

Fruit Breeder Taps Into Consumers' Sweet Tooth With Cotton Candy-Flavored Grapes

BAKERSFIELD (CBSLA.com) — A fruit breeder has tapped into the sweet tooth of consumers with cotton candy-flavored grapes.

[David Cain](#), who grows grapes at a 180-acre vineyard south of Bakersfield, is the creator of the “healthy junk food.”

“We’re trying to compete with candy bars and cookies and real cotton candy. So we want to develop varieties that especially kids like to eat so they will consume more fruit,” he said.

Cain, a former USDA scientist, came up with the cotton candy creation back in 2003 by cross-breeding different varieties of grapes for years.

“It takes a minimum of six years and a lot of times, 10, 12 years to develop a new variety,” he said. “There will be a little tiny aborted seed traced in here that when you eat it, you don’t notice it. But we can actually abstract that, and put it in a test tube, and get it to grow into a little grape plant.”

Cain said the grapes are all-natural and have not been genetically engineered. The name of the grape was even picked in the old-fashioned way.

“Some of our owners had small children and they said it tastes like cotton candy. So we said, ‘Well, that’s a great name for it then,’” he said.

Oscar Contrellas, the food service manager at Bristol Farms in West Hollywood, said the sugar-spun flavor has been a hit.

“The name says it all. It’s not like your average tart grape. It’s not like a sweet red grape. It’s like if you’re having cotton candy at the carnival,” he said.

While the grapes are a bit pricier than most, “it’s an exclusive grape you can’t find anywhere right now,” said Contrellas.

Dawn Dunbar, a mother from Mount Washington, knows fruits play a big role in her son’s diet.

“We talk a lot about nutrition because he has such a sweet tooth...that if he could, he would eat sweets all day,” she said.

The cotton candy grapes were a hit in Dunbar’s home.

“Whatever works to get children eating better...and adults. I’m a big fan of that,” said Dunbar.

The cotton candy grapes are only available for another three weeks. They can be purchased at [Bristol Farms](#), [Sprouts](#) and [Gelson’s](#).

Cain said he is currently working on ones that taste like lollipops.