

Wild Blueberry Summer Field Day & Meeting

Wild Blueberry Research & Extension Facility, Blueberry Hill Farm
Jonesboro, Maine

Wednesday July 15, 2015

Organized by David E. Yarborough, Blueberry Specialist, University of Maine Cooperative Extension

2015 Wild Blueberry Summer Field Day Agenda

9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.	<p><u>Trade Show Sponsors</u></p> <p>Therault Equipment Doug Bragg Enterprises NovaSource Farm Credit East Acadian Machine Works Ltd.</p>	<p><u>Trade Show Vendors</u></p> <p>Doug Bragg Enterprises All Points Insurance BioBest USA Inc. Crop Production Services Dow AgroSciences</p>	<p><u>Trade Show Vendors</u></p> <p>DuPont Gowan Company Hammond Tractor Company Koppert Biological Systems</p>
10:00 - 10:15 A.M.	Open Crop Discussion (<i>Light blue metal building</i>)		
10:15 - 12:00 A.M.	<p>Maine's Climate Future 2015: Our Climate and Why It Matters - <i>Ivan Fernandez, University of Maine</i></p> <p>Growing Season Effects on Wild Blueberry in Maine and Implications for Management - <i>Dave Yarborough, University of Maine</i></p> <p>Blueberry Crop Insurance: Options & Updates - <i>Erin Roche, University of Maine</i></p>		
12:00 - 1:30 P.M.	Cookout		
1:30 - 4:00 P.M.	<p>Research Talks & Demonstrations - <i>UMaine</i> (<i>presenters not in order of presentation and several will be posters to view at lunch in light blue metal building</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Disease Forecasting - <i>Seanna Annis</i> • Update of <i>Valdensinia</i> Leaf Spot - <i>Erika Lyon</i> • Studies on <i>Monilinia</i>: Cause of Mummy Berry - <i>Tyler Case</i> • Out Smarting the Spotted Wing Drosophila...What is on the Horizon - <i>Frank Drummond</i> • Can We Control Spotted Wing Drosophila with Fungi - <i>Gabe Alnajjar</i> • Top Bee Plants for a Pollinator Garden - <i>Alison Dibble</i> • Do Natural Predators in Blueberry Fields Take a Toll on SWD - <i>Ellisa Ballman</i> • Can We Control the Blueberry Tip Midge Yet - <i>Judy Collins</i> • Control Potential for a New Pest, the Winter Moth - <i>Kaitlyn O'Donnell</i> • Do Bees Prefer Healthy Food Over Junk Food - <i>Megan Leach</i> • Are Power Lines Important Nurseries for Native Bees - <i>Brianne Du Clos</i> • What Can We Learn about Pollination from Across the Border - <i>Kourtney Collum</i> • The Maine Bumble Bee Atlas - <i>Kaylin Bickerman</i> • Forget Size, Number and Position Might be More Important for Blueberry Flowers - <i>Alex Bajcz</i> • Winter Injury was High this Year...Why - <i>Lee Beers</i> • 2015 Weed Management Research and Demonstration Plots - <i>Dave Yarborough</i> <p><i>Two recertification credits offered for Maine certified pesticide applicators</i></p>		
4:00 P.M.	Trade Show Vendors (Close)		

Wild Blueberry Crop Prospects 2015

Maine - *David Yarborough, University of Maine*

The blueberry plants in Maine had a long fall but the onset of winter occurred rapidly and many plants may not have hardened off well. We also had an extremely cold winter but with good snow cover that extended into March, so plants were delayed in their development and pollination occurred later than normal. We did observe some winter injury, especially in areas that had the snow cover blown off. There were only a few scattered frosts, so very little damage occurred from this. Despite the delay in growth we had a large bloom so there were plenty of blossoms, providing the potential for a large crop. The mid-coast Union area had excellent weather conditions and an exceptionally high fruit set but the Downeast fields were delayed with much cooler and windier weather that prevented a large fruit set, but most fields that had adequate bees had an average fruit set. We had a fairly dry May so we had few infection periods for mummyberry disease. There was some *Botrytis* blossom blight observed this year because of the wet conditions during bloom in the Downeast fields. Tony Jadzack's estimate for bees contracted to pollinate wild blueberries was 77,000 hives, which is a little less than last year. In Jonesboro, we received 3.54, 1.32 and 6.52 inches of rain in April, May and June respectively. Despite the dry May and the yearly rainfall being four inches below normal, moisture has been adequate and combined with the cooler temperatures provided for both good blueberry and weed growth. Crop progress is delayed about two weeks Downeast but could catch up with warmer temperatures. If we continue to get adequate moisture for the remainder of the summer, the crop in Maine could be about average at 90 million pounds.

Quebec - *Pierre-Olivier Martel, Quebec Agriculture Ministry*

In Quebec, cold temperature arrived quickly last December after a warm weather and rain episode. In many production areas, plants did not harden off well. We also had a low snow cover and very cold temperatures. In the spring, we observed a lot of winter frost and a lot of variability in bloom. We observed damage between 10 to 90% in many fields. Hopefully, weather during pollination was good and hives strong; we did not see any frost. We didn't have much disease either, except for mummy berry in some fields. A few fields were treated for flea beetle in prune fields, but little activity for this insect. It is dry in many production areas, but the rain forecast for this week may change the picture. The crop in Quebec could be about 30 to 40 million pounds. The winter injury is principally responsible for the yield reduction.

Nova Scotia - *Peter Burgess, Perennia*

Nova Scotia had a cold winter and a delayed start to the growing season due to the high volume of snow. By early May, crop development was delayed by almost two weeks through the province. Some winter damage is evident but it is relatively minor and only in areas where snow was blown off fields. It was an unusually dry May so *Monilinia* infections were very low, with just minor damage seen. June was damp and cool with some *Botrytis* pressure noted. There were two separate frost events in mid bloom with very little effect on the crop. Nova Scotia again brought in 5000+ hives from Ontario and western Canada through the import permit program. Domestically Nova Scotia had low winter honey bee losses, and over 20,000 of those hives were used for pollination. The use of Bumble bee quads is continuing to increase as well. There were lots of native pollinators again throughout the province. The weather during bloom was not ideal but there were adequate flying days to allow for pollination. Nova Scotia looks to have a good to very good fruit set, however yields should be less than last year's record crop. That being said, the provincial yield should still be above the 5-year average of 40.6 million pounds.

New Brunswick- *Michel Melanson, NB Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries*

Minimal winter injury has been observed in many fields. Fruit bud scale separation was visible during the second week of May, similar to last year, but later than previous years. The snow melt was late this spring, delaying field operations. Monilinia blight infection periods occurred, but levels were generally low. Wet periods occurred during bloom; however, minimal infection of botrytis blight was present, likely due to pre-bloom fungicide applications. There were a couple of cold nights during bloom but temperatures recorded at weather station were never below freezing. Only a few flowers were open at this time therefore, low lying areas may have been at risk and some frost injury was noted. Bloom was generally good and weather was cool and wet, however, over the period, there was still good pollinating days. An estimated 35,000 colonies were used for pollination in wild blueberry fields, slightly higher than last year. Bumble bees and Alfalfa leafcutter bees use was also higher in 2015 compared to 2014. In southwestern NB, 2.6 and 10.1 inches of rain in May and June respectively were recorded. Crop is still in early fruit set, and difficult to assess at this time. Crop stage is similar to last year but later than the previous years (2012 and 2013). With the recent warmer temperatures, crop development could catch up quickly. If normal rainfall occurs during the month of July and early August, the crop in NB should be average. The provincial 5-year average is 42.5 million pounds, but with newly developed fields maturing and improving production practice, a crop of 50 million pounds could be expected, not as good as last year's crop of 60.3 million pounds.

Prince Edward Island - *Chris Jordan, PEI Department of Agriculture & Fisheries*

PEI experienced a cold fall in 2014 with no significant snow fall until mid-January. The province received record breaking snow accumulation during the winter and fields remained covered until early May in several regions. Very little winter injury resulted. Most fields were covered with two fungicide sprays for Monilinia and control appeared to be good. Pollination season was at least one week later than normal and there was lots of bloom present on the fields. Pollination weather was good with two minor frost events occurring during June. PEI had 11,500 colonies available for pollination. This is a record number for PEI with the majority being supplied by resident beekeepers and a significant number imported from Ontario. Bumblebee quads continue to be a popular add-on to complement native bees and honey bees. Fields need rain to help berries size up over the next several weeks. Final crop estimate is expected to reach 20 million pounds in 2015. Five-year running average crop for PEI is 15 million pounds with a record crop harvested in 2014 at 22.7 million pounds.

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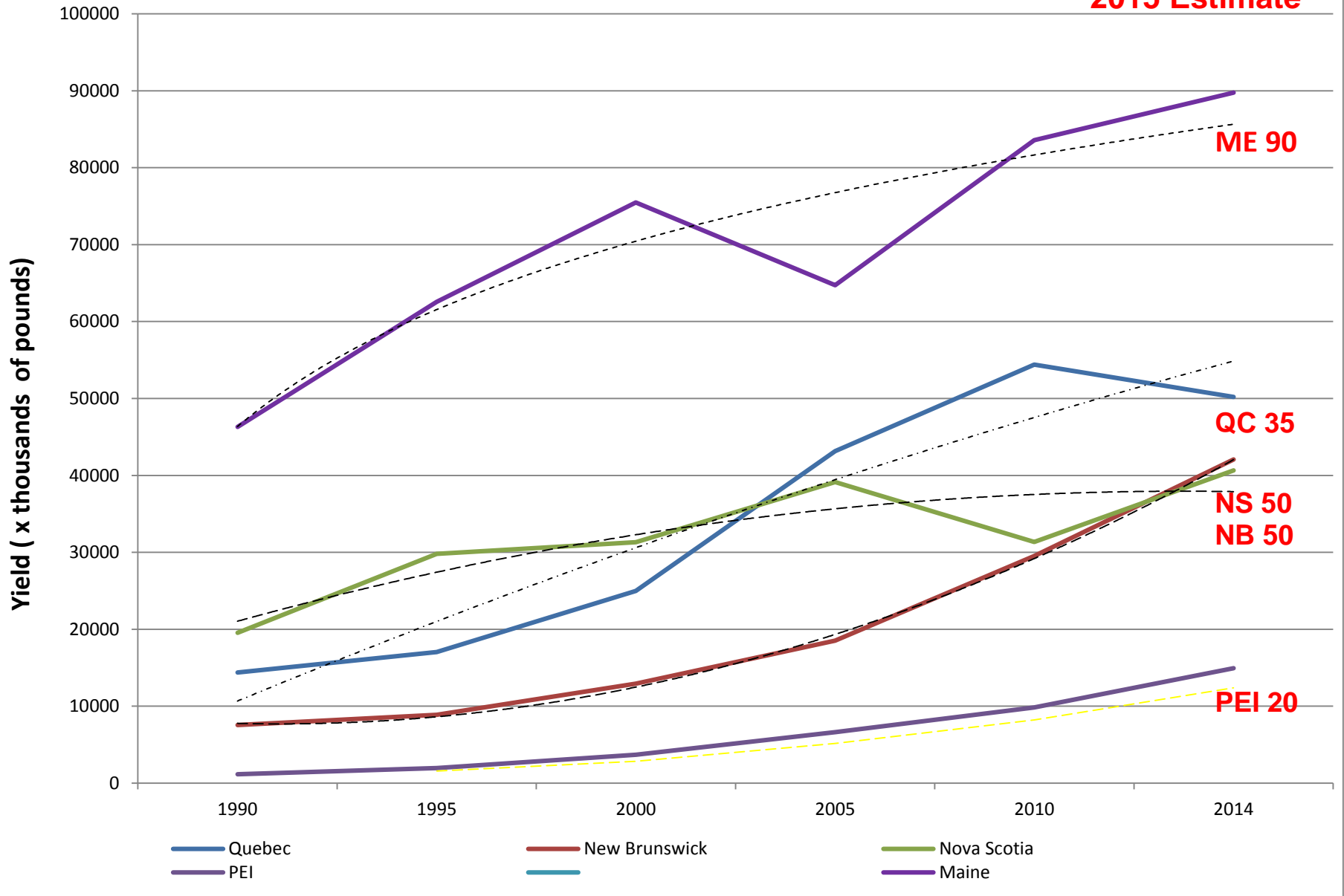
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Five-Year Wild Blueberry Yields for Maine and the Canadian Provinces

2015 Estimate



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