



Cranberry Station Newsletter

DECEMBER 2001

UMASS CRANBERRY EXPERIMENT STATION

1 STATE BOG ROAD

P.O. BOX 569

EAST WAREHAM, MA 02538

<http://www.umass.edu/umext/programs/agro/cranberries>

Cranberry Station News Update

Winter meeting Changes

As we mentioned in the last newsletter, we have rearranged our winter meeting schedule to combine the cranberry management training workshop (previously the cranberry school) with the research and extension update (previously held in March) into a single "Cranberry Management Update" meeting. The second announcement for the meeting, to be held on January 15th in Plymouth, is in this newsletter.

Station faculty will report on current projects and issues and new management options. Guest speakers will discuss pollination and business planning, and a grower panel will lead a discussion of new or revisited ground-application methods and technologies. During breaks, we will present posters showcasing Cranberry Station and UMass Dartmouth Research Projects. We hope that this format will provide you with useful information, pesticide credits, and a chance to reconnect with the research community with a minimum of time commitment. Pesticide credits will be offered. This will also be your first opportunity to meet our new faculty member, Environmental Plant Physiologist Justine Vanden Heuvel.

Please be advised that this is the only for-credit workshop that the Station will sponsor this winter. We do plan to offer a pesticide safety workshop with contact hours in April.

As in 2001, we will organize Bogside Chats at grower farms and at State Bog during the 2002 season.

Cranberry Chart Book Revisions

We anticipate few major changes in the Chart Book for 2002, although some newly registered pesticides will be added. For example, SpinTor is now under a full Section 3 registration for use on cranberry.

Given time constraints and staff reductions in the industry, we have decided to cancel the formal Chart Revision meeting for this year. Instead, Station staff will revise the Chart Book in consultation with pesticide companies, local ag vendors, and the Cranberry Institute.

Despite the lack of a formal meeting, we want to be sure that growers have an opportunity to comment on Chart Book content and issues. If you have comments or input that you wish to provide, please visit or call Marty (x20), Hilary (x21), Frank (x18), or Carolyn (x25). You can also forward any comments to Hilary by email at hsandler@umext.umass.edu. In addition you can visit with us at the Management Update Meeting or attend Frank's fruit rot summit — see announcements in this newsletter.

We hope to go to press by mid-February, so please provide comments by the end of January to insure inclusion in the revision.

CAROLYN DEMORANVILLE
ACTING DIRECTOR

Saving the Osprey

Joey Mason, Research Assistant in Cranberry IPM Program at the Station, has developed the Raptor Retrofit Project. This project provides information and equipment so growers can prevent bird electrocutions due to contact with utility wires. The project is funded by the Cranberry Research Foundation through grants from several other sources.

Raptors, particularly osprey, consider utility poles, especially those near cranberry reservoirs or other wetlands, excellent nesting sites. Unfortunately, proximity to electric lines has resulted in injury and even mortality for the birds. As part of the Raptor Retrofit Project, growers are retrofitting dangerous utility poles with anti-nesting devices, providing alternative perching areas on poles, and establishing alternative nesting poles nearby. These actions continue to provide essential osprey habitat while protecting the birds from the danger of electrocution. As part of this project, over 100 privately owned utility poles in the Southeastern Massachusetts cranberry region have been identified as qualifying for the 'raptor friendly' conversion.

Cranberry growers have encouraged the return of osprey in the region by providing nesting structures for the birds adjacent to freshwater reservoirs, used by the birds as fishing grounds. Unfortunately, as the osprey population has grown, the likelihood of the birds perching and nesting on active utility poles has also increased. This has intensified the danger of electrocution for the birds and power outages for the bog systems. These utility poles, used to power critical irrigation pumps, are essential to the operation of the bogs. This is the problem addressed by the Raptor Retrofit Project — How can growers maintain essential utilities on their bogs while safely providing nesting habitat for the osprey?

Joey initiated the Raptor Retrofit Project to answer this question. In the past, Joey had worked on wildlife enhancement projects with growers, including providing nesting boxes for Eastern Bluebirds and American Kestrels. Joey has also assisted growers in putting up nesting platforms to encourage osprey on their properties. Now growers have come to Joey to solve the problem of bird endangerment by live utility poles.

Joey has teamed up with Bob Hartman of Kaddas Enterprises, Inc., a manufacturer of wildlife protection devices that have been used to make utility structures 'raptor friendly' for over 10 years. The Retrofit Program is the first major project for Kaddas in the Northeast. Kaddas is supporting experimentation with a prototype anti-nesting device to be installed on dangerous poles and has donated many of the materials used in the Project. In addition to the efforts of Joey and Kaddas, D.A.D. Line Construction, a private utility line construction company in Carver, has been instrumental in addressing the needs of the cranberry growers and osprey.

The Cranberry Research Foundation has also played a major role by soliciting and administering the funding necessary to carry out the Raptor Retrofit Project. In light of the economic situation many growers are facing, the Cranberry Research Foundation jumped at the opportunity to assist Joey in her efforts to help the cranberry growers as well as the ospreys. Funding has been received from USDA, The Norcross Wildlife Foundation, and the Nuttall Ornithological Club, as well as from individual donors and businesses. As a result, those growers who could not otherwise afford to retrofit the utility poles on their property, will now have the opportunity to do so. The Project will enable cranberry growers to make their utility poles a safer haven for the birds and help prevent detrimental power losses by providing the funds and materials necessary to make their utility poles 'raptor friendly'.

To find out more about how you can safeguard raptors, contact Joey Mason at extension 27.

WORKER PROTECTION TRAININGS CRANBERRY STATION LIBRARY 2 - 4 PM

Worker Protection Trainings for cranberry workers in the Handler category will be offered in the spring of 2002: March 27, April 24, May 29, and June 26. Anyone working on the bog must be trained unless they are a family member or already have a pesticide license. There will be a \$5.00 charge that includes training book and EPA verification card. Contact Martha Sylvia: 508-295-2212, ext. 20 for additional information.

Business Planning Course for Farmers to be Offered by DFA

The Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture is once again offering the full 10 Session course "Tilling the Soil of Opportunity" to existing Massachusetts agricultural enterprises. Please note that you must have some commercial farming experience to qualify - this course is not for start-up or pre-venture farms with less than 2 years of business experience. If you fit the latter category, we can put you in touch with other similar training opportunities.

Three locations will run courses this year - Pittsfield, Dartmouth and the greater Lowell area - all beginning in December or January and all concluding in March.

New this year is an additional orientation session with help to clarify your historical financial picture so you can make new decisions going forward more effectively. Participants will develop a comprehensive business plan during the course, with sessions covering resource clarification, legal issues, marketing, financial management and loan tracking, product selection, and personnel allocation. The process encourages enterprise budgeting, so that you can see which farm activities are or can be most profitable among the list of things you do or are thinking about.

All 30 farmers who took these courses last winter gave them high marks, and both Instructors from those courses have returned. The cost is \$150 per business, including all materials and an opportunity to receive free individual technical assistance in areas of greatest need.

Contact Rick Chandler at MDFA - (413) 577-0459 or rhandler@umext.umass.edu for an application or more information.

PESTICIDE SAFETY WORKSHOP Date and Location to be announced

This new training will be a concise session on "what you need to know" regarding the safe and effective use of pesticides. It is being offered in April in place of the Beginners Cranberry School, which will not be offered this year. Recertification credits will be offered.

Fruit Rot Meeting

The informal meeting to discuss what happened this past growing season and what to do in preparation for the 2002 growing will take place on Tuesday, January 15 at 2:30 pm in the library at the Cranberry Experiment Station. This is the same day as the Cranberry Management Update scheduled to conclude at 1 pm. There should be ample time for lunch and travel to East Wareham. I am hopeful people will be willing to share war stories and enlighten us with what was successful and what was unsuccessful. I would like for this to be a session where we can all learn something. It is hopeful that afterward I will be able to explain some presently unexplainable scenarios and this should also be helpful in shaping my future research program.

Several people have expressed an interest in attending and I hope this day and time is acceptable to most of you. If you have not contacted me about attending, please do so because I want to be certain that the library will be a suitable location. No recertification credits will be offered. This is primarily an opportunity to try to figure out "What happened?"

FRANK L. CARUSO
PLANT PATHOLOGY

UMass Cranberry Experiment Station
1 State Bog Road, P.O. Box 569
East Wareham, MA 02538
(508) 295-2212 FAX (508) 295-6387

Dr. Carolyn DeMoranville, Acting Director

December 2001 Issue

Deborah Cannon, Editor

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UMass Extension Mailing Signoff

Dr. Carolyn DeMoranville, Acting Director

**CRANBERRY MANAGEMENT UPDATE
SHERATON INN, PLYMOUTH
Tuesday, January 15th, 2002 8 AM - 1 PM**

This new training is a straight forward session on “what you need to know” to grow cranberries effectively and economically. It is being offered as an alternative to the Cranberry Production Training and the Research & Extension Update Meetings, which will not be offered this year.

The usual aspects will be covered -- insects, weeds, disease, nutrition, and water management. This meeting will offer an opportunity for the Cranberry Station faculty and staff to present areas of research that have reached the grower-implementation stage. Invited guest speakers will discuss pollination and marketing.

\$10.00 charge includes a morning coffee, a mid-morning coffee break and handouts. Pesticide re-certification credits for the cranberry category will be offered - 4 contact hours.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

ALTERNATIVE PRACTICES--*CAROLYN DeMORANVILLE*

CRANBERRY DISEASE MANAGEMENT--*FRANK CARUSO*

POLLINATORS AND POLLINATION - *DAN SCHIFFHAUER*
OCEAN SPRAY CRANBERRIES

Coffee break with poster session

GROUND APPLICATIONS - *PANEL DISCUSSION*

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING - *TONY VIEIRA, UMASS-D*

INSECT MANAGEMENT - *ANNE AVERILL*

PERENNIAL WEED CONTROL - *HILARY SANDLER*

Please register using form on the page 5.

**UMass-Dartmouth Offers Continuing Education
Series on Agricultural Businesses**

Listed below are 8 different workshops being offer by UM-Dartmouth during the winter of 2002.

- * Computer Training for Agricultural Businesses (\$49). Jan 7-10, 2002.
- * Introduction to the Internet for Agricultural Businesses (\$29). Jan 8, 2002.
- * Quickbooks Pro for Agricultural Businesses (\$179). Jan 15-31, 2002 T,&Th. 5-9 PM.
- * Financial Management Seminar: Agricultural Businesses (\$29). Feb 5, 2002.
- * Financial Management Seminar: Selling Development Rights (\$29). Feb 7, 2002.
- * Agricultural Marketing (\$49). Feb 12-14, 2002, T&Th.
- * Seminars on Developing Your Business Vision: Agricultural Business (\$29). Feb 19, 2002.
- * Seminars on Developing Your Business Vision: Equestrian Business Law (\$29).
Jan 24, 2002. 1-4 PM.

All workshops are from 6-9 PM unless otherwise noted. For further information on these workshops, please contact Tony Vieira by phone: 508.999.8744, email: avieira@umassd.edu, or visit the Cranberry Station web page.

**Registration Form for Cranberry Production Training
 Tuesday, January 15, 2002 8 AM - 1 PM
 Plymouth Sheraton**

Please register for the meeting using this form.

COMPANY _____

CONTACT _____

PHONE _____

NAMES OF ATTENDEES _____

Return complete form with payment by:

January 7th, 2002.

Include check made out to:

UMASS

In the amount of:

\$10 per person.

Return to: **Cranberry Experiment Station**

P.O. Box 569

East Wareham, MA 02538

Attach additional sheets as necessary.

CRANBERRY STATION NEWSLETTER RENEWAL

YOU MUST RETURN THIS FORM TO STAY ON MAILING LIST!!

FREE TO ALL MA GROWERS, CRANBERRY RESEARCHERS, AND IPM CONSULTANTS NATIONWIDE

The Cranberry Station Newsletter is provided **free to all MA growers, cranberry researchers and IPM consultants nationwide**. **Subscription fee of \$15** (for a single one-year subscription) is required for **out-of-state growers and industry personnel**. All persons wishing to receive this newsletter (whether paying or not) must complete and return this renewal form to maintain a subscription. Include a check (made out to UMass) with the renewal form if you are out-of-state or are industry personnel. **All out-of-state subscriptions sent by email are FREE**.

**Everyone must respond to this notice by Dec. 31, 2001
 or your name will be taken off of our mailing list for 2002!**

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What's with this Weather?

I hope you have been enjoying the lovely spring (!?) weather lately. Unfortunately, the warm and dry spell may not be as good for the cranberry plants. According to our records, we have experienced 3 drought periods (24 or more days with less than 1/2 inch of rain) since late August — Aug. 21 to Sept. 20, Sept. 23 to Oct. 16, and Oct. 26 to Nov. 25. Some rain between these periods was helpful in providing enough water for harvest but water supplies for winter are starting to show the effects. Even worse, some growers reported signs of drought stress late in October on beds that were not flooded for harvest or irrigated for frost during the fall (basically, new beds or out-of-production beds).

The warm weather may be even more troubling in the long run. You may remember that we had a fall like this in 1989 followed by a severe cold snap in December. The 30% below average crop in 1990 was most likely the result of those events. I am very concerned that we may be heading for a similar situation this year.

Our research has shown that the ability of cranberry buds to withstand cold increases through the fall as dormancy deepens in response to cold weather cues. When it is this warm (particularly above 55°F), hardiness may be delayed. Several years ago, we saw sub-lethal effects at 15°F in December after a warm fall. What does all this mean? It is possible that buds would be damaged if in the next week or so, temperatures dropped below 20°F. Normally, we would not worry about such temperatures unless the ground was frozen and other winterkill conditions were present for several days in a row. But with potentially reduced hardiness, actual freeze damage (as opposed to winterkill, a desiccation injury) may occur below 20°F if we don't move into the cold weather gradually. The most risk is in a severe drop right after a warm spell.

What can we do? This is where the drought may continue to be a problem. The best protection would be to apply the winter flood quickly when the forecast calls for below 20°F. Quick flooding may be problematic where water levels are low. Let's hold a good thought that temperatures drop gradually and that we get some significant rainfall soon.

Happy Holidays, CAROLYN DEMORANVILLE

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