

[Abstract:](#)

A programme to determine the optimum harvesting dates for the main commercial blackcurrant cultivars ran from 1992 to 1998 in New Zealand. Colour change near harvest, when 90% of the fruit was black, was used as the base from which optimum harvest dates were determined. While colour and sugar levels continued to increase with later harvest dates, fruit drop from the bush and fruit shrivel increased, while juice yield declined. A range of optimum harvest dates was therefore determined for cultivars 'Magnus', 'Ben Rua' and 'Ben Ard' based on days from 90% black. A model to predict this point from earlier colour stages was developed for each of these cultivars.