

WBPANS 2013 Annual General Meeting



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The Shoreline Journal

Over 200 people attended the Wild Blueberry Producers Association of Nova Scotia (WBPANS) AGM at the Glengarry Hotel in Truro, Friday, Nov. 22nd and 23rd.

WBPANS President Peter Van Dyk opened the meeting reflecting on the past season. "For the most part we can say it was a successful year, even though our overall produc-

tion was down a little," he said. "It was a good year, with the price holding well."

This year's crop is estimated at 37.5 million pounds, with over 44,000 acres in production.

The new Dean, Faculty of Agriculture and Principal, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, Dr. David Gray was one of the opening speakers.

He told producers, "He was proud of the ongoing partnership with WBPANS, proud of the support given us and the support we give you." He noted the University is currently recruiting a week specialist.

Minister of Agriculture, Keith Caldwell, stopped by for a few moments to offer his appreciation and support, say-

ing the Wild Blueberry Producers are really setting the standard high for the rest of Industry.

Alice Pugsley presented the Promotion Committee Report, highlighting a very successful Wild Blueberry Harvest Festival with over 1000 people attending the Festival kickoff and very successful promotion at

Saltscapes Expo in April. Looking ahead, the committee hopes to put more emphasis on Wild Blueberry Fund Raising Projects for schools and sports teams.

Peter Burgess, Perennia, updated growers on the Best Management Practices Web Portal, where a wealth of information can be found at . There is also a Wild Blueberry Blog at , which provides updates in crop development, observations in the fields and reminders about management practices.

Burgess also drew attention to changes in the WB production system in the last 10 years. He highlighted 3 areas of concern- 1) The Spotted Wing Drosophila, 2) Botrytis and 3) Leaf Rust, noting all three need to be managed. He also noted results from the Cost of Production Study seem to indicate there is not much difference in cost/acre on different sizes of farms; the yield/acre is the deciding factor.

All bugs are not created equal! Dr. Chris Cutler gave an informative talk on using natural enemies to control pest populations and the benefits of biological controls. Some interesting research is being carried out, with the potential for applications in the wild blueberry fields.

Vehicle Compliance personnel, Joseph Young referred growers to the Transportation Rules & Regulations for NS Farmers for detailed information but stressed the importance of load security, saying farmers

often think, "that'll never go anywhere", until it does!

The Spotted Wing Drosophila update by Dr. Debra Moreau was not all bad news. The flies have been detected throughout Atlantic Canada and are on the move, but numbers did not cause undue hardship this past year. She recommends diligent monitoring and good sanitation practices (harvest promptly, destroy any damaged fruit and cleaning processing and packing areas). Extensive research is continuing across Canada.

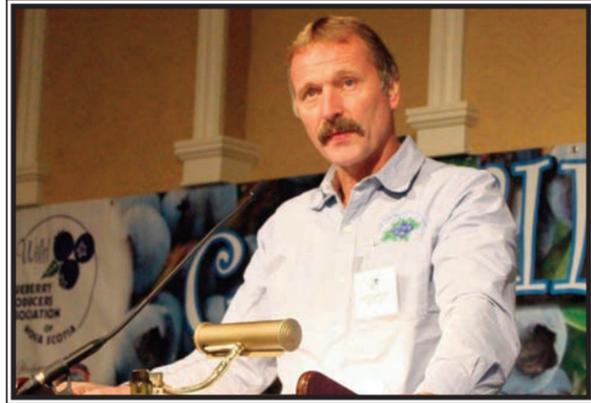
Some Sheep Sorrel has become resistant to Velpar, says Scott White, and producers need to use management strategies to reduce or prevent flowering, keep machinery clean to avoid spreading and use herbicide rotation.

Dr. David Percival, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, gave an update on crop year management of floral blights and leaf diseases. He stressed the need to be pro-active and provide coverage before infection with Moilinia and Botrytis occurs, while managing other diseases at the same time, in order to optimize yield potential.

He said the good news is there are solutions for each of the leaf diseases. Research information can be found at .

Peter Rideout, NSDA, gave a market update. Quebec had a much smaller crop this year at 40 Million pounds, but Maine was strong with 90 million, followed by NS (37.5)

continued on page 18



Peter Van Dyk, President of WBPANS, welcome everyone to the 2013 WBPANS Annual General Meeting.



Dr. Chris Cutler provided information on increasing the use of biological controls in wild blueberry fields and research with the Canadian Pollination Initiative.



Dr. David Gray, the new Dean, Faculty of Agriculture and Campus Principal, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus was the opening speaker at the Annual Meeting.



Peter Van Dyk makes a comical presentation to Exec. Director Dave Sangster. Dave is retiring from his position as Executive Director at the end of this year. A "Meet & Greet" will be held in Dave's honor on Jan. 16th. from 4:00- 7:00PM at Jenkins Hall, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture.

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