



March 2016 NEWSLETTER

Presidents Report

As presented at the OBG A AGM

I recently came across an article regarding parenting. It was called, "Six of the best; the traits your child needs to succeed". I have often looked at my role as a parent in terms of creating little humans that can thrive in the adult world and when you have children of farmers these traits become even more amplified.

It outlined 6 simple concepts: Joie de Vivre, resilience, self-discipline, honesty, courage and kindness. Joie de vivre – a zest for life- the ability to wake up at dawn each day and attack the world with vigor...a farmer must. Resilience – there is no challenge too tough and no obstacle too large. Self-discipline – for a farmer the variance from day to day, month to month, year to year creates a need for self-regulation. Honesty – there is nothing more truthful than the dirtied hands and soft spoken words of a farmer. Courage – face adversity and uncertainty head on and never give up. Kindness...perhaps the most important of all. Be kind to one another...a true life mantra.

I loved these concepts. The more I considered them the more I could see them in all aspects of life. I also felt more and more that these were the aspects of a farmer.

I have had the extreme pleasure of being the president of the board of directors of OBG A for the past two years. I can very proudly say that I was the organizations first female chair and I will look back on the experience as one that provided both challenges and great rewards.

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Thank you to the board of directors for entrusting me with the monumental tasks of the past two year. It is through your support and guidance that OBG A continues to be successful. Thank you to Will Heeman, past president, who provided a direction and path that was easy to follow and pursue. Thank you to Kevin Schooley – our industry has seen such great benefit under your leadership and I can only hope we benefit from your abilities for many years to come. Thank you to Pam Fisher, Becky Hughes, Adam Dale and the group of researchers.

You are all committed to our industry and it is through that commitment that we can find success. I would like to thank the grower speakers, meeting hosts and selfless volunteers that have been the backbone of berry growers for years. I'd like to recognize Steve Kustermans, Bill Parks and the board of directors of the Ontario High Bush Blueberry Growers Association – I believe that the work we have accomplished together in the last year will benefit the industry for years to come.

OBGA is moving forward. It will be the six traits to success that will continue to propel the Ontario berry industry. I urge berry growers to support the movements in the next year. As we look towards stable funding and stronger representation, I know that Ontario growers will continue to be resilient and courageous. We will face our needs with honesty and kindness and we will show discipline in our decisions. I hope as we move forward with Ontario Berry Growers that all members can enhance their joie de vivre and we can commit to the stability our industry so badly needs.

Our industry needs strength in leadership, and a cohesive voice. We need to rely on those that have both history and experience, along with those that have new ideas and drive. As I step down as chair I look very confidently towards the road ahead for Ontario berry growers. I remind growers to get involved in your industry and support your elected representation.

A reminder of another opportunity for growers – please consider attending

the one day work shop on biocontrol for berry growers on March 8th in Guelph – a special thanks to Pam Fisher for organizing a day full of education, discussion and grower experience on a concept with much potential for all growers.

As I sign off one last time please hold on to the six traits – challenge yourself, get involved and move forward. I look forward to watching Ontario berries move into 2017 with a great capacity for success.

Thank you for allowing me to serve,

Sincerely,

Jenn VanDeVelde, President

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From OBGA Headquarters

Thanks to everyone who braved the elements to participate in our annual meeting on February 16th. It was a

snowy day and it delayed several folks but we did end up with over 100 in attendance and overall the day went very well.

There were some interesting highlights from the AGM portion of the meeting. The OBGA had not increased its membership fee in more than a dozen years and an increase of \$75 was moved and seconded only to have another member suggest an increase of \$100 to fall in line with the suggested base fee in the proposal being submitted to the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission. The increase to \$250 was strongly supported with no opposition.

Jenn VanDeVelde presented on the proposal that will soon be submitted to the commission with the news that the proposal would now be a joint submission between the OBGA and the Ontario Highbush Blueberry Growers Association. Jenn outlined the highlights of the proposal and there were a few questions but no opposition based on her presentation. Growers will have the final say as a vote will hopefully be held late in 2016 or early 2017.

The crazy weather continues and it looks like we may see more winter in March than we previously have had. We always wonder how the berry plants will overwinter and this year is no different with all the fluctuations in temperature. Let's keep our fingers crossed and think happy thoughts!

All the best!

Kevin Schooley

Achene Report

As presented at the OBGA AGM

The Achene Committee has been working on several initiatives this past year. Finding new varieties is important. As such, an agreement has been entered with Fresh Forward Marketing from the Netherlands to provide three European strawberry cultivars to licensed nurseries for propagation. Without getting into specifics, there is still some work to be done with the CFIA and the USDA, before all is finalized.

Also, the Committee has been working on a project with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to obtain six variety selections from Andrew Jamieson in Nova Scotia, for testing and performance. Again there have been some difficulties in the process, but work continues on it.

Becky Hughes hopes to retire in 2018, and has been investigating ideas to ensure that the propagation lab at New Liskeard remains open and active. Some research activities at that station have already been discontinued, and the possible closing of the unit in New Liskeard is of great concern.

There is a plan for a variety trial in Simcoe in 2016, but there is a lack of variety trials in Ontario. As such, Sandra Carther, an Ontario propagator and a member of the Achene Committee has made a proposal to the Committee to address that situation. As stated in part of the proposal: "There is a transition in production practices to include raised bed plasticulture systems, high tunnels and

greenhouse hydroponic systems, there is a need to evaluate a number of strawberry cultivars and their performance in each of the production systems." For this of course, money is required.

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This summer again, some members of the Committee will evaluate plants that are grown in the Plant Propagation Program. The strawberry plant evaluation is at Heeman's, and in Florida. The raspberry plants have been established in New Liskeard.

On behalf of the Committee, I extend thanks to Maribeth Fitts for doing the inspections this year, and my thanks to the Committee members, Becky Hughes, Sandra Carther, Bryan Durst, Kevin Howe, Jenn VanDeVelde, Tom Heeman, John Cooper, Pam Fisher, Adam Dale, and of course Kevin Schooley for all the work they have done.

The Committee will formally meet again in the early spring.

Best Regards

Andy Megens
Chair, Achene Committee

Mark Your Calendars

OBGA Biocontrols for Berry Growers
March 8, 2016
Springfield Golf Club, Guelph, ON
www.ontarioberries.com

International Strawberry Symposium
August 14-17, 2016
Quebec City, QC www.iss2016-quebec.org

North American Strawberry Growers Association Summer Tour
August 17, 18 2016
Quebec City, Quebec www.nasga.org

North American Strawberry Growers Association Annual Meeting and Conference.
December 5, 6, 2016
Grand Rapids, Michigan www.nasga.org

Great Lakes EXPO
December 6-8, 2016
Grand Rapids, Michigan
www.qlexpo.com/

Growing Raspberries in Tunnels and Greenhouses: basic concepts

Adam Dale,
Department of Plant Agriculture,
University of Guelph,
Simcoe, Ontario

Part 2
Cultivation of raspberries in tunnels and greenhouses is increasing world-wide as it offers the

advantages of early production and improved fruit quality. Probably the largest advantage is that many of the fungal diseases are reduced or eliminated, particularly the fruit rots so that the shelf-life of the fruit is significantly expanded. However, to understand how to grow raspberries under tunnels or in greenhouses successfully, the grower needs to understand the biology of the plant, and know something about the systems used in field production of raspberries. Here, in the last article, I explained the structure of a raspberry plant and discuss various aspects of flower initiation and dormancy as they relate to protected cultivation. Here, I will discuss such concepts as cane quality, cane density, within-plant competition, and trellising as they relate to 'long cane' production.

Cane Density

When the effect of cane number on yield is considered, the general trend is that yield per length of row increases until there are about 12-17 fruiting canes per metre. It then plateaus, and as the cane number increases starts to decrease. The optimum cane number of 12-17 per metre is for rows 2.4-2.7 m. apart. This translates into about 5-6 canes per m² of land area. Since most canes are fruited at about 1.5 m. tall, this would give a fruiting cane length of 7.5-9 m per m² of land area. This gives the grower a target cane length around which to design his system.

Berry size tends to become smaller the larger the number of fruiting canes in the row. Young first-year canes also affect yield through their competitive effect. The general

trend is that the larger the numbers of young canes, the lower the yield will be.

To optimize the cane density in a fruiting plantation, two aspects need to be considered: row spacing and cane density within the row. Research has shown that if the rows are planted closer together the yield will be higher on an area basis. In Ontario, depending on the type of trellising and the farm machinery used, raspberries can be planted as close as 1.8 m., although 2.4-2.7 m is usual. Inside tunnels and greenhouses, closer spacing between the rows can be used

Within-plant Competition

Within-plant competition can be altered by controlling the number of young canes that grow. There are three ways to control young cane growth and influence yields: an annual system, annual with cane vigour control, and biennial. In the annual system the young canes grow each year to fruit the following year. In the annual system with cane vigour control, the first flush of young canes is removed each year and a second flush is allowed to grow. In the biennial system, the fruiting phase is separated from cane growth. In the first year of the two year cycle only new canes are allowed to grow, in the second only fruiting canes are allowed to grow.

When the three systems are compared, there is a relationship between the vigour of the young canes and the yield of the fruiting canes; the more vigorous the first year cane, the lower the yield of the fruiting cane. The annual system

gives rise to tall first year canes and the fruiting canes only give moderate yield. In the annual system with cane vigour control, first year canes are moderately tall and the fruiting canes can give between 120% - 150% of the yields of the annual system. The biennial system has no first year canes in the fruiting year and the fruiting canes can give between 150%-250% of the yields of the annual system.

In the annual system with cane vigour control and the biennial system, first year canes are removed when they are between 10-20 cm high. For cane vigour control only the first flush of cane is killed, while in the biennial system the canes may have to be removed three or four times until the harvest season.

Trellising

With the raspberries in narrow rows and the new cane growth carefully controlled, the canes will need to be trellised to support the heavy crop. Trellising also increases picker satisfaction and efficiency, increases yields as more of the berries will be picked, and allows a lower disease pressure as the canopy will be more open. However, effort is needed to build the system which gives the grower a larger up-front cost. There are three ways to trellis raspberries; the conventional upright system, a "V" or "T-Bar" system, where the fruiting canes are supported at an angle, and the new Stiles system, which bends the cane into the row and moves them into the correct position at flowering.

The conventional system holds the raspberry canes in a single upright

row and makes picking considerably easier than if nothing is done. It allows narrow row spacing to be used but the young cane grows outside the fruiting canes. This type of system is the only one that can be used for machine harvesting of the crop at the moment. One possible method is to place 1.5m high posts, about 10m apart and hold the fruiting canes in a single line with two wires held together at about 50 cm from the ground. The fruiting canes are then tied singly or in bundles of 2 or 3 to a single wire about 1.3m from the ground.



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In the "V" system, the canes are separated to form two rows which are between 0.6-0.9m apart at their tips. This allows pickers to reach the fruit very easily, particularly as the young cane grows up between the fruiting canes. The yields from this system are higher per row than the

conventional system, but the rows need to be spaced further apart. One possible method is to place posts at the same distance apart as in the conventional method and a horizontal bar 0.6-0.9m long is attached to the post to make a "T" bar configuration. Single wires are then placed on the end of each arm and the canes tied to these wires.

In the Stiles system, designed by Dr Herb Stiles, VPI & SU, Virginia, the fruiting canes are supported on a swing trellis. This trellis is placed so that initially the fruiting cane is bent at about 45 cm by an off-set wire on one side of the row with the tip of the cane held equally off-set on the other side of the row. The fruiting laterals then grow towards the light onto one side of the cane. At flowering, when the lateral position has been set, the trellis is moved so that the fruiting cane becomes upright. This then presents all the fruit to one side of the row. In this system, the young cane will grow away from the fruiting canes towards the light. This system has many advantages as all the fruit is presented on one side unobstructed by the new canes.

Conclusions

We can learn how best to maximise yield in tunnels and greenhouses from research and growers experiences with field production of raspberries. So in tunnels and greenhouses, I have the following recommendations: keep the canes in the rows in a band no wider than 30cm, with at the most 1.8m between the rows; leave 7.5-9m of fruiting cane per m² of land area; control the vigour of the primocanes by removing the first flush when they

are 10cm tall; trellis the canes and consider the Stiles trellis.

However, for someone to grow a good crop of raspberries they need to understand the basic biology of the raspberry plant as this enables them to make good decisions regarding the plant husbandry. Also, careful attention to management factors such as trellising is required so that the plantings in tunnels and greenhouses are easily accessible for pickers to harvest the crop. In this and the first article, I have explained some of the basic biology of the raspberry and some of the standard cane management procedures. These, together with good plant and harvest management can make the raspberry a highly profitable crop in tunnels and greenhouses.



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The new ONfruit blog provides information on production and pest management for all fruit crops grown in Ontario. OMAFRA Fruit Specialists contribute to the blog and can answer technical questions you may have.

How to Win Markets and Influence Grocery Buyers

Bigger isn't always better in the eyes of one businessman.

"Why did we decide to focus on local? Because it's difficult for the big players to do." That's the business

strategy used by Jim Beveridge of B&H Your Community Grocer, an independent retailer in Kemptville. His grocery store uses its small size to its advantage in the David and Goliath struggle for market share and sales.

Grocery retailers, chefs, and other food buyers are looking for local product and they want to buy local says Jessica Kelly, a direct farm marketing specialist at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). “Yet, when it comes to buying from farmers and small food processors, they say there’s often a gap between what they need, when they need it, and how they do business” she adds.

OMAFRA has a one-day workshop in March bringing together farmers and small food processors to learn how to address those gaps.

Ministry specialists in business management, business development, food regulation and food safety can help business owners and managers learn more about different sales channels and how they work so participants can ultimately decide if there is an untapped sales channel that is right for their business. Each workshop is customized to local interests with subjects ranging from market channel opportunities, food regulations, food safety, pricing for profit, packaging and labelling. Participants will also learn where to get more information and support.

Your business might benefit from selling to a local grocery store or other retailer, a restaurant or public sector organization like a university

or school nutrition program. The key is to invest few hours to learn about different market opportunities and what customers expect. The Selling Food to Ontario workshop is available: March 2nd in Smiths Falls, March 3rd in Renfrew and March 9th in Vineland. Space is limited for this free workshop so register today at <http://www.ontario.ca/chbi>.

International Strawberry Symposium 2016 in Quebec City!

Moving strawberry science to new frontiers

Building on the success of past editions, the next ISHS International Strawberry Symposium will take place in Quebec City from the 13th to the 17th of August 2016. Known as the Olympics of strawberry, the next edition will be the meeting place of all those involved in the science and development of the strawberry industry worldwide.

We expect about 400 scientists for some 50 countries to meet during ISS2016. At the same time, a similar amount of industry stakeholders and progressive growers will meet to attend the Strawberry-Techtransfer conference to take place simultaneously to the scientific gathering. For the event, we have partnered with Veiling Hoogstraten to organize a special session on worldwide marketing opportunities and outcome for the years to come.

For more information visit the symposium website at <http://www.iss2016-quebec.org/>

Biocontrols for Berry Growers:

Improving the potential for successful biocontrol strategies on strawberry and raspberry farms



Agenda

Location:
Springfield Golf and Country Club
2054 Gordon Street, Guelph, ON

Date & Time:
Tuesday March 8th,
9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

9:00 a.m.	Welcome and introductions
9:15	<i>Opportunity for biocontrols on berry crops.</i> Liette Lambert-Greenhouse Vegetable and Berry Crop Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Quebec (MAPAQ)
10:15	<i>Discussion and COFFEE</i>
11:00	<i>Bio-fungicides- how they work and strengths and weaknesses.</i> Dr. Anissa Poleatewich, Research Scientist, Plant Pathology, Vineland Research and Innovation Center
11:30	<i>Encouraging beneficial insects and pollinators with naturalized habitat and landscape.</i> -Hannah Fraser, Entomology Program Lead, Horticulture Crops, OMAFRA
12:00	<i>Discussion</i>
12:15 p.m.	Lunch and more COFFEE
1:00	<i>Ordering and handling biocontrol agents.</i> Judy Colley, Biological Technical Representative, Plant Products
1:30	<i>Case study- control of root weevils with Nemasys (entomophagous nematodes).</i> Graham Shaw, Taylor Berry Farms
2:00	<i>Case study-Thrips and biocontrol at in our day-neutral strawberries.</i> Matt Tigchelaar, Tigchelaar Berry Farms
2:15	<i>Discussion</i>
2:30	<i>Commercially available predator mites, their strengths and weaknesses.</i> Cara McCreary, Greenhouse Vegetable IPM Specialist, OMAFRA
3:00—3:30	<i>Discussion + Thank you and goodbye</i>



Registration: \$75 OBGA Members, \$100 Non-members
Contact Kevin Schooley, at Ontario Berry Growers Association,
info@ontarioberries.com
or 613-258-4587

Pre-registration required. Space is limited .



**Biocontrols for Berry Growers
Springfield Golf and Country Club, Guelph
March 8, 2016**

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