson, Minister of Employment and Associate Minister for Māori Development, attended and spoke at the event.

The agreement provides the new company with access to Plant & Food Research berry genetics for the development of proprietary new varieties. The joint venture partners will create a breeding programme for new high-value berry varieties, and Miro will grow, market and sell the berries in New Zealand and globally with support from BerryCo NZ Limited.

The joint venture is a milestone in horticultural entrepreneur Steve Saunders' vision for Miro, to create a step-change in both the New Zealand berry industry and the regional Māori economy for current and future generations.

Plant & Food Research CEO David Hughes says the joint venture is aligned with the science company's mandate to use research innovation to add value to fruit, vegetable, crop and food products and their industries.