



Annual Report to Producers 2013

Activities from March 1, 2012 to February 28, 2013

Welcome

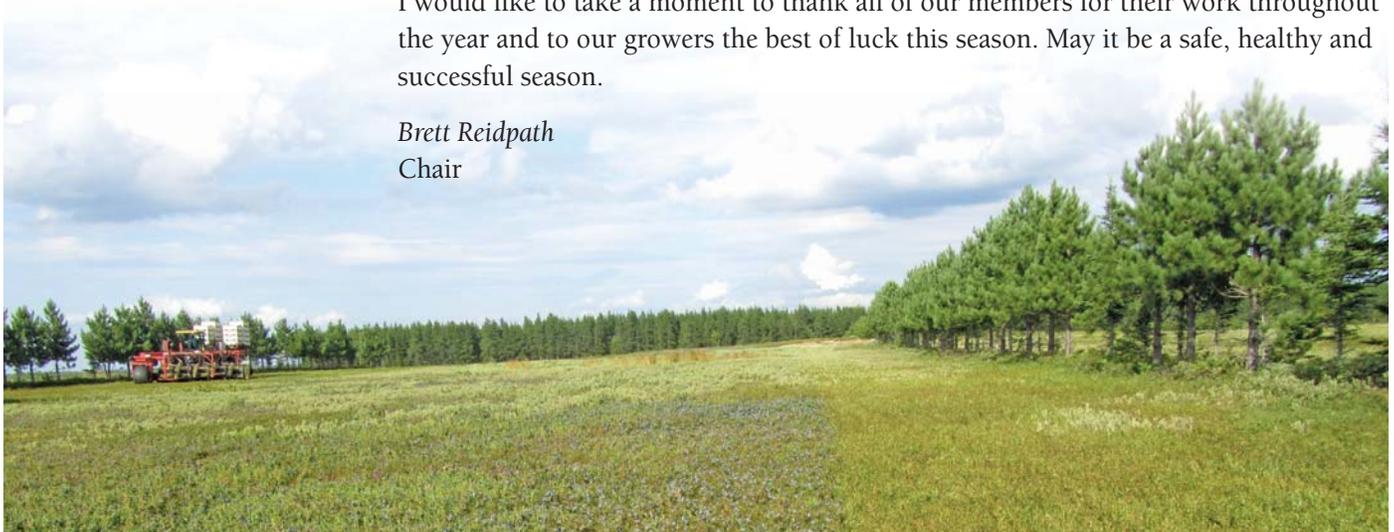
As we approach the first of April, our annual meeting and the start of our next growing season I would like to take a moment to reflect on the activities of Bleuets NB Blueberries and the New Brunswick blueberry industry in general.

As an agency we spent a lot of our time promoting our industry, our farmers and our successes to various groups across the Maritimes. We spent time with other provincial associations, government groups and private industry. Your agency promoted your innovativeness and cooperation in building the industry to where it is today and shared your vision for the industry in the future. BNBB worked hard to build on our close working relationship with the Department of Agriculture. By doing this we were able to voice the concerns that many of our members share in an effective and focused manner. By organizing meetings with our counterparts in other wild blueberry producing regions and participating in their meetings, we were able to reinforce the fact that we all share common concerns, and that success for one of us is truly a success for us all. In the coming year we hope to build further on these relationships and look forward to consistent and meaningful communication with all jurisdictions.

Our Pricing Committee was formed in early October. We had several meetings with various stakeholders in the wild blueberry industry throughout the winter. These meetings had two objectives in mind. Firstly, to gather accurate information on field price variability across the various regions and try to determine why they occurred; and secondly, to identify what other forms of governance these jurisdictions used for their associations and boards. To this point we have completed an executive summary of our findings which will be made available to our membership at the annual meeting. Once we have received feedback from the membership and answered any questions, the Committee intends to meet and plan its next course of action.

I would like to take a moment to thank all of our members for their work throughout the year and to our growers the best of luck this season. May it be a safe, healthy and successful season.

Brett Reidpath
Chair



1 Services to Producers

BNBB provides a number of services to producers. One of our key roles is to facilitate learning opportunities like technical sessions, workshops and kitchen meetings. We also administer the Advance Payment Program and publish a newsletter twice yearly. Details are provided below.

Learning Opportunities

In collaboration with the **Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries**, BNBB ensures growers have access to production and research information. Our activities in 2012 included:

- **Spring Technical Session and Annual General Meeting**
 - In Moncton at the Holiday Inn on March 30-31, 2012. For the first time in 2012, BNBB departed from regional annual meetings to a provincial approach that helped establish an industry event involving researchers, processors and suppliers.
- **Twilight Meetings**
 - In Lamèque, Memramcook and Pennfield on June 12, 13 and 14, 2012 respectively. BNBB thanks Paul Lanteigne, Roland Dupuis and Russ Hawkins and their families for hosting the meetings.
- **Annual Field Day**
 - At the farm of Eric Hall in Saint-Sauveur on July 14, 2012. BNBB thanks Eric and his family for hosting the field day.
- **WBANA Symposium**
 - In Fredericton at the Fredericton Convention Centre on October 24-26, 2012.
- **Regional Fall Kitchen Meetings**
 - Tracadie, November 6, 2012
 - Moncton, November 7, 2012
 - Pennfield, November 8, 2012



Advance Payment Program (APP)

BNBB continues to administer the APP program for producers. The APP is part of the suite of business risk management programs offered by the federal government under the Growing Forward initiative. In 2012, BNBB disbursed \$485,880 to seven growers and producers saved \$11,203 in interest.

Maritime Wild Blueberry Benchmark/Cost of Production Study

BNBB worked over the last year with other Maritime blueberry grower associations to conduct the interview process and finalize the study. Grower surveys were conducted by Dynamic Outcomes from PEI and Perennia from Nova Scotia and the data analysis and study prepared by the George Morris Centre. The study will be presented at the annual meeting.



Pricing Committee

The Committee was set up in October 2012 and five meetings were held over the winter to look at price variability across growing regions and governance bodies in various jurisdictions. A report has been prepared for presentation to growers at the annual meeting.

Newsletter & Website

BNBB produces two newsletters annually where research projects, production reports, WBANA activities, and upcoming events are shared with producers. These are published in June and December. BNBB also maintains the website which producers may consult for research summaries and documents, previous newsletters and links to other sites.

2 Administrative / Industry Activities

Similar to previous years, the BNBB Board of Directors conducted regular meetings throughout the year. BNBB also participated on the WBANA Board of Directors and, as part of the larger agricultural sector, supported organizations such as the **New Brunswick Agricultural Alliance** and the **Canadian Horticultural Council**. BNBB has tried to ensure the voice of blueberry growers is heard in various forums and has worked to be involved in discussions of broader policy issues that affect the industry. As an example, BNBB prepared a briefing note for NBDAAF officials on the impact of proposed EI reforms.

BNBB Board Meetings

- March 22, 2012
- April 3, 2012 (cc)
- June 6, 2012 (cc)
- October 17, 2012
- December 4, 2012

Ministers Roundtable

- June 4, 2012

New Brunswick Agricultural Alliance

- AGM on January 17-18, 2013. BNBB set up the booth and provided samples of blueberry juice.
- Commodity Board Advisory Group, May 1, 2012 and November 20, 2012.

New Brunswick Farm Products Commission

- Annual Review, May 17, 2012

Canadian Horticultural Council/CHC Blueberry Working Group

- AGM, Ottawa, March 12-16, 2012

WBANA

- Conference calls of the Board on April 27, July 12, September 17 and December 20, 2012 and February 13, 2013. Sit down meeting on October 24, 2012.

Wetlands Consultation

- February 11, 2013 organized by the Department of the Environment to consider a “Balanced Approach to Wetlands”.

Association des Producteurs de Bleuets Sauvages du Nord-Est du Nouveau-Brunswick

- Support for activities in the northeast including promotional efforts as well as participation in the AGM.

3 Research

DAAF staff are updating the content within the Wild Blueberry Production Guide, which is available on the www.gnb.ca/agriculture website within the blueberry section. The majority of the content has been revised and new Pest Control Selection Guides will be updated for the 2013 season. Growers are encouraged to visit the website and look over the resources available. Staff involved in this undertaking include Gaetan Chiasson, Maurice Basque, Gavin Graham, Kelvin Lynch, Michel Melanson, Chris Maund and Etienne Thériault.

Gavin Graham, Weed Management Officer, NBAAF, EARI-09-002 – 4 year project, “Evaluating Current and Innovative Weed Management Tools for New Brunswick Lowbush Blueberry Production”.

The wild blueberry industry is a vibrant and growing industry in New Brunswick. Weed issues, both in established production and new development, continue to be a significant limitation to wild blueberry production. Current industry priorities reflect a need to integrate new innovative weed management strategies within the existing weed control framework based on hexazinone use. This project consisted of multiple, ‘stand-alone’ herbicide research trials designed to evaluate control options for specific weed issues. Thirty-eight separate reports were compiled in response to the project objectives, including over five-hundred individual treatments evaluated. Weeds of interest included fescues, ticklegrass, poverty oatgrass, hawkweed, sheep sorrel, lambkill, rhodora and many other common weeds found within wild blueberry production in New Brunswick. Trials evaluated innovative products, application timings and sequences for the blueberry industry. The information helped to improve the production recommendations for New Brunswick wild blueberry producers and has been incorporated into multiple articles, presentations, fact sheets and the Wild Blueberry IPM Weed Management Guide. Trial data supported regulatory approval for many innovative herbicides and application patterns within wild blueberry, including mesotrione, sethoxydim, flumioxazin, glyphosate and foramsulfuron. In addition, trials evaluated the use of tank mixtures and repeated applications, ensuring sustainable herbicide use and protection against weed resistance. Using the information gained from this project, New Brunswick wild blueberry producers are able to manage weed issues in a more economical and environmentally sensitive manner. The final report for this project has been prepared and is available to growers.





Dr. Steve Javorek, AAFC, Kentville, “Lowbush Blueberry Pollination: Linking Bee Abundance and Landscape Pattern”

The overall objective is to produce a new lowbush blueberry land development model that increases the long term competitiveness of the industry by incorporating landscape conservation elements specifically targeted to maximize wild bee abundance and, by extension, their pollination contribution. BNBB is the applicant for this project. This is a three year project and the third year of field work was completed in 2012. The final report is being prepared.

Dr. Linley Jesson, University of New Brunswick, “Fruit Production in Blueberries”. Researchers from the Universities of Ottawa, McGill and New Brunswick worked with growers to investigate factors that influence fruit yield in fields in New Brunswick. We measured fruit production and aspects of plant reproduction across managed fields in New Brunswick over three years and correlated this with the abundance and diversity of introduced and native pollinators. While we have weak indications that areas with high native pollinators influence fruit yield, we found no difference in the type of managed pollinator in fruit production. The greatest variation in fruit production was among different fields and regions, regardless of pollination addition. This suggests that plant health and genetics are as likely as, or more important, than the addition of managed pollinators.

We are now trying to compile a database of growers’ records to ask how different management strategies influence total fruit production in a field. Interested growers can input details of different management strategies and fruit production. We hope that by combining as many records as possible we will be able to more accurately examine the factors limiting fruit production in a field. We will provide details of this database to growers in the next short while.

Christopher Maund A, Roger J.A. Tremblay^A, Rebecca Allen^A, Debra Moreau^B and Etienne Theriault^A “Survey of the spotted wing drosophila, *Drosophila suzukii* (Matsamura), [Diptera: Drosophilidae], in New Brunswick, 2012”

The spotted wing drosophila, *Drosophila suzukii* (Matsamura), [family: Drosophilidae], which attacks thin skinned soft fruit, has been reported for the first time in New Brunswick in 2012. It was captured using Contech R traps baited with commercial apple cider vinegar. It was first trapped in mid-July and started to become trapped at most locations by mid August. Trap captures increased dramatically by the end of summer and this pest was found in 19 out of 20 general locations. The fly was trapped in the following New Brunswick Counties: Kent, Westmorland, Charlotte, Kings, Queens, York, Gloucester. It was found in all Counties where traps were installed. Traps were installed at the following crop sites: blackberry, blueberry (wild and highbush), cherry (both sweet and sour), cranberry, edible honeysuckle, wine grape, plum, raspberry (summer bearing and fall bearing), sea-buckthorn, strawberry

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(June bearing and day neutral). This fly was found at all crop sites, except for cranberry and early bearing crops (June bearing strawberry and summer bearing raspberry). Only wild blueberry and fall-bearing raspberry were tested for emergence of this pest, which was found to be present in fruit of these two crops. Signs of damage typical to those from the spotted wing drosophila were observed in highbush blueberry. The need for further research on this pest in New Brunswick is discussed in the report.

^A New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries.

^B Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Kentville, Nova Scotia.

Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman, Precision Agriculture Research Chair, Engineering Department, NSAC “Prototype Variable Rate Sprayer for Real-time spot Application of Agrochemicals in Wild Blueberry Fields”

The primary objective of the proposed research project is to develop a tractor-mounted pre-commercial prototype VR sprayer using cost-effective ultrasonic sensors/digital color cameras and fast computerized variable rate controller to detect weeds, bare spots and blueberry plants to spray herbicides in a specific section where the weeds have been detected, and fungicide/insecticide where the plants have been detected. The collaborators for this project involve blueberry industry stakeholders including grower organizations and governments. This project is ongoing.

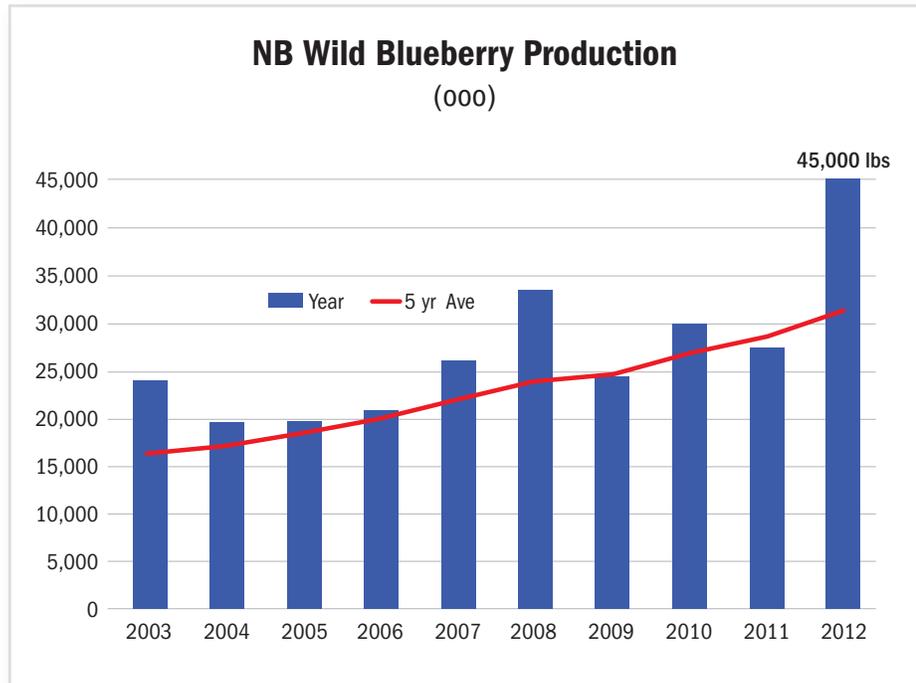


MLA Blueberry Pancake Breakfast

4 Promotions

- WBANA contribution (2012 crop) \$104,000.
- Royal Visit to New Brunswick of Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall, Saint John, May 21, 2012.
- Feast in the Field, Officer's Square in Fredericton, September 9, 2012.
- Bud Doncaster Memorial Agricultural Field Day, Sackville, September 22, 2012.
- MLA Blueberry Pancake Breakfast, Cafeteria at the Legislature. Fredericton, December 5, 2012.

5 Production Data



Field Day, Eric Hall's farm



BNBB would like to thank NBDAAF staff for their hard work and dedication to the blueberry industry.

We are also very grateful for the support of our sponsors. Thank you very much!



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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. 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 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. Producers are invited to stop by the office when they are in Fredericton.



Bleuets NB Blueberries