



November 2011 NEWSLETTER

Presidents Report

Greetings from the East:

As the fall season progresses and the workload eases somewhat on the farm, Ria and I were doing some reflecting on the positives of our farm lifestyle. One aspect we both agreed on was the many benefits we have derived from being members of the OBGAs.

Each February we look forward to renewing our friendships with growers from across the province at our annual conference in St. Catharines. There is no better way to keep abreast of what is most current than to rub shoulders and exchange ideas for a few days with the people who are at the forefront of the industry. The return on investment in this event is huge.

Another aspect that has been very positive is the newsletter which gives us timely reminders of products, events, and things we need to do as well as info on new trends in our industry.

Speaking of trends, the association held its annual twilight meeting at the Jennen's' beautiful farm near Thamesville in September. Ellen and Peter are, in my opinion, trendsetters in terms of both production and marketing. They grow field crops for processing such as tomatoes and peppers, strawberries and raspberries under tunnels, and use a wide variety of marketing techniques to ensure that a maximum amount of what they grow finds its way to the consumer – the people who pay our wages. Thanks to

the Jennen's for a wonderful experience.

It is also good for us as growers to realize how fortunate we are to have Becky Hughes, Pam Fisher, Adam Dale, and of course, Kevin Schooley closely associated with our association. These four people have formed a solid foundation of technical expertise to assist your board of directors in making decisions on your behalf. Along with your board of directors they have made the OBGAs a very strong and useful association for berry growers.

On a personal note, Ria and I are retiring from growing raspberries and strawberries. We will very much miss our association with all of you across the province. We have decided to continue growing and marketing Christmas trees as our retirement project. All the best with your fall chores!

Sincerely,
Paul Ralph

From OBGAs Headquarters

The turnout at the Twilight Meeting at Jennen's was excellent. With a meeting held at one end of the province it was very rewarding to see 50 people in attendance. The twilight meeting has had very good attendance the past number of years and it is something I look forward to every year to get a chance to see a different farm operation and get to visit with members while the season is still fresh in all our memories. Thanks to Peter and Ellen for being such good hosts and if anyone has suggestions for a location for 2012 or would be willing to host the meeting please let me know.

Your education committee has been working hard on putting together a great program for both the OBGAs annual meeting and the berry session at the

Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention (OFVC). Both of these meetings will be held in Niagara Falls this year from February 21-23, 2012. More details will be coming forward but the main reason for the move was to accommodate a larger trade show and the new convention centre in Niagara Falls seemed like the next move for the popular OFVC. The trade show space is double the size of what was used at Brock and has potential to be 3 times as large. You will now be able to kick the tires of large equipment that could not be displayed in the past.

We had a great year with promotional items this year and although the OMIF program is now wrapping up we hope to access funds to keep the ball rolling. We have learned a lot over the past 2 plus years and want to carry on promoting local berries.

All the best!

Kevin

Achene Report

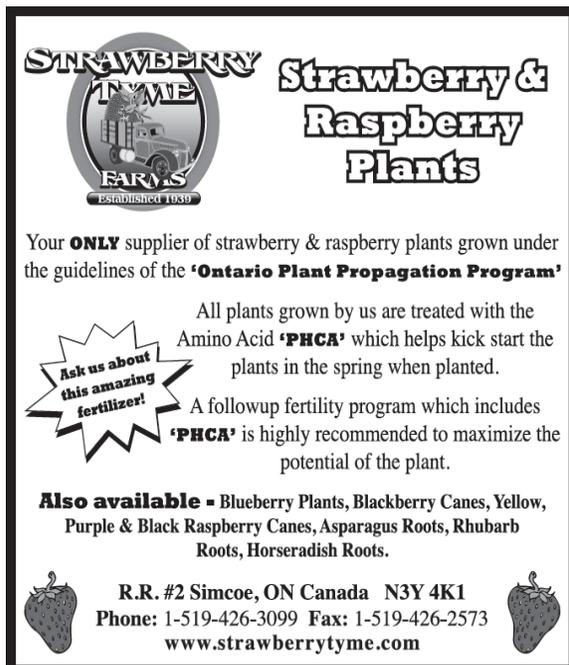
The reputation for the Ontario Plant Propagation Program continues to grow resulting in several orders from companies outside Ontario. The program was established to ensure Ontario plant propagators had a place to purchase disease free berry plants that are true to type. The Achene committee was somewhat concerned after the loss of one of the two propagators that it might be difficult to ensure the program could pay for itself

Over the past year there were 7 orders from nurseries outside Ontario. Becky Hughes has worked with the University of Florida and the Florida Seed Patent Service to establish an agreement that will see us working with them for years to come. There were also two repeat orders from Canadian nurseries and we are hopeful that these will continue and we can add a few more to our list. The bottom line is that we brought in more money than it cost to run the program last year so that money can be dedicated to things such as research.

The Achene committee continues to look for new cultivars to test and to add to our license agreements. As head licensee for the University of Guelph berry varieties we continue to see interest in these varieties from Europe and now South Africa. This is a long process but if a variety were to become popular in one of these areas it could bring in extra income for both the OBGA and the University of Guelph.

Through some cooperative work with the CFIA and the Achene committee raspberry plants can now be sold and shipped to the US. Hopefully there will be a good market opportunity for our propagator now and in the future.

The next challenge will be shipping plants to Europe. There are presently 3 different groups wanting strawberry



STRAWBERRY Tyme
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Strawberry & Raspberry Plants

Your **ONLY** supplier of strawberry & raspberry plants grown under the guidelines of the **'Ontario Plant Propagation Program'**

All plants grown by us are treated with the Amino Acid **'PHCA'** which helps kick start the plants in the spring when planted.

Ask us about this amazing fertilizer!

A followup fertility program which includes **'PHCA'** is highly recommended to maximize the potential of the plant.

Also available - Blueberry Plants, Blackberry Canes, Yellow, Purple & Black Raspberry Canes, Asparagus Roots, Rhubarb Roots, Horseradish Roots.

R.R. #2 Simcoe, ON Canada N3Y 4K1
Phone: 1-519-426-3099 Fax: 1-519-426-2573
www.strawberrytyme.com

plants to test. The CFIA has been a great partner on our other projects so hopefully together we will be able to get plants to those who want them.

Have a great fall

Sincerely,
Paul Watson
Achene Committee Chair

Membership

You will find a membership form included with the newsletter. The price remains the same as it has for the last 10 years or more. I truly believe this is a great value especially if you take advantage of some of the cost share promotion items.

Send your membership back as soon as possible! Otherwise it will end up in a pile somewhere and you will have to suffer with endless reminders from the OBGA office.

OBGA Website

We hope you like the new look and functionality of the new website. The website is a great marketing tool and we are now tracking the use patterns on the site.

The next time you are online go and have a look at your information to make sure you have the best listing possible. Navigating the site I am often disappointed at the lack of information listed under some farm operations especially if I know they have more to tell their customers.

Google maps is far from perfect so take a look at the map and let us know if it needs some adjusting. I am certainly missing my student assistant Erin who has mastered making changes to the website look very routine.

Dirty Money!

By Don Blakely, OMAFRA

When we think of dirty money we conjure up thoughts of ill-begotten dollars through illegal activities such as the drug trade or fraudulent activities. When it comes to food safety, dirty money is pathogen, fecal covered coins and bills. Just think of the number of hands money comes in contact with, which may or may not be clean. Plus money never gets washed so that contamination stays around for a long time.

It is refreshing to go into a sub shop and watch your order prepared by staff with gloves on which are then removed when they take your cash payment. The same cannot be said about stopping at a farmer's roadside produce stand and watching an attendant handle your purchase with dirty hands, collect your cash then proceed to service the next customer without any attention to washing their hands. If you have a roadside stand or sell at a farmer's market you can increase your customer's confidence in food safety by keeping your hands clean by washing them if running water and soap are readily available, using plastic gloves to handle produce then removing to handle cash or keeping a ready supply of disinfectant wipes and hand gel available which are used after handling cash.

The Canadian Government will soon be introducing new plastic bills, which in addition to being difficult to counterfeit could be laundered to clean them. Maybe then we can look forward to cleaner money but for now we are stuck with dirty money!

Passing of Donald Craig

Don passed away October 11, 2011 at age 87. For those who didn't know him or his work, he developed several important berry cultivars including

'Bounty', 'Kent', and 'Annapolis' strawberries and 'Nova' raspberry. He was the Wilder medal winner in 1990 from the American Pomological Society for "contributions in small fruit breeding" and won several other awards for his breeding work. He enjoyed his retirement years and continued to breed Rhododendrons and he established a very fine garden in which they were featured.

He will be missed by those who knew him.

Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) Update for Ontario Growers

By Pam Fisher, Hannah Fraser, Denise Beaton, OMAFRA

In recent weeks, spotted wing drosophila (SWD) populations have increased throughout Ontario. In late September, SWD was found at 8 new locations, including the first detections east of Toronto. As of October 12, 2011, SWD has been found at 22 agricultural sites in total, representing approximately 50% of currently monitored sites (Figure 1). SWD has been found in traps near peaches, apricots, raspberries, day-neutral strawberries, blueberries, grapes and blackberries. At a few sites where SWD has been present since early August, trap catches have increased dramatically in late September.

We have collected fruit from some unsprayed sites and reared SWD flies from this fruit, indicating that this pest does indeed infest fruit in Ontario. Fortunately, there have been no reports of problems with infested fruit on a commercial scale.

Harvesting is now complete in most fruit crops in Ontario; however, growers with fall fruiting raspberries, especially raspberries in high tunnels, should be on the lookout for a late season build-up of this pest.

Why is SWD a problem? SWD are like other vinegar flies; they lay eggs in fruit, where larvae develop and pupate. The difference is that normal vinegar flies, like the annoying ones you find in your fruit basket in late summer, are attracted to OVERRIPE or DAMAGED fruit, that is about to spoil anyway. By the time the larvae develop, the fruit is usually spoiled or mouldy. SWD is different in that it lays eggs in fruit that is RIPENING, or NEARLY MATURE. This means that SWD larvae may be present in fruit when it is harvested. Infested fruit breaks down very quickly, and is especially leaky, reducing the expected shelf life substantially. Consumers are likely to notice infested fruit because the larvae will try to escape from the fruit as it is cooked or frozen.

What crops are most affected?

Information from other regions suggests blackberries and raspberries are preferred hosts, followed by blueberries, strawberries and other soft-skinned fruit. Tender fruit, such as apricots, peaches, plums, and possibly tomatoes and some types of grapes are also potential hosts for this invasive pest.

Will SWD overwinter in Ontario? We expect a small percentage of SWD adults will overwinter in southern Ontario in most years. We expect they will overwinter in sheltered locations, such as around building foundations and wild hosts. We don't know how quickly populations will build up each year. Also, we have more to learn about alternate and wild hosts for SWD in the spring and early summer. We expect that wild raspberries, wild blackberries and possibly other wild fruit such as elderberries will provide reservoirs for this pest.

What can I do to prepare for next year?

Learn as much as you can about the pest. Think about how you can manage field culls and unharvested fruit to reduce build up during harvest.

Investigate options for custom spray application during harvest. Plan to attend some meetings where you can learn about experience in other regions. For example, Dr. Rufus Isaacs from Michigan State University will be speaking about this pest at the Ontario Berry Growers Association Annual Meeting in February.

Is there any good news? We are learning a lot about SWD from our colleagues in British Columbia, the Pacific Northwest, Michigan and Florida. The Ontario Berry Growers Association has secured some funding for us to expand our monitoring project next year. We will continue to monitor for this pest and provide the latest news and information in 2012. The other good news is that SWD is manageable. An effective IPM program will include monitoring, sanitation and pesticides applied when necessary.

More information: Do you have questions about SWD? More information is posted at the following sites:

Identification of SWD:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/pest-alert-swd.htm#id>

Monitoring program and weekly trap catches for Ontario:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/swd-catches.htm>

Management of SWD in Ontario:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/swd-management.htm>

Registered products for SWD in Ontario 2011:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/swd-registrations.htm>

Links to more information about SWD:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/swd-links.htm>

Still didn't find the info you are looking for? Send us your question and OMAFRA's SWD team will do their best to address it. Pam.fisher@ontario.ca, or hannah.fraser@ontario.ca

Equipment for Sale

Van Laecke Farms Inc is retiring from the raspberry business and has some equipment for sale

1) 2HP Copeland condensing unit, (FA 3 AD-B2 01-CFV-020-R22)
With -18lbs R22 refrigerant
A19ABC 24 thermostat
KUC 123A Evaporator
Plus all fittings
Used for 6 years & all new when purchased

2) 3 display tables with adjustable shelves, each having 2 positions 4 feet in width. Tables are on wheels

3) 1 open flag (like new) red & white

4) 2 carts on wheels with adjustable galvanize mesh shelves, used in cooler 4 1/2 ft. wide by 6 ft. tall

Please call 519 582 1358 or 519 688 8285 for more info.



Annual Meeting and Conference February 6-8, 2012 Harrah's Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV

Plans are well underway for the upcoming meeting of the North American Strawberry Growers Association. The meeting location is Harrah's Las Vegas which is in the heart

of "The Strip" on Las Vegas Boulevard. Not only is this a great location and a beautiful facility but the organizing committee has negotiated a fabulous rate of \$39.00 for a standard room.

The education program is nearing completion and there is a great line-up of speakers. Holding a meeting in the desert makes it difficult to do a farm tour so there is a real emphasis this year on highlighting and profiling several farm operations. Participants will be getting a chance to see and hear about farm operations in Vermont, Ohio, Ontario, Oregon and California.

Confirmed speakers include Marvin Pritts, Cornell University, Kirk Larson, University of California, David Handley, University of Maine, Gail Nonnecke, Iowa State University, Jim Luby, University of Minnesota and Kim Lewers USDA- ARS.

In addition there will be a focus on marketing including a workshop on social media and panel discussions on trends in marketing. As always there will be an opportunity to visit with exhibitors and there will be lots of opportunity of entertainment once the sessions are over.

For more information visit www.nasqa.org or call Kevin at the NASGA office 613-258-4587

Food Safety Audits and Record Keeping

By Colleen Haskins, OMAFRA

The requirement of having a food safety audit for farm production is increasing, and some of the major retailers are requesting a short turnaround time for these to be completed and producers to be certified. Produce commodities are classified into different risk categories, and some retailers are requiring high risk produce to be certified first. Audits are focused on the season in which the commodity is being produced, and

typically occur during harvest or packing. Many audits require a minimum of 3 months of records to be completed *prior* to an audit being conducted. However if nutrient applications were made in the previous fall for the next year's production, those records may be considered during an audit as well. With any food safety program, it is imperative to maintain and keep your records as proof of due diligence for your farm productions and often to be kept for 2 years at a minimum. *Contact your retailer or customer to verify which food safety program they require and the requirements for record keeping **before** you schedule your audit.* Now is the time to get started and the good news is, we can help! Food safety questions? Ask us. Visit our website for more food safety information and additional resources. www.ontario.ca/good-ag-practices

Mark Your Calendars!

The Annual Meeting of the OBGAs will be held on **Tuesday February 21st**. This year's meeting will be held at the **Embassy Suites by Hilton Fallsview Hotel**, located at 6700 Fallsview Blvd., Niagara Falls, Ontario.

There is lots of space at this hotel and thus everyone can be at one location

The convention rate is \$125/night + taxes and includes:

- A spacious two room suite overlooking the famous Horseshoe Falls
- Complimentary daily buffet breakfast with cooked-to-order omelet station
- Complimentary parking!
- 2 complimentary drink tickets per night!

To book your room call 1-800-420-6980.

Please refer to "Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Convention" rates.