



44th Annual Open House and Trade Show a big success!

The Sampson Agri-Expo Center in Clinton was packed with vendors and attendees for this year's anticipated 44th annual event.

Bill Cline, Plant Pathology, NCSU provided a robust program that offered many topics of interest to North Carolina's blueberry growers.

The Tuesday program opened with a presentation from Jim Ballington, Horticulture Science, NCSU with a summary of frozen rabbiteye fruit quality experiments and an update on new cultivars.

Bill Cline, Plant Pathology; Hannah Burrack, Entomology; Katie Jennings, Horticulture Science, NCSU addressed diseases, insects and weeds. Later Burrack's program concerned spraying the blueberry maggot and asked the important question "Are We Spraying Too Much?"

Diane Duchame's program was "What is Your Neighbor Doing About Fresh Produce Safety?"

Duchame is with GAPs Program, NCSU. Her Wednesday program informed attendees about food safety steps to reduce risk.

David Hardy, Agromomic Division, NCDA & CS introduced a program offering a new look at blueberry fertility and fertilizer formulations.

Richard Blaylock and

Michele King, from the US Department of Labor, answered many questions for growers regarding labor issues. The team also left a variety of handouts for future reference.

Joanne Stevens, Governmental Affairs Director for the NC Blueberry Council, introduced herself to the members and outlined legislative issues of importance to blueberry growers. (*Editor's Note – Learn more about Joanne on page 3 of this issue*)

Another safety program was offered Tuesday afternoon. Charlotte Glen, NCCES, Pender County; and Sue Egelston-Moncada, NCDA&CS. provided Pesticide Safety Training, Category V.

On Wednesday Mike Mainland, Horticultural Science, NCSU spoke on plant growth regulators and offered observations on new cultivars.

Laurie Wood, Marketing Division, NCDA & CS, gave a summary of the 2009 blueberry promotional

programs and introduced plans for 2010.

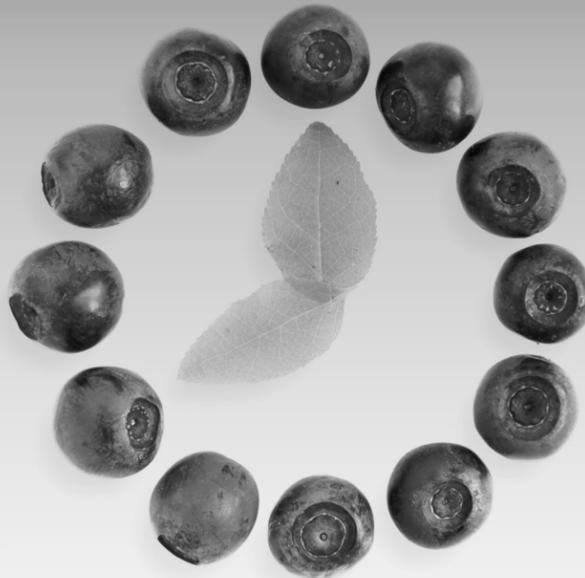
The drawing for door prizes was exciting and there were some wonderful contributions from very generous sponsors and vendors. Once again Wayne Batten kept Bill Cline busy handing out vendor and cash prizes.

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**‘Suzible’: A New Southern Highbush
Blueberry Variety
from The University of Georgia**

By D. Scott NeSmith

‘Suzible’ was selected in 2002 at the Georgia Experiment Station in Griffin, Ga. from a group of seedlings of the cross ‘Star’ X TH-474 planted in a nursery in Griffin in 1999. Tested as selection TH-730, ‘Suzible’ has a pedigree involving multiple *Vaccinium* species, including *V. corymbosum*, *V. darrowi*, and *V. ashei*. ‘Suzible’ has been tested in plantings in south and middle Georgia since 2003.

‘Suzible’ is an early season southern highbush blueberry flowering and ripening about the same time as ‘Star’, but 1 week later than ‘Rebel’. ‘Suzible’ berries are similar in appearance to ‘Star’ and ‘Rebel’. In 3-year trials, berry weight of ‘Suzible’ has been greater than ‘Star’, averaging 1.8 to 2.8 g compared to 1.5 to 2.2 g for ‘Star’. ‘Suzible’ flavor is noticeably sweeter than ‘Rebel’, which has a mild to bland flavor. The new variety has an estimated chill hour requirement similar to that of other early season southern highbush, in the range of 450 hours or less.

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Are You Prepared for a Crisis?

N.C. MarketReady and the N.C. Fresh Produce Safety Task Force
present

Crisis Preparedness Training

<p>March 17, 2010—Noon to 5 p.m. and March 18, 2010—11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.</p> <p>Butler Building, N.C. State University Campus 3210 Faucette Drive Raleigh, NC 27695</p> <p>Participate in: Crisis Communication Planning Crisis Simulation Media Training</p>	<p>For more information: Leah Chester-Davis N.C. MarketReady N.C. Research Campus, Kannapolis leah_chester-davis@ncsu.edu 704-250-5406</p> <p>Registration: pghi_info@ncsu.edu 704-250-5400 Deadline: Feb. 26, 2010. Seating limited.</p>
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Notes from the NC General Assembly

By: Joanne Stevens, Governmental Affairs Director
for the NC Blueberry Council

During the 2009 legislative session, one of the issues that got considerable attention was that of water quantity. Because of the statewide drought several years ago, much attention has been focused on ways to manage water in North Carolina. There were several bills introduced during the 2009 session in an attempt to regulate water usage. The most comprehensive bill was Senate Bill 907 which would have created a statewide water bureaucracy and would have placed many restrictions on water usage. However, with considerable opposition to the bill, the legislation did not make it through the process.

One thing that did come out of the 2009 Legislative Session was a provision in the Studies Bill of 2009 that created a Legislative Study Commission to study issues related to water, water supply and delivery, wastewater infrastructure and funding. The legislation also established the membership for this study commission. Of the seventeen (17) members that make up the Commission, the NC Farm Bureau has a seat at the table and is able to speak to the issues of water usage in agriculture.

The initial meeting of the Commission was November 10, 2009, followed by two additional meetings on December 14th and the most recent on January 20, 2010. The three meetings involved a number of presentations on water quantity and infrastructure related topics. During the recent meeting on January 20th, Mr. Mitch Peele, Senior Director of Public Policy with the NC Farm Bureau provided a very informative presentation on agriculture water usage. During his presentation, Mr. Peele provided information which shows that agriculture as a whole is not a large water user, using approximately 10% compared to all other significant water users. In addition Mr. Peele talked about significant advancements in recent years making agriculture a very efficient user of the water resources.

The next step in this process which will take place over the next couple of months will involve work on issues that have been presented during the past three (3) meetings. The Commission will divide into four (4) working groups that will focus on specific issues. It appears that Farm Bureau will be assigned to the first working group, which is "Identifying and Reporting Infrastructure Needs". The charge for the group will be to recommend methods and processes to provide information to the General Assembly and to the public on an annual basis that will detail the current status of water and wastewater infrastructure needs, the activities of funding entities to meet those needs and the estimated future needs for publicly-assisted infrastructure.



Joanne Stevens is the new Governmental Affairs Director for the NC Blueberry Council. Ms. Stevens has worked with associations, councils and committees across the state for the last 20 years. She has developed strategies to meet the goals of each association.

She has directly lobbied for over 11 years with the NC General Assembly. This has allowed her the opportunity to be successful with multiple pieces of legislation and appropriations

Ms. Stevens' roots are in the blueberry industry. She grew up on a blueberry farm in Bladen County and has watched the industry grow from a few acres to a multi-million-dollar industry. She holds a Masters' degree in Nursing Administration with a concentration in business from ECU.

N.C. MarketReady Announces Spring Cost Share Cycle for Equipment

KANNAPOLIS, N.C. – The North Carolina Value-Added Cost Share (NCVACS) program, administered by N.C. MarketReady, is now accepting applications for the spring funding cycle, Equipment Cost Share. This program is funded by the N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund Commission to support the development of value-added agricultural operations, an emerging sector of North Carolina agriculture.

A value-added agricultural product is a raw, agricultural commodity that has been changed in some manner so that it no longer can be returned to its original state. This change results in increased market value, allowing the producer to receive a higher price for these value-added products compared to the original commodity. Chopped lettuce, fruit jams and stone-ground corn meal are a few examples. “The NCVACS guidelines broaden the definition of value-added beyond the traditional scope. It also includes non-standard production methods (such as organic), physical product segregation (keeping

genetically modified (GM) corn separate from non-GM corn), generating farm-based renewable energy and some locally produced food products,” said Brittany Whitmire, program coordinator for NCVACS.

The NCVACS program works hand-in-hand with the USDA Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) by reducing the costs associated with professional services and equipment purchases that are not funded by the USDA grant. The spring cost share cycle allows value-added producers to apply for equipment cost share funding. Applicants can seek to purchase new or used equipment with cost share funding. Equipment cost share awards will vary from 25 to 50 percent of the total cost of the equipment, up to a maximum of \$25,000.

Applications for NCVACS Equipment, spring 2010, are now available online at www.ncmarketready.org. Applications are due by March 30, 2010. Guidelines and a list of frequently asked questions can be found on the Web site. Award recipients will be notified by June 1, 2010.

For more information about NCVACS and VAPG, please visit www.ncmarketready.org and click on “Value-Added Cost Share” on the left menu bar.

To: **NC Blueberry Producers & Exporters to Canada**
 From: Lane Kreitlow
 Subject: Blueberry Application 2010
 Date: January 26, 2010

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is preparing for this year’s export of fresh market blueberries to Canada. We do not anticipate any changes from last year. The auditing program will commence within one week of actual or projected blueberry maggot flight (approximately the last week of May).

The application deadline is March 1, 2010. Please confirm your plans to participate in the Blueberry Certification Program in 2010 by returning the enclosed application. Indicate any additions or deletions in your blueberry production acreage on the form. Once I receive notification from you regarding your 2010 status, I will mail out the 2010 auditing form. If you do not intend to participate in the program in 2010, please return your unused certificates to our office.

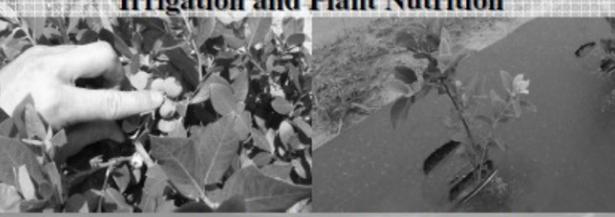
Thank you for your interest in the Blueberry Certification Program. We wish you the best of luck in the 2010 growing season. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call (phone: 919/733-6932 ext. 237; fax: 919/733-1041; email: lane.kreitlow@ncmail.net).



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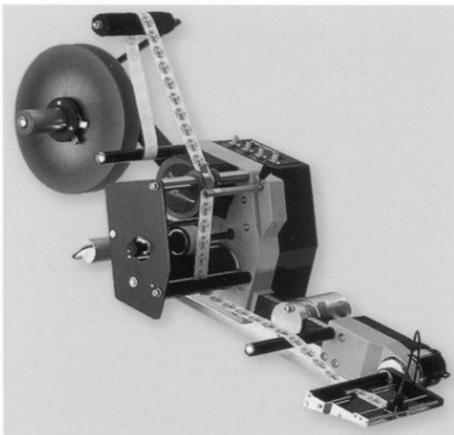


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The advertisement features a black and white photograph of a clear plastic clamshell container filled with blueberries. In the upper right corner, there is a white rectangular box containing the Pactiv logo, which consists of a stylized globe icon followed by the word "PACTIV" in a bold, sans-serif font. Overlaid on the bottom half of the blueberry image is a white, tilted banner with black text that reads: "50% PRE-SEASON DISCOUNT THROUGH MARCH 15, 2010 CALL GENE 770-367-6207".

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Introduced "Modernized" Rotary Head Harvester in 2009

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Introduced "Revolutionary" Black Ice Harvester in 2009

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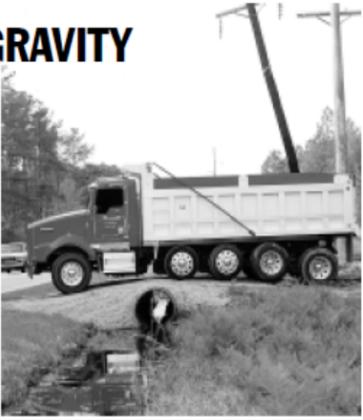
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Etheridge meets with NCBC

Congressman Bob Etheridge, met with North Carolina Blueberry Council President, Ralph Carter, Vice-President, Henson Barnes and Governmental Affairs Director Joanne Stevens January 28th. The group discussed grower concerns about blueberry picker employment designations and incorrect concerns that children were being used as labor during the harvest of blueberries.

Also attending were Mike Little, District Representative Caseworker for the Congressman and Julie Woodcock, Executive Coordinator for the North Carolina Blueberry Council.



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-Press Release-

Korvan harvesters make gains in fresh market blueberry harvesting

In an effort to continually improve fruit quality and fruit retention, Oxbo worked with local growers to test various catching systems. Putting the Korvan Ultra Low Loss catchers up against the competitors, the Korvan catchers led the competition with only 9.4% fruit drop-page; Littau dropped 12% and BEI Centipede catchers dropped 18%.

Testing was conducted on side-by-side rows. Tarps were laid down and attached to the blueberry plants and each harvester drove down a full row. Then, fruit collected by each harvester was weighed. Fruit on the ground was collected and also weighed. Dropped fruit weight was compared to collected fruit weight

to determine the percentage of total droppage. Korvan's Ultra Low Less catchers proved to drop less fruit—*reducing droppage by up to 50%, when compared to round-style catchers.*

“We understand that fruit retention is key to profitability for many growers, especially with lower prices,” said Brian Foote, Korvan product representative. “That’s why we wanted to get the numbers in the field—to get together with the growers and optimize fruit retention. The tests proved the Ultra Low Loss system captured more fruit; plus, it doesn’t smash any berries like growers have discovered with the turning-wheel design.”

Growers also appreciate other key features of the Korvan 8000, including the shortest drop from the belts to the bin and the most effective picking system on the market. Season after season, the unique Korvan Oribrotor picking head picks fewer green berries and leaves more bloom than any other picking method.

Korvan Ultra Low Catchers are available from \$5,500 and can be purchased as a retrofit kit for older harvesters, a substantially lower investment than other catcher kits on the market.

For additional information, please contact Brian Foote, Oxbo International Corp, (888)656-7826 or (360)354-1500, berries@oxbocorp.com



The Korvan 8000 has the least distance between catchers and picking unit and can effectively pick low hanging fruit and big bushes, making it the versatile choice for growers looking for high quality fruit and reliable performance.

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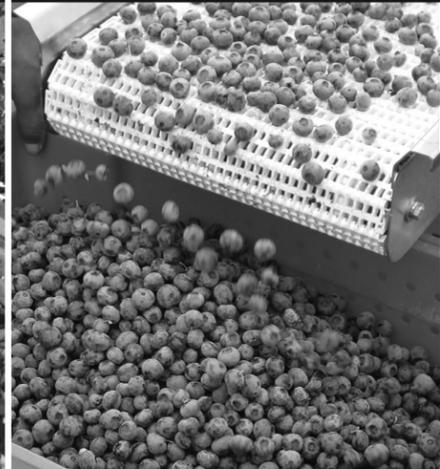
- Free turning, free picking head
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- Field tests proved **Ultra Low Loss catchers drop less fruit than competitor's catchers**
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- Durable Polycarbonate catchers
- Easy to retrofit

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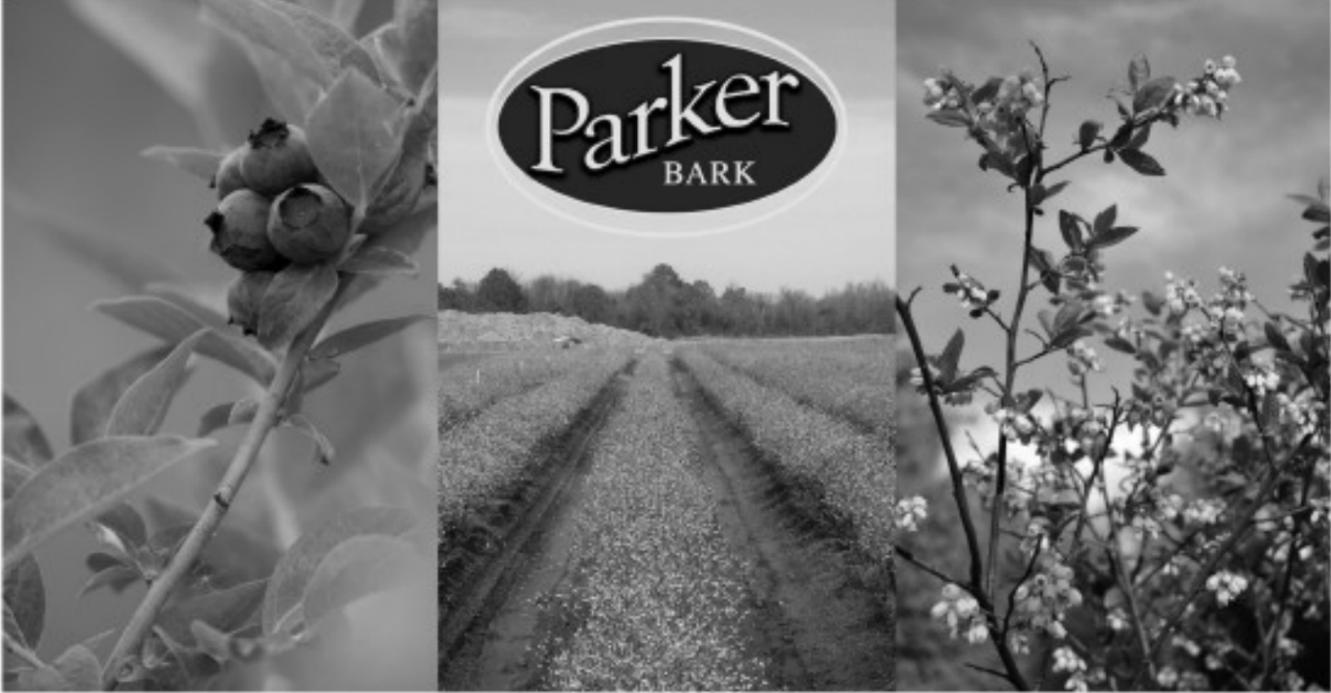
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The advertisement banner is a horizontal strip divided into three vertical panels. The left panel shows a close-up of a blueberry branch with several ripe, dark berries. The middle panel shows a long, straight row of blueberry plants in a field, receding into the distance under a cloudy sky. The right panel shows a close-up of a blueberry branch with many small, white flowers. In the center of the middle panel, there is an oval logo with the word "Parker" in a large, serif font and "BARK" in a smaller, sans-serif font below it.

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