

“Juanita”, “Virreyna” and “Tricolor” New Cactus Pear Cultivars for the Semiarid Highlands of Central Mexico

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Cactus pear cultivation in Mexico depends on traditional varieties, but global trade is imposing new challenges to growers. Stiff competition with other summer fruits is also pushing cactus pear to a second role. Demands for more attractive fruit, with improved quality, longer shelf-life and extended harvest season is stressing the market. Multipurpose cvs. can also improve farmers income by diversifying products. INIFAP started breeding cactus pear in 1995, focussing on the Central región. In this paper we present three new cultivars of the first generation of improved varieties, aimed to provide the grower a competitive edge in the modern cactus pear market. They are adapted to semiarid areas with 380-650 mm rainfall, altitude 2000 to 2400 m.a.s.l. and slightly alkaline soils.

Spineless smooth cladodes, multipurpose cultivar; fresh fruit, vegetable and fodder. A single cross hybrid of RCNF x Roja Rosalito developed for national and export market to supplement Roja Lisa, intermediate cv. ripens from August to early September.



“VIRREYNA”

Chance seedling of open pollinated “Reyna”
Harvest season:
July to August 15
20% less seed than “Reyna”
the leading cactus pear cultivar in Mexico.
All other plant traits are similar to Reyna.



“TRICOLOR”

A single cross hybrid of Roja Lisa (LT07) x Cristalina selected for its long shelf-life (up to three weeks) and unusual color combination, late bearing -september- to combine with Cristalina, its spineless pads facilitates consumption as forage.

Cultivar	Fruit weight g	Fruit caliber cm	T.S.S. °Brix	Edible portion %	Seed content %	Aborted Seed %
“Juanita”	162	6.6	12.6	66.7	4.10	1.22
“Virreyna”	216	6.5	13.1	55.2	3.27	0.71
“Tricolor”	195	6.3	12.0	56.2	6.78	0.36
Reyna**	141	5.2	14.8	64.2	5.60	0.88
Roja Lisa**	177	5.9	14.2	53.0	6.61	0.33
**Reference cultivars						

