

Wild Blueberry Association of Nova Scotia 2019 Annual Meeting

Photos by Linda Harrington

Wild Blueberry Technical Sessions

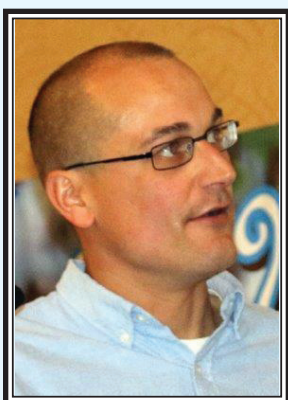
Sheep Sorrell Comprises 98% of 211 Weed Species

By Linda Harrington



Jeff Orr

Jeff Orr opened the Technical Session of WBPANS Conference with an interactive activity for producers to indicate individual priorities for wild blueberry research. These top 15 issues ranged from foliar nutrition to wildlife predation and the results would help give direction to the Research Committee as they make decisions to help get the industry to the next level.



Dr. Scott White, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture.

Dr. Scott White, Weed Specialist, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture presented results from 165 wild blueberry fields surveyed across Nova Scotia. In 1985, they were 119 different plant species recorded in fields and in 2019 there were 211. The most common was Sheep Sorrell (98%), followed by Poverty Oat Grass (93%) and Narrow Leaf Golden Rod (78%). Spring application of Spartan in the sprout year seems to be working better than fall application for Sheep Sorrell, as it controls the

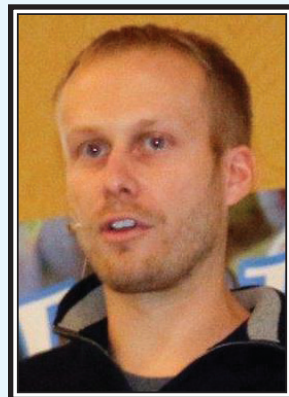
seedlings. It was recommended not to go after Poverty Oat too aggressively or Sheep Sorrell will take its place. Two applications of Callisto seem to be the best treatment for Narrow Leaf Goldenrod, one in the sprout year about the third week of May and the other about mid-June. Of course, as with all herbicides, check with processors for allowable products.



Dr. Chris Cutler, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture.

Bees are important pollinator in the wild blueberry industry and controlling insects

while not harming the bees should always be top of mind. Dr. Chris Cutler, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture, noted pesticides have come along way but risk assessment is always needed. Two important considerations are toxicity and exposure. "The dose makes the poison," says Dr. Cutler, who noted even table salt can be a poison at a certain dose. Anyone spraying insecticides should be familiar with the Risk Quotient Chart (RQ) for bees, read the label on the chemicals, avoid drift, avoid spraying during bloom when bees are most active and spray late in the day or early morning if possible.



Dr. Travis Esau, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture.

A Performance Evaluation for an Automated Color Sorter was presented by Dr. Travis

Esau, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture. Dr. Esau had informative slides on the eight steps in the processing line. Berries are first input on a conveyor and then put through a winder or blower fan to get out most of the leaves and debris. The berries then pass along a sizing belt, which can be adjusted in size depending on the market. A tilt table sorts out anything that rolls, sending clumps of berries to another processing. As berries pass the Impulse Soft Sorter, over-ripe berries are sent to another processing. The color sorter comes into the line in the sixth step, using camera technology to sort the ripe blueberries from unripe green or pink berries. The berries are finally manually picked over for anything that might have gotten missed and then filled in packages for the retail market.

Processed berries have an average of 0.9% debris, 9.1% unripe berries, 11.4% soft berries leaving 78.6% berries for the retail market.

Dr. David Percival, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture says there has not been much change in the 2020 portfolio for disease management. The structure of the wild blueberry blossom is important, not only from a pollination prospective (hard to pollinate for bees) but for fungicide ap-



Dr. David Percival, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture.

plication. The interior ovary means some tissue will be exposed during bloom, and could result in a residue, making it important to time applications. Check with processors or end users when using any pest control as some require zero residue.

Apiculture Tech Transfer team have been busy over the last year with research into queen rearing, pollination, pollination supplementation, Nosema, Miticides and other areas.

Visit <https://www.perennia.ca/portfolio-items/honeybees/> for updated information and results.



The 2020 WBPANS Board of Directors include: Front (left to right)- John Cameron, Janet Geldart, Don Mingo, Barron Blois, Peter Van Dyk, Jeff Orr; Back (left to right)- Neil Erb, Peter Swinkels, Alice Pugsley, Mark Austin, Peter Rideout. Missing from photo were Jonathan Millen, Jeff Perrin and Joe Slack.

Chef Alain Bossé - Wild Blueberry Champion

By Linda Harrington

Alain Bossé, also known as the Kilted Chef, has travelled the world from kitchens to convention centres sharing his expertise and love for buying

and eating local ingredients with people near and far. With his signature tartan kilt, proud Acadian heritage and undeniable flair for cooking with local, he has earned a reputa-

tion as Atlantic Canada's culinary ambassador.

Chef Alain says he has been a fan of wild blueberries since he was a young boy, growing up eating a lot at home. "I'm crazy about wild blueberries, they have an explosion of flavour and they are so darn good. This is a testament to you farmers," said Chef Alain at the recent Wild Blueberry Producers of Nova Scotia's (WBPANS) AGM banquet.

Chef Alain is a Wild Blueberry Champion, helping show the world how to taste blueberries in a different way. "Your product is the best in the world, and I will represent you with pride," he said referencing several prestigious culinary events where he attended and featured wild blueberries on the menu.

WBPANS invited Chef Alain to showcase wild blueberry recipes during the AGM at Best Western Glengarry, and the conference chef and culinary staff graciously accepted his offer to join them in the kitchen.

The meals received rave reviews with wild blueberries taking center stage in each course from salads, to main course and dessert.

CTV Atlantic has recently aired What's for Dinner segments with Chef Alain preparing Wild Blueberry recipes, the latest being pan fired haddock with a wild blueberry pepper sauce.

This recipe can be found at <https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/what-s-for-dinner/pan-fried-haddock-with-wild-blueberry-peppered-sauce-1.4662672>



Alain Bossé, also known as the Kilted Chef is a Champion of wild blueberries. He was invited to the WBPANS Conference at the Best Western Glengarry and he put his culinary expertise to work in the kitchen.



Wild blueberry meal from start to finish! So many ways to add wild blueberries to your diet, from the morning coffee break with wild blueberry scones to the scrumptious lunch with salads and sandwiches bursting with the tasty berries, and an apple wild blueberry crisp for dessert.

\$930,000 Support for Wild Blueberries

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a wild blueberry smoothie featuring plant-based protein. Fundy Drinks developed a wild blueberry sparkling water drink under their VIVEAU brand resulting in a blend of Nova Scotia wild blueberries and lightly carbonated mineral water.

VIVEAU is committed to supporting local growers and picking the highest quality fruit. The fresh fruit varieties are sourced from Nova Scotia orchards. Blueberries, cherries and apples are picked at the peak of ripeness to harness their pure, natural taste without added sugars, preservatives, or artificial flavours.

Research has shown compared to cultivated high bush blueberries, wild blueberries have 39% more healthy antioxidants per serving and over twice as many as strawberries or blackber-

ries making wild blueberries one of the healthiest foods people can eat.

The Wild Blueberry Producers Association of Nova Scotia has tested new automated equipment using lasers to sort fresh wild blueberries. The pilot project at Millen Farms, Great Village represents new and ongoing research and development being supported by the province. Commenting on the project, Brandon Millen said, "This project enabled us to pack a better-quality fresh blueberry with reduced labour. This has enabled us to get real knowledge on whether this technology could work for wild blueberries." The Shoreline Journal is planning in an upcoming issue to present greater detail about another Colchester company being at the forefront of research and development to improve efficiencies and product quality.

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