# Wild Blueberry Summer Field Day & Meeting Agenda

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

**Wednesday July 19, 2017**

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

## 2017 Wild Blueberry Summer Field Day Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00-4:00 PM</td>
<td>Trade Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td><strong>Trade Show Sponsors</strong>&lt;br&gt;Theriault Equipment&lt;br&gt;Farm Credit East ACA&lt;br&gt;NovaSource&lt;br&gt;Koppert Biological Systems&lt;br&gt;Grand Falls Agromart Ltd.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td><strong>Trade Show Vendors</strong>&lt;br&gt;Butch Hall Land Leveling&lt;br&gt;Crop Production Services&lt;br&gt;Dow Bragg Enterprises Ltd.&lt;br&gt;Dow AgroSciences&lt;br&gt;DuPont Crop Protection&lt;br&gt;Farm Credit East, ACA&lt;br&gt;Gowan Company&lt;br&gt;Grand Falls Agromart Ltd.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00-10:15 AM</td>
<td>Open Crop Discussion &lt;br&gt;(Light blue metal building)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15-10:30 AM</td>
<td>Agricultural Wild Blueberry Heritage Center and Virtual Museum - Marie Emerson, Wescogas Wild Blueberries</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30-10:45 AM</td>
<td>Wild Blueberry Commission’s Promotional Efforts - Trish Kontur, WBC of ME</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45-11:00 AM</td>
<td>Harvester Efficiency/Wild Blueberry Management Tool - Travis Esau, Dalhousie University</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00-11:45 PM</td>
<td>Boosting On-farm Wild Bee Populations and NRCS Programs to Help - Eric Venturini, Xerces/NRCS</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:45-12:00 PM</td>
<td>Release of Bee Mapper (the bee prediction software for growers) - Brianne Du Clos, Cyndy Loftin, Sam Hanes and Frank Drummond, University of Maine</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:45-1:30 PM</td>
<td>Interactive Demonstration of Bee Mapper (Lab building) - Brianne Du Clos</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00-1:30 PM</td>
<td>Cookout</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>Research Talks &amp; Field Demonstrations (by UMaine presenters unless otherwise stated). Presenters not in order of presentation - begin in the light blue metal building and continue outside to upper field.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- Recycling Pesticide Containers: The RIGHT Thing to Do! - Ron Perkins, Ag Container Recycling Council</td>
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<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- Rusty Patched Bumblebee Listing - Mark McCollough, US Fish &amp; Wildlife Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- Mummy berry Update - Seanna Annis</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- Bees and Mummy berry Disease - Elissa Ballman</td>
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<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- Molecular Methods to Aid in Forecasting Blueberry Rust - Nghi Nyugen</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- Climate Change Research in Wild Blueberry - Venessa Grove</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- Blueberry Tip Midge - Judy Collins</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- Trapping Blueberry Maggot and Spotted Wing Drosophila and Action Thresholds - Frank Drummond</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- Pollinator Demonstration Planting - Eric Venturini - Xerces/NRCS</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00 PM</td>
<td>- 2017 Weed Management Research Plots and Low Input Demonstration Plot - Dave Yarborough</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Trade Show Vendors (Close)</td>
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**Wild Blueberry Crop Prospects 2017**

**Maine - David Yarborough, University of Maine**

We had a mild fall and winter and so had a very large bloom, but the pollination weather was poor as it was cold, wet and windy. These conditions also resulted in extensive damage from mummy berry disease as well because growers could not apply fungicides as the rain, wind and wet fields prevented it. There was also some scattered frost but it was not extensive. Jennifer Lund, State Apiculturist, reports that we only had only 27.7 thousand bee hives in Maine; this is down from 58 thousand last year and 77 thousand the year before. Also, some of the fields will not be harvested because the companies are not accepting their fruit. We have had ideal growing conditions with cool temperatures and ample rainfall. In Jonesboro, we received 3.83, 7.01 and 3.22 inches of rain in April, May and June respectively and temperatures have been cooler than normal, so there is little stress on the plants. The crop in Maine has been over 100 million pounds each of the last three years. Because of the conditions stated, I expect the crop may be reduced by 25% or more, so it could be about 75 million pounds or less.

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

In Quebec, we had a good snow cover on the entire wild blueberry production area, so we didn’t notice any winter damage. Some fields flooded for several weeks were reported in the spring. We had a nice bloom with some localized flower frost. The weather favored mummy berry infection in some fields. We haven’t had much flea beetle. Bloom period was generally good, but many producers used less bee hives than normal for pollination. Fruit set seems to be good. Since May, we had plenty of rain so drought isn’t a problem in most of the production areas. We expect the crop greater than average with more than 70 million pounds but less than the last year 125 million pounds.

**Nova Scotia - Peter Burgess, Perennia**

Nova Scotia had a relatively mild winter with snow leaving blueberry fields early. Development started early but cool and dry conditions in April and May slowed blueberry development. By early May, crop development was still slightly ahead of a normal year. Very little winter damage was evident. We had a significant year for Monilinia infections, with several infections periods. Because of different management strategies, significant infections were evident throughout the province. There were 3-4 separate frost events in mid bloom with some effect on the crop. There was also significant botrytis pressure during bloom and we are seeing evidence of infections, especially in dense canopy fields. Nova Scotia brought in 500 hives from New Brunswick through the import permit program. Domestically Nova Scotia had low winter honey bee losses, but because of market challenges in the wild blueberry sector hive usage dropped significantly from past years. Bumble bee quads were still used, but we did not see the growth in numbers like previous years. There were lots of native pollinators again throughout the province. The weather during bloom was relatively good with adequate flying days to allow for pollination, through most of Nova Scotia. Late June and early July has been warm with periodic rainfall events, moisture is currently not an issue for fruit development. We are currently ahead of the five year average for heat unit accumulation, so we could expect a slightly early start to harvest. Yields are expected to be down, with disease pressure, increased weed pressure and a reduction of inputs like pollinators. Some growers have taken poorer or unprofitable land out of production. I’m expecting a crop above 40 million pounds for Nova Scotia in 2017, however it will be significantly down from the last three years, which were over 60 million pounds each year.
**New Brunswick** - Michel Melanson, NB Dept. Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries

The 2017 winter was mild, and minimal winter damage was observed. As usual, a few fields had some injury along the edges, but overall fields looked good in the spring. The spring was cool and wet, and made it a challenge for many growers to apply fungicides to protect against monilinia blight. The cool and wet conditions prevail during the early bloom and bloom was prolonged. Weather conditions improved in the Northeast NB at the end of the season. The number of honey bee colonies has not been finalized yet, but fewer honey bee colonies were brought in for pollination. It is also noted that a number of local beekeepers were asked to only provide a single pollination, as compared to previous year were colonies may be used in Southern NB and then transported to Northeastern NB. A number will not be harvested this year, as growers revising their production practices and field potentials. Generally, the plant health is good, but fruit set is variable due to fewer managed pollinators and poor weather during bloom. I expect NB to be less than last year crop of 82 M lbs. Although some fields have some very good fruit set, others fields are poor, making it difficult to assess overall estimate.

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

Prince Edward Island experienced a relatively mild winter with less than ideal snow cover. Some winter damage resulted in exposed fields, particularly along the north shore where salt spray damage off the Gulf of St. Lawrence was also an issue for some growers. A wet spring provided conditions for several Monilinia blight infection periods. This, in combination with reduced fungicide sprays and wet fields preventing sprayers from driving, resulted in a higher than normal incidence of symptoms from Monilinia blight in 2017. Botrytis pressure was relatively low and only a small acreage of later maturing fields were protected in the eastern region of PEI. High winter losses were experienced by local beekeepers and there was less demand from growers to use commercial pollinators, including bumblebee quads. Approximately 1,632 colonies were imported from Ontario (non-small hive beetle areas) as well as 432 from New Brunswick via Nova Scotia. June provided good flying weather for bees and excellent fruit set has been achieved. A frost event did occur on May 29/30 and June 14/15, but no major impact on yield is expected. No major issues with insects were observed. Overall, growers have reduced their inputs for the 2017 and 2018 crop and marginal acreage has been either taken out of production or only minimal inputs have been applied. Overall, fields look very good. PEI expects an estimated provincial yield of 30 million.
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