

'Blackberries could be new blueberries'

The UK blackberry market has the potential to double in value over the next three to five years, Asda has predicted.

Blackberry retail sales currently stand at about £30m and account for 4% of the total berry market, but Asda buyer Andy Jackson said he believed this could reach £60m if the industry addressed the problem of the berry's old-fashioned image and delivered consistently high quality fruit.

"Consistency is key," Jackson told a blackberry conference organised by grower Hargreaves Plants. "When you're asking people to spend £2 or £3 in the current economic climate,



Better image and consistent quality are key, says Asda

people get nervous."

Overcome these problems, however, and "the time is right to do to blackberries what we did to blueberries", he said.

Growers should harness growing consumer interest in home cooking, and focus on developing larger, sweeter varieties, he added.