



Bleuets NB Blueberries

UPCOMING EVENTS

July

BNBB Field Day

Saturday, July 13, 2013
 Blueberry Fields of Murray Tweedie
 1722 Chemin Desherbiers
 Saint-Ignace, NB
 1-866-840-2583

Maine Field Day

Wednesday, July 17, 2013
 Jonesboro, Maine
 Call Nancy England to
 confirm participation
 at (207) 581-1475.

WBPANS Field Day

Saturday, July 20, 2013
 Debert, NS
 (902) 662-3306

September

Open Farm Day

Sunday, September 15, 2013
 Agricultural Alliance of N.B.
 (506) 452-8101
 alliance@fermeNBfarm.ca

Classified Ads

At the last meeting of the Board it was agreed that classified advertising would now be permitted in the newsletter. For the growers it would include equipment and there would be no cost for the ad. For vendors and suppliers, the space would be limited to a business card size and would be billed on a cost recovery basis. Keep in mind we publish twice a year in July and December. Please contact the office if you are interested.

Field Notes

Bleuets NB Blueberries · 1350 Regent Street, HJ Flemming Centre, 680 Strickland Lane, Fredericton, NB E3C 2G6
 Tel. (506) 459-2583 · Toll Free 1-866-840-2583 · Fax (506) 459-8920 · bnbb@nb.aibn.com · www.nbwildblue.ca

Annual Field Day

Saturday, July 13, 2013, 10 am

The blueberry fields of Murray Tweedie
 1722 Chemin Desherbiers
 Saint-Ignace, NB E4X 2C6
 \$10/person (includes lunch)

Producers are encouraged to bring weed, insect and disease samples for identification

Demonstrations Welcome

BNBB recognizes that many producers have equipment (small and medium sized) with innovative on-farm modifications. BNBB encourages producers to consider demonstrating their work at the field day. Please contact the office to make arrangements. Funds are available to assist with transportation.

AGENDA

Registration 9:30 am

10 am to 2 pm Technical Displays

Station 1

- Equipment Display
- Acadian Machine Works
- Doug Bragg Enterprises
- G.B. Equipment (land clearing)
- JR Tardif
- G.G. Haché
- Grasshopper
- D.H. Blueberry pickers
- Small harvesters – various models

Station 2

- DAA Crop and Pest Management Specialist Staff

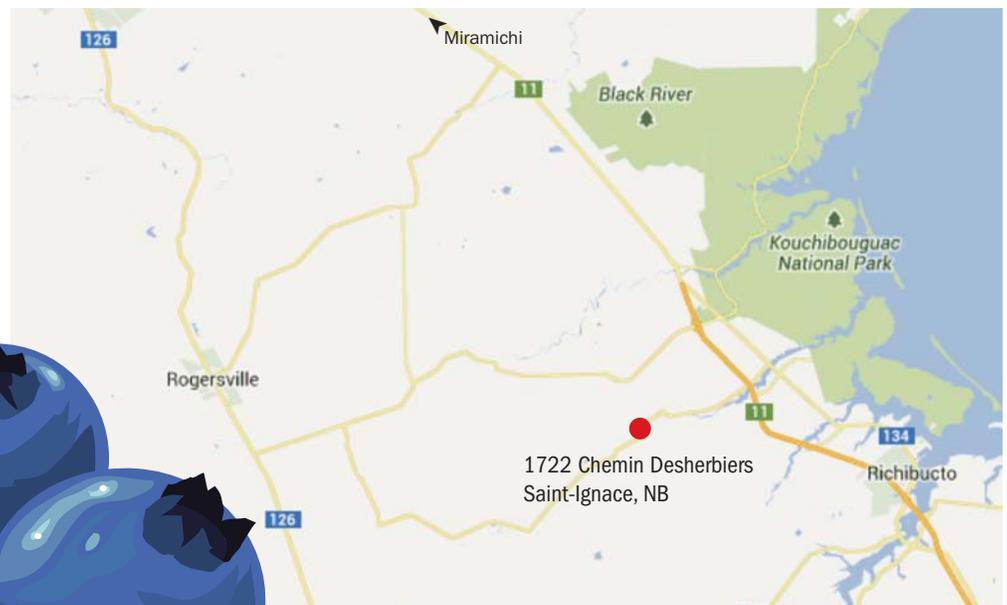
Station 3

- WBANA Canada

Lunch On Site

Packing Station Tour in pm

Source: Google Maps 2013



Second Combined AGM Another Big Success

BNBB held its second combined AGM in Moncton at Ramada Crystal Palace on April 5-6. Thanks to the generous support of our many sponsors, government officials and presenters, the comments have been great. There were more than 110 growers in attendance during two days. The program included speakers from Ontario, Maine, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. At the banquet on Friday evening Minister Olscamp spoke to the attendees (see the text of his remarks on the facing page).

This year there was an expanded sponsor display with 15 booths. The new site allowed for more area for the displays as well as the attendees in the meetings. There was a better representation from all three regions.

Speakers talked about blueberry burner modification, food safety and wild blueberry promotions around the world. We were fortunate to have a special presentation by Angela Hofstra on Health and Food Safety. Employees from NSAC, Agriculture Canada and NB Dept of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries talked about the spotted wing drosophila, Growing Forward II and lowbush ecosystems' seasonal effects on flowers.

One of the main benefits of these meetings is the opportunity for growers to meet and exchange ideas and solutions to their common problems. BNBB would like to offer a special thanks to Mike Melanson for all his work in putting the event together. It requires many hours.



The AGM provides plenty of opportunities for learning, sharing and fellowship.

AGM 2014

To build on the momentum of the event the Board has decided to hold next year's AGM at the same location in Moncton again with the date set as **March 28-29, 2014**. Many of our growers visit Moncton several times a year with their families and BNBB encourages growers to make this weekend one of those trips.

Remarks from the Minister

by Hon. Michael Olscamp, Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

Wild blueberries have proven to be one of the fastest growing sectors in New Brunswick, with revenue increases averaging over \$2.5 million each year in the last decade. The sector has become an important contributor to our economy with estimated farm cash receipts of \$32.3 million for the 2012 – a record crop for New Brunswick.

While the sector has great potential for continued growth and development, there are also issues facing us. Industry is expressing a strong desire to develop land for production and has also expressed concerns about pricing transparency. For government, we want to make sure we get the best economic value and returns from blueberry production for the maximum benefit of New Brunswickers.

In my opinion, the best way to move the industry forward is by everyone working together. Together, there is strength in numbers.

Last Fall's Speech from the Throne noted that government will put increased emphasis on identifying suitable land and infrastructure required to further develop blueberry production. And it is no secret that there is significant interest in Crown land for blueberry development.

Government is trying to be pro-active on this issue. Last fall we began an evaluation process to identify suitable Crown land for wild blueberries and this assessment will continue to take place this summer and fall in a number of regions in the Province. Once suitable Crown land has been identified, then the question becomes how to best allocate what is available.

I want to be clear that I support local blueberry producers, whether they be in the Northeast, Kent County, Charlotte County or in my back yard in Westmorland County. Since 2005, the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries has issued about 45 new leases for wild blueberries, nearly all of them to local producers. Once in full production this would represent about 5,600 acres of land producing close to 7 million pounds of wild blueberries. I think those figures are a strong indicator of government's commitment to the wild blueberry sector.

When allocating Crown land, one needs to take a number of factors into consideration. Stakeholder consultation is important, along with economic development potential and the environment. Crown land is land for the benefit of all New Brunswickers. Government must ensure that we use Crown land to its full benefit for now and future generations. This means the approach to Crown land allocation and leasing must be a balanced one that considers, among the many factors, local needs, provincial needs and competing industry needs.

I am committed to leasing Crown land for wild blueberry development. I have had good discussions with Minister Northrup on Crown land use for agriculture and I am pleased (about) the positive steps that our Department and the Department of Natural Resources are making toward the better access to Crown land for agriculture.



Hon. Michael Olscamp, Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries, was the keynote speaker at the AGM banquet on Saturday evening.

Staff from both departments in Fredericton and the regions is working to ensure local and provincial needs are met. I am committed to ensuring that what is produced on Crown land, contributes to the economy of not only the region that land is located in, but also the provincial economy as a whole.

That means if there are opportunities to add value to blueberries through processing then that will also be given consideration.

Together we can ensure that the blueberry sector reaches its full economic potential for the benefit of all New Brunswickers.



Value Added in Style

On May 22, 2013, David and Beth Hatt (Granite Town Farms, St. George) along with representatives from Ganong Chocolate and Cooke Aquaculture (Salmon) and NBCC (St. Andrews) hosted an exciting culinary event in St Andrews.

Granite Town Farms initiated the challenge four years ago with Cooke joining in the second year, followed by Ganong last year. Future chefs from the NBCC culinary program entered a competition to create original recipes from local products. Blueberries were of course a featured product. BNBB partnered this year to recognize the *Best Blueberry Dish*, and also made a contribution to the college student fund.

The young chefs definitely went all out. Judging was at the highest level with chefs from the Algonquin Hotel and other restaurant sites, as well as included Ms Karen Schaler, former host of ABC's Travel Therapy.

Besides the competition, the event also gave an opportunity for attendees to see some of the many value added products that are available. Granite Town Farms harvests over 500 acres but is also well known for its many packaged goods. As well they have become an active player in the Cruise Line Trade whereby vacationers can visit their site for practical tours. The Hatts have definitely shown what imagination, hard

work and superior products can do for your enterprise. A great event and it would be so beneficial to see more of these around the province to help promote our great wild blueberries.

AT RIGHT

Amy Gibbons, winner of the Best Blueberry Dish, is presented with a cheque by BNBB's Jamie Morrison. Below, a look at one of the creations using wild blueberries.



AT LEFT

David and Beth Hatt of Granite Town Farms with Matt Murr, one of the prize-winning chefs who created original dishes from local products.



Remarks from the Chair

From the Editor: Sometimes newsletters are impersonal, but in May I received this little note from the Chair and I thought it was worth sharing.

This may sound made up but I am jotting this down on my phone while sitting here on the side of the highway at midnight waiting for the last of my bees to arrive.

The past week has been a long one for me as I am sure it has been for all of you. Long nights landing bees, short naps then back to the bee yards to get the next night's load ready. Spending lunch breaks checking over sprayers and spreaders all the time sure that I am missing something by not taking the time to walk some fields. But right now I am checking the weather on my phone compulsively; it's 4°. Is that going up or down? Are those clouds moving in or moving out?

I hope all of you have a successful season and avoid as many of the countless pitfalls as you can, I look forward to seeing you at BNBB sessions and the our field day at Murray Tweedie's farm. I see the lights of the truck coming over the rise now so until next time.

—Brett Reidpath

Farm safe. Farm for success.



Did you know?

One card and one registration form combining two programs!
Farm License Plate Related Fuel Tax Refunds Are Now Available!

The main features are:

- One application form that combines both the Farm Registration and the Farmer Purchaser's Permit Program
- One card to cover both programs
- Expansion of the Farmer's Purchaser's Permit Program to cover all on-farm activities that use fuel;
- Simplified reporting of farm truck fuel usage on farms to obtain tax refund; and
- Reduced and simplified auditing procedures.

If you have not participated or ceased to participate with the Farmer's Purchaser's Permit Program in the past, this year is a great time to re-instate your membership.

By becoming a RPAP and a member of the Alliance you will benefit from:

- Being a member of a strong organization led and run by farmers that speaks with one voice
- Being kept informed on the Alliance's activities and progress
- Eligibility for the Farmer Purchaser's Permit Program
- Reduced laboratory fees for analysis at the provincial agricultural laboratory
- Farm license plates
- **NEW!** farm license plate related motive fuel tax refunds
- Assistance with the Environmental Farm Plan Program at no cost

Do not forget to select the Alliance – your organization that works for you – when you register.

Save the Date!



Canpolin Workshop next February

The Canadian Pollination Initiative (CANPOLIN) and BNBB are planning a two-day workshop on blueberry pollination that will take place next February 21-22 at the Ramada Crystal Palace in Moncton. Growers, beekeepers and other stakeholders are welcome to attend. The event will feature research updates from CANPOLIN scientists in the areas of bee health and conservation, plant reproduction, and pollination ecology in blueberry agroecosystems. The workshop will also explore new opportunities for collaboration to support blueberry pollination research after the CANPOLIN network concludes.



Bleuets NB Blueberries

Update Pricing Committee Work

The following is a repeat of the executive summary presented at the AGM. Because of the importance of the task, it was suggested we include it in our newsletter.

As an addendum to the newsletter you will find a copy of the study commissioned on behalf of the association of Quebec growers.

BNBB is reviewing the possibility of joining this study to ensure a fair and impartial report for our growers.

Executive summary Pricing committee work to date

Introduction

At our 2012 AGM, a resolution was passed that a committee be struck to investigate alternate forms of governance for BNBB that could be beneficial to its members. The resolution reflects a desire of the growers to determine if they are receiving a fair share of revenue from the processors. BNBB's current mandate is to promote and conduct research of wild blueberries. The goal of this review is to determine if its membership would be better served if the Agency were converted to a Board which would allow it to be involved in different levels of pricing, selling and supply management if the members so desired. On several occasions, the Minister of Agriculture has indicated an interest in reviewing the results of the BNBB Pricing Committee.

Pricing Committee

The pricing committee was formed of five members representing three regions of the Province and held its first meeting in October 2012.

The committee recognizes the wisdom in the current system by which blueberries are produced, delivered to the processors and then sold on the world market. The role of the processors is deemed important and essential. The limited number of processing plants confirms the fact that processing and marketing blueberries is not an easy task.

At the meeting, members also agreed on the following:

- Acceptance of uniqueness of wild blueberry industry in terms of co-operation between processors has led to an imperfect pricing determination at the producer level.
- That under the current system, the producer is deprived of being in a position to negotiate a fair market price for their blueberries, even though they are a stakeholder in the processor's inventory. Realization that negotiating a starting price is not where we should put our emphasis, but rather as an ongoing process over the 12 month period following harvest. Blueberry growers are price takers as opposed to price setters.
- After clarifying price discrepancies across jurisdictions, the committee agreed to review the pricing policies in New Brunswick and other jurisdictions.

Regulatory Framework

Representatives from the NB Farm Products Commission made a presentation to the committee on two possible structures under current legislation.

BNBB currently operates as an agency whose mandate is solely to promote and conduct the research of wild blueberries.

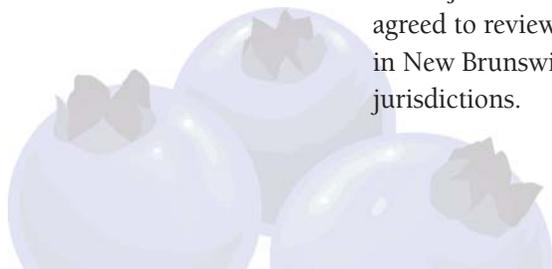
The alternative to an agency is a marketing board. Marketing boards can be set up with varying degrees of powers, such as "buying, selling or offering for sale and includes advertising, financing, assembling, storing, packing, shipping and transporting in any manner by any person". All or any of the above can be regulated as determined by the growers and ratified by a provincial plebiscite.

A board is established with specified powers to achieve specific goals. If, in the future different powers are deemed necessary, a new plebiscite will be required.

All producers would be bound by a new mandate.

Quebec

The growers in Québec are governed by the Marketing of Agricultural, Food and Fish Products Act which sets out the conditions by which blueberries can be bought and sold, amongst other things. Both the processors and growers must sign a convention which establishes an initial price and exact dates for possible further payments. They can offer up to three top ups based on factors such as inventory, retail sales, supply and demand, processor ability



to pay and relationship between producer and processor. It should be noted there are five blueberry processing plants in Québec owned by the two processors and that most of the growers are in close proximity to them.

All berries in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean area must be sold by producers and purchased by the processors who signed the contract which specifies the condition under which berries are sold, bought and a sharing formula which is the final price set on the world market less the cost of production and the processor's margin.

Every two years, the syndicate appoints an accounting firm that verifies the processor's record and reports their findings to the syndicate.

When the syndicate has information that the price received does not reflect the terms of the contract, they can appeal to the Regis des Marchés Agricoles that has authority to hear and settle disagreements. These appeals can be lengthy and expensive.

Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island

In an effort to determine the Maritime blueberry field price, producer representatives were invited from these two provinces to join us in developing a common understanding. A joint meeting was held in Moncton on January 15, 2013.

Prince Edward Island is set up as a marketing agency similar to New Brunswick. Nova Scotia is established under the Agricultural Marketing Act as an association and has no regulation prohibiting them from discussing pricing issues. WBPANS maintains regular communications with the processors.

Provincial representatives have taken the information shared at the meeting back to their respective Boards. Prince Edward Island has since committed to joining the process and we are awaiting a response from Nova Scotia.

Maine

A telephone conference call took place on February 11, 2013 with David Yarborough from Maine involving representatives from Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and BNBB Pricing Committees. It was determined during the conference call that the system in Maine is very similar to the one in place in the Maritimes with no legislated system for price determination.

Although Maine went through litigation on price fixing, this did not lead to major changes in the blueberry pricing system in Maine.

The Board would like to acknowledge the time and commitment of the following growers who volunteered to serve on this committee: Brett Reidpath, Jean Maurice Landry, Ed Goguen, Murray Tweedie, and Robert Theriault.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Northeast Region

Norbert Brideau, 548-9750
 Arsène Roussel, 395-3575
 > WBANA Board Representative
 Benoit Savoie, 776-5550
 > Vice Chair, Board of Directors

Southwest Region

Ed Goguen, 455-4566
 > Chair, Pollination Committee
 John Ness, 485-6248
 Russell Weir, 755-6001
 > Chair, Research Committee

Southeast Region

Brett Reidpath, 384-6507
 > Chair, Board of Directors
 Murray Tweedie, 876-4537
 Kathy Trueman Del Villar, 536-8995
 > Special Projects

Producers are invited to call their Board members with any ideas, questions and comments they may have concerning upcoming activities and the work of the Board.

Office Hours

The hours of operation for the office located at 1350 Regent Street in the Hugh John Flemming Forestry Centre are: Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 to 5:00. The BNBB office is located in the Strickland Building Annex at 680 Strickland Lane.

BNBB Website—On the BNBB website producers can find newsletters, upcoming events, and links to sites with information useful to growers. There is also more general information for people interested in learning about wild blueberries. BNBB will review the website regularly to make improvements and add information. If you have ideas, suggestions or would like to become involved with the website, please call the BNBB office at (506) 459-2583 or send an email to bnbb@nb.aibn.com.

www.nbwildblue.ca



Bleuets NB Blueberries

WBANA UPDATE Japanese Jam

Submitted by Neri Vautour

The 2012 crop is behind us and the 2013 crop is still a question mark, however, continuing promotional and marketing activities are the key to increasing demand for wild blueberries. That has been WBANA's role for the past 31 years and continues to be the key to the growth of the Wild Blueberry Industry.

Recently, WBANA attended the FABEX Trade fair in Tokyo, Japan, where we met buyers and companies interested in knowing more about wild blueberries. We also met with the Japanese Jam Association executive director, Mr. Kawate and the new president, Mr. Eiichi Nozawa

to discuss the possibility of a Japanese industry tour of wild blueberry fields this coming August. We were also fortunate to be invited to visit Jam manufacturing plants in Hiroshima, Japan. These are state of the art facilities and are by far the cleanest and safest plants in the world. It is easy to understand why the Japanese (and other countries) are so fixated on where their food comes from and what chemicals may have been applied to it.

The Japanese continue to use wild blueberries in their products, however, as mentioned previously, they continually ask us about any chemicals that producers may use on their crop. Please make sure that you



always follow the recommendations from the people buying your crop or from provincial specialists. Remember, all fruit is tested entering Japan (and other countries) and we have to make sure that the fruit complies with the importing country's regulations. The internet is a great way to get information, however, it also is a great way to spread bad news fast! Please don't be the one to put the industry in a bad position.

We hope that all producers enjoy a great 2013 crop year and we look forward to seeing many of you at your provincial field day in July.

National Bee Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard

A multi-agency group (including producer associations) has been working for the past two and a half years to develop a National Biosecurity Standard, Producer Guide, and Field Guide for the honey bee, alfalfa leafcutting bee, and bumblebee sectors. These guides are aimed at

raising the importance of on-farm biosecurity, and will assist in assessing current biosecurity measures and identify potential areas for improvement.

Every registered beekeeper has received the material which will hopefully help safeguard their

operation against the introduction and spread of pests and diseases.

For more information you can visit the CFIA's Web site at www.inspection.gc.ca and follow the links: *Animals – Terrestrial Animals – Biosecurity*.



Promotional Activities

Every year BNBB participates in a variety of local promotions. This year is no exception. In the photo are Michelle Robichaud and Lin Brideau at a recent show in Caraquet, entitled *Salon Peninsule*. Because of the convenience of the products, we usually promote blueberries by way of samples of juice and pies. The event was well attended and blueberries had great exposure.

Final Comments on the COP Study

Submitted by Kathy Trueman

This project had as a main objective the preparation of a practical and usable *Maritime COP/ Benchmarking Study* for the wild blueberry industry that is accessible and easy to use for both industry associations and individual growers. Key project activities included i) a review of previous benchmarking studies; ii) design of the survey template; iii) interviews with growers to collect data; iv) analysis of the data; and, v) drafting the final report.

An organizing committee with representatives from each province met over several months beginning on June 7, 2010. The Committee worked in cooperation with the George Morris Centre (GMC) (Guelph) to draft the survey template.

Survey data was collected and then sent to the GMC. At the outset the goal had been to survey 100 growers between the three provinces, but only 57 interviews were finally completed.

The GMC submitted a draft report to the Committee in September 2012. The final draft was completed by March 2013. As part of the project growers participating in the survey received an individual farm report from the GMC. These were distributed to growers in March and we have received positive comments from some of these growers who feel the information will be valuable for their businesses.

This project provides cost and return information to help producers more carefully manage their berry production to obtain the maximum returns. There have been many changes in the production and marketing environment for the wild blueberry industry in recent years. Over the last decade input costs for blueberry production have increased and the inputs themselves have changed. More intensive production and the need to increase per acre yields are pushing producers and researchers to examine more carefully all factors that can influence production.

The project has resulted in the preparation of a cost and returns benchmarking study for the Maritime blueberry industry. Information on costs and returns will allow for comparisons between individual results and aggregate measures.

All aspects of the project were completed. However, as already mentioned the number of growers surveyed was only 57 rather than the anticipated 100. The survey process was lengthy and costly. There were difficulties scheduling interviews in an efficient manner.

As was anticipated, this was a rather significant undertaking for the industry.

The success of this project was the result of the cooperation of growers and the dedicated volunteers from the blueberry industry who gave their time to sit on the committee.

Project partners wanted to develop materials that will make the information in the report accessible and easy for growers to use when looking at their operations. A worksheet is in the process of being drafted by blueberry specialists in the three provinces.

We have had a review of the project completed by Dynamic Outcomes. There is concern about the willingness of all other producers to look at their farm data and use the worksheets to evaluate their farm enterprise. However, we have also had some feedback from producers who suggest that many growers will be interested and willing to take the time to look at this material.

The importance and value of the study will only be shown if growers take the information in the study and use it to assist in the management of their operation. Copies of the study are available by contacting the office of BNBB.



Pest Management Activities for 2013

Submitted by Kelvin Lynch
IPM Specialist NBDAAF

2013 has started out as a good year for blueberries in the southern parts of the province. Most fields had less than 5 percent winter injury to fruit buds and the lack of rain in early May has resulted in low levels of mummy berry infection in early fields. These fields are now at the late bloom stage and are also free of Botrytis blight at this time.

Late fields were only at the F2 stage when the wet weather started on May 9 and we are still waiting to see what blight levels might occur in these fields. Continuous wet conditions since mid-May have been conducive to Septoria infection and I now expect that Septoria levels in crop fields will be at least average this year. Pristine fungicide applied at bloom suppresses Septoria leaf spot and improves both fruit firmness and fruit retention. I favour a late bloom timing for this spray as honey bees are no longer in the field and the leaf canopy is more developed and easier to cover with the spray material. However, to control Botrytis blight, Pristine would have to be applied at mid bloom when bees are still present in the field. This fungicide application is of greatest benefit to fields that are harvested late, although with the potential threat of SWD this year it is best to harvest as much as you can as earliest as you can as SWD pressure is likely to increase dramatically in late August and early September.

This year many fields have small areas, often field depressions, where development lags behind the rest of the field by 7 to 10 days. In affected areas bud development is delayed but there is no sign of insect feeding. Saturated soils, herbicide damage, winter injury and insect damage are some of the things we are looking at as possible causes.



Late last year I reported on a new insect problem in blueberry, a bug that punctures and feeds on apical buds and leaves. Work to identify this insect and understand the damage to blueberry is underway this season. Several fields that were damaged in 2012 are scouted on a weekly basis using a vacuum shredder to collect insects. When operating, the vacuum sucks insects onto a piece of fabric lining the end of the suction tube. This tool might be of interest to anyone scouting blueberry fields. It is not a replacement for a sweep net but it can do some things that a net can not, such as scouting early in season before there is canopy to sweep or if you are looking for insects that feed at night and hide in the leaf litter during the day.



NBDAAF has published a new fact sheet *Integrating Burning into Your Pest Management Plan*. This fact sheet brings together in one place a lot of information on using burning to control pests. The information is summarized in a table that makes decision making quicker and easier. Check out this fact sheet and many others including a new fact sheet on tip midge at the NBDAAF Wild Blueberry webpage (www.gnb.ca/0027/Agr/0006).

