

## Australia's Costa Group develops world's heaviest blueberry

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Costa Group has hit the record books for developing and growing the world's heaviest blueberry, according to the official Guinness World Records book.

The blueberry was picked on November 13, 2023, at Costa's berry farm in Corindi, New South Wales, Australia.

Weighing 20,40 g (0,71 oz) and measuring 39,31 mm, it was grown by Brad Hocking, Jessica Scalzo and Marie-France Courtois. The previous world record was for a 16,20g berry grown in Western Australia in 2020.

The blueberry was of the Eterna variety, as part of the Variety Improvement Programs (VIP) of Costa, which licenses blueberry varieties grown by Costa in regions including the Americas, Morocco, China and South Africa.

Costa's VIP program is based in Corindi and has been operating for over 25 years, developing on average one or two new blueberry varieties of global commercial value each year.

Utilizes Costa's extensive network of farms in mid-latitudes, low latitudes and low to medium-cold locations to select, evaluate and develop new varieties suitable for a variety of global growing conditions, meeting customer and consumer requirements for varieties of premium blueberries.

George Jessett, horticulture manager at Costa Berries International, said there was great confidence and excitement around the new varieties.

“We are always looking to develop new varieties that improve on the current benchmark and meet changing customer requirements. We are also looking to grow varieties that are more adaptable to warmer climates, more drought tolerant and with better resistance against pest and disease pressure,” Jessett said.

Senior horticulturist Brad Hocking said the Eterna variety was known for its large fruit size, crunchy texture and long shelf life.