



Peter Rideout, Senior Planning and Development Officer, Nova Scotia Dept. Agriculture, explained factors affecting the market outlook for wild blueberries. Currently the demand exceeds the supply, resulting in a slightly higher price for producers.



Doug Wyllie, WBPANS Research Committee Chair, made a special presentation to Jack Rudolph. Jack developed the wild blueberry sweepnet in the early 1980's and these nest have been use every since.



WBPANS Past President, Neil Erb (left) and President John Quinn (right) presented Case van Dyk (center) with an award in recognition of his valuable contribution to the Wild Blueberry Industry.



Neri Vautour, WBANA Executive Director, shows Michael Hodgson a variety of wild blueberry products available around the world.

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crops this year because of a lower total volume of wild and cultivated crops. "In years when the price is down, you must be competitive in growing at a price markets will demand," says Dr. Yarborough.

Peter Burgess, from Agra Point, said researchers are keeping a keen eye on a new pest, the spotted wing drosophila. This insect has the potential to damage any soft fruit, similar to a fruit fly, and has been found in significant numbers in Ontario.

Producers were updated on results which indicate it is beneficial to put inputs into their crops, even if the price is down. Prices dropped two years ago (2009) and some producers decided to cut costs by reducing inputs such as pest management. The negative results were obvious this year, when these same fields were harvested, and crop yields were lower than normal.

The total harvest in Nova Scotia has been on a declining trend, with 28 million pounds this year, down from 33 million in 2009. Wild blueberry production on a whole is increasing, with an estimated 216.5 million pounds in 2011.

Peter Rideout, Senior Planning and Development Officer, Nova Scotia Dept. Agriculture, said the current demand for wild blueberries exceeds supply, thanks to the development of new products, such as smoothies, which have been driving the frozen fruit demand. He said there is a good demand for North American Wild Blueberries in places such as Europe and Japan because of the competitive pricing, superior quality and a consistent supply.

Producers were told future prices will depend on inventory, how much cultivated fruit is moved to processing, the stability of key markets and the rate of development of new markets.

One of the key market challenges continues to be differentiating wild blueberries from comparative fruits by highlighting the superior flavor, quality and health benefits. Medical research continues into the positive effects on aging, cancer prevention, urinary tract health, vision and more.

The 41st Annual WBPANS Banquet was held on Nov. 18th. Jack Sibley and Case van Dyk were recognized for their valuable contributions to the Wild Blueberry Industry. Their names will join 21 others in the Recognition Book.



The latest in wild blueberry harvesting equipment was on display outside the Best Western Glengarry during the annual meeting.

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- 3) **Roadside Mower** - Single head, side mount mower 5-foot head. There are 25 units in operation throughout Nova Scotia. Units are used in bush cutting operations and roadside mowing in the State of Maine.
- 4) **Excavator Mower** - Single head, boom mount mower has 5-foot head. Head is mounted to the excavator boom using existing bucket mounting pins enabling mower head to mow contour of the ditches.
- 5) **Highway Median Mower** - BMM-5 median mower is a combination of 2 mid-mount 5-foot side mowers mounted on left and right sides of 90 HP tractor unit and 2 five-foot heads with 1 four-foot head mounted under a tow frame with a total cut path of 21'6". All heads are independently raised and lowered.
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- 7) **Cranberry Harvester** - This is the latest addition of Doug Bragg Enterprises's lineup of custom manufactured products. This machine is intended for dry picking cranberries with as little waste as possible and with virtually no damage to the bog. The ground pressure with the recommended setup is less than a foot print of an adult of average size.

