

Title Hybrids of European and Nashi pears: a new fruit for Europe?
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Abstract

In the attempt to combine the positive characteristics of European pears (*P. communis*) and Asian pears (*P. pyrifolia*), crossings were made in 1993 and 1994 to create a new pear type for the fresh fruit market in Europe. Approximately 10 hybrids of the crossing *P. communis* 'Harrow Sweet' × *P. pyrifolia* 'Nijisseiki' show promising characteristics worth further investigation. Five of these interspecific hybrids are described in respect to external and internal fruit quality parameters. In addition, a sensory evaluation was carried out between the fruit of European pears, Nashis and the interspecific hybrids. This first study shows a higher consumer acceptance of the hybrids in terms of aroma, acidity and general popularity in comparison to the two other species. These first results indicate a potential for market diversification. The requirements for producing, trading and marketing of the new fruit will be discussed.