



Bleuets NB Blueberries

MARCH 2007

Field Notes

UPCOMING EVENTS

March

Winter Information Meeting, WPBANS

March 31, Truro, NS
Call 902-662-3306 for details.

April

Pest Management Session, NBDA and BNBB

April 5, 9 am-12 pm
Complexe Les Deux-Riviere
100 rue Deux-Riviere St, Tracadie, NB
Call 459-2583 or 453-3480 for details.

Pest Management Session, NBDA and BNBB

April 12, 1-3 pm
NB Department of Agriculture and Aquaculture boardroom, Moncton, NB
Call 459-2583 or 453-3480 to confirm date.

Pest Management Session, NBDA and BNBB

April 24, 7-9 pm
St. Stephen, NB
Call 459-2583 or 453-3480 to confirm date and location.

July

Field Day, BNBB and NBDA

Saturday, July 14, southeast region
Call 506-459-2583 for details.

Field Day, WPBANS

Saturday July 21, Debert, NS
Call 902-662-3306 for details.

Field Day, University of Maine

July 18 (tentative), Jonesboro, Maine
Call 506-453-3480 for further information.

August

Wild Blueberry Harvest Festival, WPBANS

Events throughout Nova Scotia during August.
Call 902-662-3306 for details.

November

Annual General Meeting, WPBANS

November 16-17, Truro, NS
Call 902-662-3306 for details.

Annual regional meetings for Bleuets NB Blueberries

Dates and locations to be announced.

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Welcome to blueberry news!

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the first newsletter from your new blueberry agency **Bleuets NB Blueberries**.

Since establishment of the agency under the Natural Products Act in summer 2006, your Board of Directors has been working hard to establish an effective organization. A levy process has been implemented and annual regional meetings were held in Moncton (November 9), St. George (November 18) and Tracadie (November 23). At these meetings nine board members were nominated, three from each region. The agency has hired Joe Rideout as our Manager and established an office in Fredericton at the Forestry Complex on Regent Street.

The new board had its first meeting on December 11. Plans are underway for a field day on July 14, and research and pollination committees have been established to begin working with the industry to address some of the issues facing New Brunswick producers. We are also working closely with other Maritime producer associations to make our industry stronger, to cooperate on projects where possible and to make better use of available resources. If you have comments or suggestions we would like to hear from you. Please call your office at (506) 459-2583, toll free at 1-866-840-2583 or email us at bnbb@nb.aibn.com. Your Board of Directors looks forward to working with all producers over the coming months.

International Market Focus

Wild Blueberry Week in Japan

WBANA UPDATE

Submitted by Neri Vautour

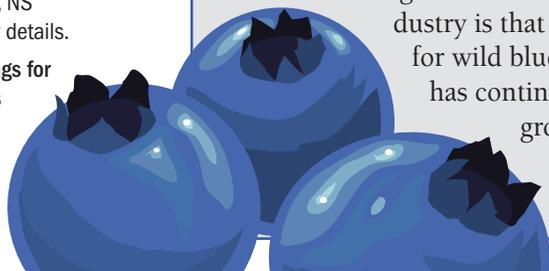
The Canadian wild blueberry industry harvested a record 131.9 million pounds of fruit in 2006! When combined with production in Maine, the total crop reached 204.9 million pounds, very close to an industry production record.

The good news for the industry is that demand for wild blueberries has continued to grow as a result

of the many promotional activities undertaken by WBANA over the years.

Have you seen an interesting article about blueberries in a magazine, newspaper or on television lately? You should be aware that WBANA is responsible for those articles being placed and circulated to millions of readers in Canada, the United States and other countries around the world. This is WBANA's primary role. WBANA continuously looks for innovative and inexpensive ways to get more publicity for the wild blueberries that you grow.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



WBANA UPDATE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Japan continues to be a very important market for wild blueberries. The Japanese market consumes over 35 million pounds of wild blueberries annually. Japanese people are very health conscious and love the taste and health benefits of wild blueberries. WBANA introduced the "Wild Blueberry Week" promotions to the Japanese market five years ago. In August 2006, WBANA brought two top chefs and several trade magazine writers to Atlantic Canada and Quebec. During the visit, our Japanese visitors were amazed at the large open spaces, had opportunity to enjoy the great taste of fresh wild blueberries and were overwhelmed by the passion and warm welcome they received wherever they went.

The Japanese delegation visited with each producer Association, met each processor

and were guests of honour at a wonderful outdoor concert in Dieppe by our "Wild Blueberry Queen", Janelle Dupuis. Their experience in Canada has further increased the publicity of wild blueberries in Japan. Their visit was recorded and the resulting DVD was used during promotional activities in Japan in October.

The Japanese use wild blueberries in many ways – they even have blueberry gum! Today's challenge is to maintain an interest in developing new wild blueberry products when supplies are tight and prices are high. This is WBANA's challenge.

Visit WBANA's web site: www.wildblueberries.com, to see what the Association is doing for the industry and to try some of the many delicious recipes.



Field Day Plans

Submitted by Michel Melanson

Over 80 people attended the Field Day held July 29, 2006 at the Cooperative Notre-Dame in Val-Doucet. This was the first Field Day in a number of years and included machinery demonstrations and research trials. Local machinery dealers had opportunity to exhibit machinery available to blueberry growers, which ranged from small harvesters to new land clearing technologies.

Bleuets NB Blueberries, in collaboration with the NB Department of Agriculture and Aquaculture, is in the process of planning a provincial Field Day for July 14 in the south-east region. The organizing team would like to hear your suggestions. The Department will collaborate on research plots and these will be available for viewing. To discuss ideas, or become involved on the organizing committee, please call the BNBB office at 459 2583 or Michel Melanson at 453 3480.

Does burning reduce leaf disease?

RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Russell Weir

A research committee has been formed by the Board of Directors of your new blueberry agency BNBB. The committee is looking for ways to become involved in what is already an active process across the blueberry industry. We will be working closely with NB government research personnel to help establish priorities.

Since Bleuets NB Blueberries is a new organization, a budget for research has yet to be established. This process may take time as the agency is just beginning to establish itself financially. However, to begin we will undertake a small initiative looking at the leaf diseases that are devastating our crops in some areas.

Does burning reduce leaf disease? To find out, hard, medium and light burns will be tried on a field known to have been hard hit by leaf disease in the past three years. Is it possible to sanitize the leaf litter from one or more cycles of mowing by burning and will this help reduce the incidence of the disease?

Results will be obtained and reported in your newsletter. If you have research suggestions, please make them known by calling (506) 847-8033 (home) or (506) 755-3467 (work, April 15 to December).



Bleuets **NB** Blueberries

Summary of Research Activities 2006

NB DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND AQUACULTURE

Submitted by Michel Melanson

The NB Department of Agriculture and Aquaculture worked on various weed control trials throughout the province. Studies were aimed at evaluating methods of control for grasses and broadleaf weeds within blueberry fields.

In partnership with Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC), Bleuets NB Blueberries obtained funding for a long term fertility study to determine the impact of existing and reduced environmental risk fertilizers on leaching and volatilization, soil residual N, plant N and plant growth.

Work also continued on bumble bee pollination observation with cooperating growers to evaluate pollination efficacy of fields with various densities on introduced bumble bees as an alternate pollinator to the honey bees or the leafcutting bee.

Studies, with NSAC, were established to evaluate leaf spot disease within the NB production system.

Some of the studies will be continuing this coming summer with financial support from the grower organizations and other funding sources. It is anticipated that new research trials will begin this summer to evaluate problems such as flea beetle control in the sprout year.

Do You Have an Environmental Farm Plan?

Environmental farm planning is a voluntary and confidential process used by farmer managers to identify environmental strengths and potential environmental risks in their farm operations, and to develop an action plan to reduce risks. In New Brunswick, the Environmental Farm Planning Program is administered by non-governmental agencies. The Agricultural Alliance of New Brunswick is responsible for the delivery of EFP workshops while the Eastern Canada Soil and Water Conservation Centre reviews and validates individual EFPs. The program is a major component of the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF), a federal-provincial-territorial agreement on agriculture and agri-food policy.

Reasons to do an EFP

For your family and workers

- Ensure their health and safety by identifying and addressing environmental risks on the farm.

For your business

- A growing number of your customers want to know that their food is being produced in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Reducing environmental risks can reduce the costs of production, increasing your farm's productivity.
- It costs less to prevent environmental problems than to correct them.
- With an environmental farm plan, you are eligible for federal and provincial funding and technical assistance to help you address risks and/or increase benefits from the environment

EFP Workshops/Ateliers PFE

March 13	Gagetown	English
March 13	St-Jacques	Français
March 14	Grand-Sault	Français
March 15	Cape Tormentine	English
March 16	Petitcodiac	English
March 20	Tracadie-Sheila	Français
March 22	Boutouche	Français
March 22	Fredericton	English
March 27	Sussex	English
March 29	Moncton	English
April 11	Bathurst	Français

To register and for additional information.
Pour vous inscrire à l'atelier et obtenir des renseignements additionnels :

John Russell
(506) 381-2887
john@fermeNBfarm.ca

Melanie Godin
(506) 875-3508
melanie@fermeNBfarm.ca



Bleuets NB Blueberries

Reminder on Blight

Submitted by Kelvin Lynch

With the increase in crop value the last couple of seasons more growers are considering blight control in their fields. Mummy Berry is carried over from year to year by infected fruit from the previous crop. These infected berries produce spores that cause new infections from bud break until early bloom. Fields should be considered at risk if they have a history of blight in previous crops. Fields that have been mowed or had only a light burn are also more at risk.

Two fungicides are commonly used to control Mummy Berry, Funginex or propiconazole. Both are equally effective but Funginex should not be used on berries destined for the U.S. market. The fungicide propiconazole can be purchased under three different names, Topas, Mission or Propiconazole, all are very similar but the rates are different because the concentration of chemical in the formulation varies. One of these fungicides should be applied when the flower bud scales first separate; this is very early to mid May depending on which part of the province you are in. For highly productive fields that are at risk a second application can be made 7 to 10 days later. During wet springs, blueberries can be infected by a second type of blight called Botrytis. Control of this type of blight involves different fungicides and later spray dates so it is important not to confuse the two diseases.

2006 Crop Report

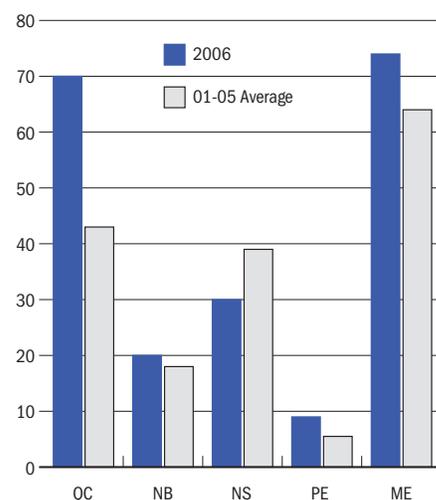
Submitted by Richard Veinot

Canadian Wild Blueberry Crop

Preliminary estimates place the 2006 Canadian wild blueberry crop at a record breaking 130 million pounds. This significantly exceeds the previous record of 120 million pounds in 2003 and the previous five year average of 109 million pounds. The biggest single contributor to this year's record production is the 70 million pounds reported from Quebec. This exceeds their previously highest crop in 2001 by approximately 15 million pounds. It is also significant to note the Quebec harvested approximately 15 million pounds of wild 'forest' blueberries which is almost 45% higher than in any previous year. The success in Quebec was a result of almost ideal growing conditions from pollination right through to harvest. Not all areas fared quite so well with New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island having crops close to their five year average while Nova Scotia's crop, at just over 30 million pounds, is well below their five year average. Statistics were not available for Newfoundland but the crop is estimated to be in the one million pound range. In those areas with lower than expected yields, the most common production problems continue to be poor pollination due to weather, fungal disease and a resurgence of many weeds that are becoming tolerant, if not resistant, to traditional herbicides.



Bleuets NB Blueberries



2006 Wild Blueberry Production (M of lb) vs. 5-Year Average

Maine Wild Blueberry Crop

The wild blueberry crop in Maine is reported at 74.6 million pounds which is 25% above their 2005 crop and 16% over their previous five year average. In addition to reasonably favorable weather conditions, one likely key to their successful yields was the use of over 53,250 honey bee hives and 460 bumblebee quads to ensure adequate pollination.

Spring Caution Tank Mixing Care

Please note that some chemical treatments cannot be combined safely in the same tank mix. This is especially important to consider when using new chemicals for the first time. Please consult with your supplier to prevent harm to yourself and your blueberry plants.

Pesticide Certification Training Course

Please be advised that a Pesticide Certification Training Course is scheduled for March 20 in Moncton at the NB Agriculture and Aquaculture boardroom on Killam Drive. The course will start at 8:30 am and runs until around 3:30 pm, leaving time for participants to write the open book exam at the end.

This is an excellent training opportunity. For those who already have their Pesticide Applicator Certificate it is an opportunity to become refamiliarized with the material.

The fee for the course and exam is \$80. The manual is available by contacting Dale Finnermore at NBCC, Moncton, 1234 Mountain Rd. (856-2807) for \$50, or can be downloaded by going to <http://www.gnb.ca/0009/0010-e.asp>, then look under Land for the Core Pesticide Manual.

Those interested in taking the course should contact Ken Browne by email (atlisnb2003@yahoo.com), fax (506) 472-4739, or phone (506) 458-5365.

If there is sufficient interest courses will be scheduled for other parts of the province as required. Please register your interest with Ken even if you are unable to attend the Moncton event.

Pollination Services

Please note that we are only weeks away from requiring the service of pollinators. Blueberry producers are advised to notify beekeepers early to book the hives they require for the 2007 season.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Northeast Region

Joseph Savoie 395-4068

► WBANA Representative for BNBB

Benoit Savoie 776-4432

Gail Savoie Doucet 395-3734

► Vice Chair BNBB

Southwest Region

John Ness 485-6248

Richard Taylor 755-2104

► Chair, Pollination Committee

Russell Weir 847-8033

► Chair, Research Committee

Southeast Region

Leonard Flynn 532-8684

Arden Woodworth 882-2550

Kathy Trueman Del Villar 536-8995

► Chair, Board of Directors

Producers are invited to call their local board members with any ideas, questions, and comments they may have concerning the new agency **Bleuets NB Blueberries**, upcoming activities, and the work of the board. Please remember that at the annual regional meetings one board member will be elected in each region for a three year term. We please ask producers to consider serving for a term on the board. If you would like more details please call the office at (506) 459-2583 or toll free at 1-866-840-2583.

Office Hours

The hours of operation for the new office located at 1350 Regent Street in Room 247 of the Hugh John Flemming Forestry Centre are: Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 to 4:30. Producers are invited to stop by the office when they are in Fredericton.

The editors would like to thank all those who contributed to this newsletter: Kelvin Lynch, IPM Specialist, NBDAA; Michel Melanson, Crop Development Specialist, NBDAA; Neri Vautour, Executive Director, WBANA; Richard Veinot, President, PEIBGA; Russell Weir, Chair, BNBB Research Committee.



Bleuets **NB** Blueberries