



## **August 2014 NEWSLETTER**

### **Presidents Report**

I'll keep this short. I figure you have as much time to read it as I do to type it! 'Tis the season of rushed everything and the long mental list of winter projects begins to grow. I find every time I come across something that needs doing, or a project I want to research, I am always telling myself, "remember to do that this winter!" It was a slow start to the season here in the South and cool temperatures continue across the province. We have had some very timely rains and as a result have required minimal irrigation on our field crops. We had a plentiful June-bearing season and saw some of the best yields since we began. I know across the province the season was varied as growers continue to battle virus and disease issues. Spotted Wing numbers are on the rise and blueberry and fall raspberries will be the most susceptible. Follow along with regular updates from OBGGA or OMAF and MRA and stay vigilant with this relentless pest.

We are just ramping up into our second round of ever-bearing strawberries. We have started with lower yields than we expected and we continue to battle anthracnose. I look forward to swapping stories and picking brains at the annual Twilight meeting on September the 10<sup>th</sup>. Our friends at Josmar Acres in Lynden are hosting and this is one of the best events of the year for growers. I always think a farmers best resource is found in

the listening ear and advice of the fellow farmer. Because, as most of us admit, "We may not have it all together, but together we have it all!"

See you in September and until then I wish you all sunny skies, pest-free days, and an inch of rain a week falling gently from midnight to 4am. Happy Growing!

Jenn VanDeVelde, President

### **From OBGGA Headquarters**

As always it is an interesting growing season with variable weather and many other challenges facing growers. It has been over 10 years since I began my work with the OBGGA and I have been working with berry growers for well over 20 years and I would have to say that today as growers we are facing more challenges than I can remember.

The virus issue continues to be a challenge for Ontario growers. Our berry specialist Pam Fisher has been talking about this for probably 5 years and 2 years ago we did a survey that proved what she suspected. We have virus here on our Ontario Farms much like the rest of our neighbouring provinces and states. We are doing another more thorough survey of well over 100 samples from farms in most areas of the province. I think like the last survey we will find more than 80% of the farms sampled will have virus.

The challenge with virus is the symptoms are not obvious. If you have leaf spot or insect damage it is easy to identify but virus infected plants do not look starkly different than non-infected

plants. Once these plants become stressed they don't have enough vigor to stay alive and often they collapse.

If you think you don't have some level of virus on your farm you are probably kidding yourself. Symptoms seem to be found as we have said on more than 80% of our samples in the past. This means that you will have to both now and over the next few years have an aggressive aphid management strategy. This means an additional 3-4 treatments directed at aphids.

## **C.O. Keddy Nursery Inc.**

**Certified Strawberry, Raspberry,  
Blueberry and Blackberry Plants**

**All popular varieties available**

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We have seen a great reduction in acreage in Ontario Strawberries over the past 5 years and I truly believe many growers have quit or cut back because of this virus issue and they didn't even know it was there. The shorter growing cycles that growers have went to are likely due to poor vigor from older virus infected plants.

A group of us met with the Deputy Minister last spring expressing our

concerns and we will bring our survey results back in the fall and see what form of help we can get from our friends at the Ministry of Agriculture.

The good news is that this is a manageable issue that can be conquered with some replanting of clean plants and diligent management practices for aphids.

All the best!

Kevin

## **Achene Report**

The Achene committee has not formally met for a while but members of the committee have been active.

Two meetings took place at Strawberry Tyme Farms to visit the Verification Trial plantings. These plantings are grown from planting stock from the lab in New Liskeard to ensure that the varieties are true to type and to look for other potential disorders. This planting has both strawberries and raspberries and it visited when the plants are fruiting. No major concerns were discovered which was good news.

The next meeting of the Achene Meeting will be this fall.

## **Voluntary Check-Off**

Thanks to everyone who has returned money towards the voluntary plant check-off. Strawberry plants purchased in Ontario are assessed with a fee of \$5.00 for every thousand plants which is used by the organization to help fund various activities including research and promotion.

Plants that are purchased outside of Ontario are not assessed these fees. A few years ago we asked our friends at G.W. Allen and Keddy Nursery to insert

a request for a voluntary check-off for the plants purchased in Nova Scotia. I want to thank those who have sent in a contribution and encourage those who haven't to find the form or just calculate how many thousand plants you purchased and send in \$5 for each thousand. The OBGA runs a really tight budget and these funds are very helpful.



## National Raspberry and Strawberry Research and Promotion Council Update

There have been no announcements regarding either of these Research and Promotion Councils. This is a big decision for the Minister to make as there are several other commodity groups waiting to file their applications.

Hopefully something gets decided before the next federal election.

If you have any questions feel free to contact Kevin at the OBGA office.

## OBGA Promotional Items

We have a supply of most items with the exception of raspberry brochures. We ordered 400,000 poly bags and there

are very few remaining. Once again we struggled to get them prior to the harvest season even though they were ordered earlier than ever.

If you would like anything and would like to pick it up at the twilight meeting let me know. Free Shipping!

OBGA promotional items can be viewed on the OBGA website [www.ontarioberries.com](http://www.ontarioberries.com) in the Grower/Member section

## Agricultural Management Institute

1) The Advanced Farm Management Program:

This program is meant for farmers who are looking to better their farm management practices and improve the performance and sustainability of their farm business. Follow the links below for more information on the program.

<http://www.takeanewapproach.ca/Events.htm>

<http://advancedfarmmanagement.ca/>

<http://www.realagriculture.com/2014/07/buy-farm-management-course-helps-decide/>

2) Farmer-club Initiative:

This program is for established or newly created farmer-led clubs. AMI has a list of expert advisors to assist these clubs in creating a business plan or address common issues and how to move forward with them. This service is free to the clubs as the advisors have an available \$5000 of funding for them to use to provide their services to the clubs. This funding is limited to a minimum of two meetings or a maximum of 1 year of facilitated meetings.

# **OBSA Twilight Meeting Wednesday September 10, 2014**

## **Josmar Acres**

568 Lynden Rd  
RR#2 Lynden, ON  
L0R 1T0  
519-647-2025

**1 mile south of Lynden on Lynden Rd.**

**Cost: \$15.00 - \$20.00 per person**

Josmar Acres has a wonderful market that is open four seasons of the year. They grow a wide variety of crops to supply their market. Crops grown include strawberries, raspberries, apples, plums, pears, sweet corn, potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, pumpkins, squash, gourds and flowers. They also bring in a wide variety of produce from local growers to provide consumers with a one stop shop for fresh, local produce.

## **A Local Board for Ontario Berry Growers**

Your Board of Directors dedicated a great deal of time to refine the proposed local board. At this time an application will be submitted to the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission for their review and determination to see if the application will go forward.

If the proposal is accepted by the Commission information meetings will be scheduled during the winter months with a potential vote in March.

The proposed cost to growers will be similar to what strawberry growers now pay as a check-off but as an acreage fee and the plant check-off will likely be phased out.

**Arrive a few minutes early and have a look around the farm market**

**4:00 - 6:00 Tour of Josmar Acres** from hosts Andrea Otten and the deBlicke family.

### **Sprayer Demo**

During this time we will also have a sprayer demonstration from Jason Devau who will show an electrostatic sprayer from On Target Spray Systems. Jason will speak to inner canopy and under-leaf coverage, application volumes (e.g. any possible water / pesticide savings), efficacy against spotted-wing drosophila, cost of the unit, maintenance of the unit, and servicing of the unit.

**6:00** Enjoy a meal at the farm and network with your fellow berry growers

Please contact Kevin at the OBSA office if you plan on attending. A meal is being planned and we want to make sure we have enough food for all. 613-258-4587 or [info@ontarioberries.com](mailto:info@ontarioberries.com)

If you have any questions feel free to contact one of your board members.

## **Water Meter Pilot Program for Agricultural Irrigation**

The Water Adaptation Management and Quality Initiative (WAMQI) is conducting a pilot program which will partially subsidize water meters for use in select agricultural operations. Through this pilot program agricultural irrigators and vegetable wash water users can receive a subsidy of 50% of the cost of a water meter and associated installation, up to a maximum of \$750 per farm. (Other specific situations involving agricultural water use may be considered) Applications will be reviewed on a first come, first serve basis, with a total of \$7,000 allocated for this program.

**Eligibility:**

- Agricultural irrigators and wash water users (and other special circumstances) wanting to meter water use or add an additional meter to better monitor a zone or portion of the farm
- Eligible operations must be located in Ontario and currently be in agricultural production

For more information on the program its purpose or eligibility, contact Bruce Kelly, [bruce@farmfoodcare.org](mailto:bruce@farmfoodcare.org) or 519 837 1326

## **How Do Weeds Resist Glyphosate**

### **Dr. Stephen Powles, Australian Herbicide Resistance Initiative (AHRI)**

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If you ever find yourself in the situation where you are catering for a group of people, and you are wondering how much food to prepare, the best thing to do is to prepare a little extra, just in case. The last thing that you want to do is run out.

Believe it or not, this is how some weeds resist glyphosate. They make an extra-large batch of the enzyme that glyphosate binds to, just in case. This way, if the weed is sprayed with glyphosate that inhibits some of the enzyme, there is still enough left for the plant to function and survive. This mechanism is known as 'Gene Amplification' and was discovered by Dr. Todd Gaines along with a large team of scientists from around the world.

There are currently six known mechanisms of glyphosate resistance and several more are suspected.

There are several other mechanisms of glyphosate resistance currently being researched but are yet to be confirmed.

Q. How many weed scientists does it take to identify a glyphosate resistance mechanism?

A. 18.

No, this is not a bad joke, it is reality. The research effort led by Dr. Todd Gaines with Colorado State University, AHRI and Bayer CropScience Germany, involved collaborating with 17 other scientists around the world to identify a new glyphosate resistance mechanism. This gives some indication of how complex these new findings are. There is a considerable global effort to better understand glyphosate resistance.

The mechanism discovered in this research is called 'Gene Amplification' because the plant produces many copies of the gene that codes for the EPSPS enzyme.

Glyphosate kills plants by inhibiting the enzyme EPSPS. This research discovered that America's biggest problem weed, Pigweed (Palmer amaranth), developed resistance by producing a lot more of this enzyme. This research identified Pigweed with 5 fold to 160 fold more copies of the EPSPS gene. More copies of the gene resulted in more EPSPS enzyme activity. The effect of additional EPSPS genes is additive, and additional copies of the gene infer higher levels of resistance. Put simply, more copies of the EPSPS gene = more EPSPS activity = higher levels of resistance to glyphosate.

Glyphosate can still bind and inhibit some of the EPSPS enzyme produced by the plant, but the plant survives because there is enough EPSPS enzyme left over to do its job and keep the plant alive.

This resistance mechanism has now also been confirmed in ryegrass and Kochia species (confirmed resistant in Western Canada). These weed species are the world champions of developing resistance to herbicides. It comes as no surprise that these weed species are each able to develop several different mechanisms of resistance to glyphosate.

<http://www.ahri.uwa.edu.au/news/AHRI-insight/How-do-weeds-resist-glyphosate>

## **Leaf Analysis – Now I the Time**

**Marvin Pritts and Cathy Heidenreich,  
Dept. of  
Horticulture, Cornell University,  
Ithaca, NY**

Why is Leaf Analysis Important? Plant tissue analysis is used to measure directly the amount of nutrients in various plant parts, and for established perennial crops, is usually a better indicator of nutrient status than a soil test.

Recommendations are based on the levels of 13 essential nutrients in your leaves at a specific time of the year (usually mid-summer). Unlike visual diagnoses, foliar nutrient analysis can alert the grower when nutrient levels are approaching deficiency so corrective action can be taken before problems occur. They also alert the grower if fertilizer is being over-applied. Unlike soil tests, foliar analysis provides accurate results for all essential mineral nutrients, not just for the 4 or 5 reported in soil tests.

Many nutrients can be applied in fall, and the recommendations will provide details on when to apply particular nutrient fertilizers and in what quantities.

### **Do I Need a Soil Test to Accompany the Leaf Analysis?**

It is not required, but it is helpful; if you haven't had a soil test done in the past 3 years, consider doing one this year. Regardless of when a soil test was last done, it is critical that the soil pH is in the correct range for the foliar analysis results to have meaning. When and

### **How Do I Collect the Leaf Samples?**

Other sampling times or plant parts may prove to be more appropriate for certain nutrients, but until more detailed studies are done, foliar samples collected in mid-summer are the standard because nutrient levels fluctuate little then.

For strawberries, recommendations are based on newly expanded leaves collected after renovation in late July or early August. For raspberries and blackberries, select fully expanded primocane leaves in early August. For blueberries, select young newly matured leaves exposed to full sun in late July.

Collect at least 50 leaves from across the planting. Samples should be representative of the entire field. If a particular area of the field looks poor or has been fertilized differently from the rest, sample it separately.

### **I have the Leaves, Now What?**

Remove petioles, and wash leaves in distilled water. Dry them, place them in a paper bag, and send them to the laboratory for analysis. If leaves cannot be washed immediately after collection, store them in a refrigerator or cooler until they may be processed; they should not be allowed to wilt prior to washing. Once leaves are dry, place in sample bags; label bags appropriately and send them to a lab of your choice

\*In Ontario we have several accredited laboratories a list can be found at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/resource/leaf.htm>