### Title: Sustainable Fruit Production

### ****Project Leader: Sonia Schloemann****

## Project Overview

## Fruit farms and vineyards provide open space and scenic vistas that add significantly to the quality of life in Massachusetts. The lands surrounding agricultural production provide buffer zones for native species of plants and animals and corridors for their movement or expansion. To remain a vital part of the Massachusetts economy, both new and established growers must learn to produce crops sustainably and to adapt production systems to market opportunities. New varieties provide fruit farmers with opportunities for enhancing production, quality, sales and consumption. UMass Extension provides farmers with access to current research information on new and alternative species and varieties, advanced horticultural management techniques, marketing and business management strategies, pest-ecology, and pest-management procedures. Research on pest ecology and management informs approaches that optimize control, reduce chemical use and increase fruit quality. The knowledge and resources provided by Extension forge successful partnerships with Massachusetts’s fruit producers that in turn foster a more secure, diverse and healthful food supply for the Commonwealth.

## Activity Summary - 2012

## Write, edit, publish New England Grape Notes Newsletter (10)

## Applied research on advanced IPM for apples (1)

## New England Fruit and Vegetable Conference (1)

## Workshops on small fruit production for commercial growers, master gardeners & high school students (40)

## Conduct Twilight/On-Farm Meetings(11)

## Cold hardy wine and table grape production demonstration (3)

## Edit New England Tree Fruit Management Guide Chapter (1)

## Field trials: Commercial production practices for Schisandra chinensis (Asian native vine)(1)

## Grower visits/consultations (788)

## Produce and maintain New England Wine Grape Growers’ Resource Center Website(1)

## Published reports and articles (26)

## Teach field component for undergraduate course in Small Fruit Production (1)

## Undergraduate Internship Supervisor in small fruit production at Cold Spring Orchard (1)

## Varietal trials for cold hardy wine grape production (1)

## Publish “Healthy Fruit” Newsletter (19)

## Publish Fruit Notes newsletter (4)

## Publish Massachusetts Berry Notes Newsletter (12)

### *Educational contacts*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Adult Contacts | Youth Contacts |
| In Person | 5,012 | 23 |
| Indirect Contacts (Print, Web, etc…) | 2,009 | 0 |

## Narrative Summary - 2012

Through its programming, the Sustainable Fruit Production and Marketing team addressed four main issue areas in FY2012.  They were:

* Integrated Pest Management,
* Economically Viable Food Production,
* Environmentally Sustainable Food Production
* Safe, Local Food

In advancing these priorities, the team conducted programming in Research/Demonstration and Outreach/Education.  Research and Demonstration activities included projects at the UMass Cold Spring Orchard Research and Education Center as well as at cooperating grower farms.  Twenty-seven projects were carried out at the UMass Cold Spring Orchard and another six projects were conducted at multiple cooperating grower sites.  Outreach/Education activities included hosting and maintaining websites, producing publications (print and online), organizing and conducting day-long and multi-day conferences, delivering educational presentations and trainings, and one-on-one consultations with growers (by email, phone and in person).

Research and Demonstration projects resulted in the publication of 23 articles and were the subject of numerous field day presentations and on-farm tours.  The fruit program had primary responsibility for 2 websites and was key contributors to 4 additional sites or blogs.  The Fruit Program members were key organizers of the New England Vegetable & Fruit Conference (1,654 attendees); J. Clements, Program Committee and General Chair; D. Green, Program Committee and Session Chair for 4 sessions; S. Schloemann Program Committee and Session Chair for 2 sessions.  Members delivered 65 presentations to an audience of over 3,000.  The New England Small Fruit Pest Management Guide (circulation 800) and The New England Tree Fruit Guide (circulation 100) are organized, edited and produced by the UMass Fruit Team.  Four newsletters, Fruit Notes (4 issues; circulation 175), Healthy Fruit (19 issues; circulation 100), Berry Notes (12 issues; circulation 392), and Grape Notes (10 issues; circulation 268) were produced.  Finally, 783 individual consultations were made either by phone, email or in person.

### Collaborating Organizations

* Massachusetts Farm Winery and Growers Association
* Massachusetts Fruit Growers’ Association
* Massachusetts Horticultural Society
* New England Vegetable & Berry Growers Association
* Western MA Master Gardeners Association