

Wild Blueberry Newsletter



May 2009

Mummy Berry Blight Forecasting Method

We have posted a new PDF on the wild blueberry website that details the [Mummy berry Disease Forecasting Method](#). In addition, information on the progress of the disease may be found on our new “Blog” site located at <http://mainewildblueberries.blogspot.com/>. Be sure to check these resources out and follow the recommendations as this will improve the control of this disease and save you money.

New Irrigation Resource Available

A new wild blueberry fact sheet, *Guide to Efficient Irrigation of the Wild Blueberry*, Fact Sheet No. 631, UMaine Extension No. 2006, is now online under *Production* section of our website www.wildblueberries.maine.edu/PDF/Production/631.pdf. This guide describes the use of evapotranspiration (ET) measurements to predict water needs and improve the efficiency of water needs for wild blueberry plants.

In addition, there will be a daily posting reference of ET rates and precipitation values for five sites: Deblois, Newport, Jonesboro, Ellsworth and Waldoboro. This information will be updated twice a week in the growing season, usually on Tuesdays and Fridays, as Excel files on the wild blueberry “Blog” site located at <http://mainewildblueberries.blogspot.com/>

Organic Blueberry Meeting

MOFGA is sponsoring an organic blueberry meeting on Tuesday, June 9th at 1:30 p.m. at Daniel and Gail VanWort’s Peaked Mountain Farm at 16 Ellery Lane in Dedham. See their web site at http://peakedmountainfarm.com/about_us.htm for detailed directions. Directions from Bangor: Go to Route 1A in East Holden, just past the intersection of Route 46, take a right on the upper Dedham Road for 2.8 miles, turn left onto Bald Mountain Road and go 2.1 miles to Ellery Lane on your right. Researchers from the *Organic Transitions* research project and other organic growers will be present to discuss the challenges of growing wild blueberries organically and a discussion of “where we go from here” will take place.

Organic Blueberry Production to be Topic of Public Meeting

There will be a public meeting on Wednesday, June 3, from 7:00-9:00 pm at the Blue Hill Town Hall to present the possibilities of expanding the production of organic wild blueberries in the Blue Hill area. Landowners interested in the potential of having their fields managed organically are encouraged to attend, as are all organic and non-organic blueberry growers and processors, people interested in local food production, as well as the general public.

Dave Yarborough, Blueberry Specialist with Cooperative Extension, will give a presentation on organic management of wild blueberries. The University of Maine recently completed a four year study of organic blueberry production, funded primarily by the USDA, and has published

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three technical bulletins on the subject which are available to the public. Charlie Hitchings of Spring River Farm in Cherryfield will speak about his current work doing market research for organic wild blueberries. Charlie has several decades of experience in growing and marketing organic blueberries and he is now helping the Maine Coast Heritage Trust plan their management strategy for an 80 acre blueberry field they recently acquired in Truscott. Nicolas Lindholm of Hackmatack Farm in Penobscot will talk about the financial challenges and potential of organic wild blueberry production. An organic grower for twelve years, Nicolas has spent the past year researching and writing a business plan for an organic blueberry processing plant, the *Blue Hill Berry Company*.

There will also be time allotted for questions and answers. Topics we hope to cover will include: transitioning fields to organic production, options for landowners who want their fields managed organically, investment opportunities for interested community investors and local food supporters, the economic stimulus potential for an expanded organic blueberry industry in Hancock County, and the various types of value-added or processed organic blueberry products that could be produced in the Blue Hill peninsula. For more information, contact Nicolas Lindholm at 207-326-0751 or nolindholm@localnet.com

WBANA Update

The Wild Blueberry Association will partner with actress and healthy living expert Mariel Hemingway in an upcoming satellite media tour. Mariel Hemingway is promoting her new book *Mariel's Kitchen: Simple Ingredients for a Delicious and Satisfying Life*.

On May 13th, Mariel Hemingway will share her fresh and simple approach to healthy and hearty eating showcasing wild blueberries in a series of television and radio interviews. Plans include preparation of a wild blueberry breakfast smoothie on-set during television interviews as an example of an easy-to-prepare and nutritious breakfast item. Interviews will be conducted with stations across the country via a satellite uplink from a New York City studio location. Interviews will air live in some markets and will be taped for airing in additional markets at a later date. A coverage report will be available in the May update.

Additionally, WBANA will partner with renowned chef Jonathan Cartwright of the White Barn Inn in Kennebunkport on the filming of a live cooking demonstration during Kennebunkport's Arts in the Inns festival in early June. This is a continuation of a partnership developed last year during Portland's Harvest on the Harbor event. Chef Cartwright will be filmed preparing a dish using wild blueberries. The segment will air on the *Chef's Kitchen* cooking show reaching more than 9 million viewers. You can view last year's "chef video" at <http://www.wildblueberries.com/recipes/>

WBANA recently participated in the *United Fresh 2009* trade show. This was WBANA's first venture into a "fresh produce" show. WBANA delivered the health and convenience message of frozen wild blueberries to national supermarket retailers and many brand name packers and distributors of berries. Interest was high for the remarkable flavor and visual appeal of our little blue frozen fruit.

Sincerely,



David E. Yarborough
Extension Blueberry Specialist