



Rosa 'Félix Leclerc'

Collaborating for New Roses

In 1998 Agriculture Canada joined forces with a consortium of private nursery growers from every region of Canada to bring new life and energy into the hardy rose breeding program.

Agriculture Canada concentrated on the breeding aspect of the project bringing the best genetic material from the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa, home of the Explorer™ roses, with the best genetic material from the research centres at Morden, Manitoba and St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Québec. Once this genetic material was assembled at St-Jean, the leading scientist, Mme. Claude Richer and her staff started to cross different rose lines.

The nursery growers were given advance rose selections to grow and evaluate at their sites. Under the direction of Agriculture Canada scientists, the growers were requested to evaluate the rose selections for plants and bloom performance, disease resistance, hardiness, propagation and growing technique protocols. All these results were submitted back to Agriculture Canada to be analyzed.



Rosa 'Emily Carr'

This special working relationship allowed for a better understanding of the difficulties which both the scientists and the growers face when selecting new varieties. This unique partnership was not only limited to the selection and evaluation process. Its also included applying for Plant Breeders' Rights (PBR) and marketing strategies for the North American market. Part of the marketing strategy included the development of a logo and sales support materials.

This cooperation between government institutions and private organizations enabled the strengths of both partners. Could this be a model for other types of plant introductions?

In the spring of 2007, the market place will see the results of this unique cooperation with the introduction of a new hardy rose series, Artistes Canadiens Canadian Artists™. The first two varieties are named 'Félix Leclerc' and 'Emily Carr'. Both varieties have been granted PBR and US patents are applied for. For a license to propagate, please contact COPF.