

Talking Biotech: 91-year-old geneticist Maxine Thompson aims to expand fruit diversity with new berry breeds

Maxine Thompson is a trailblazer. With her education and profound interest in plant breeding, she defied a male-dominated establishment and became a plant breeder at a major university. She would establish a decades-long career in plant breeding at Oregon State University, traveling the world on collection missions and making critical selections that define the roots of the OSU Hazelnut Breeding Program, still thriving today. Now in retirement she continues to breed plants, namely the Haskap Berry (*Lonicera caerulea*), a flavorful fruit slightly different from the blue honeysuckle. We enjoy an inspirational discussion about her training, her career, and the tremendous barriers she faced as a woman in science. We also discuss her current plant breeding interests and the development of the Haskap Berry.

Buy 'Japanese Haskap' bushes at Spring Meadow Nursery!

Here's the link to [Stone Barn Brandyworks](#) where they sell Haskap Liqueur!

https://geneticliteracyproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/117_Thompson2.mp3

Follow Talking Biotech on Twitter [@TalkingBiotech](#)

Follow Kevin Folta on Twitter [@kevinfolta](#) | Facebook: [Facebook.com/kmfolta/](https://www.facebook.com/kmfolta/) | Lab website: Arabidopsisthaliana.com | All funding: [Kevinfolta.com/transparency](https://www.kevinfolta.com/transparency)