Vermont Vegetable and Berry News February 16, 2010

Compiled by Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension (802) 257-7967 ext.13, vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu
http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry

JOIN THE VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

plants, machinery, supplies are sought and sold between farmers. Questions can also be asked on the listerve and they get answered by other farmers from where to get farm insurance, to finding tire out your delete

button. You get on the listserv with the \$50 membership, too, which also gets you a free book, vegetable and fruit grower magazines, meeting discounts and Agriview, the Agency of Agriculture newsletter. Out of state and commercial members are welcome. Mail your check with contact info to: Doug Johnstone, VVBGA Secretary, P.O. Box 701, Springfield VT 05156. Preferably include this form: http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/VV&BGA/Application.html

TAKE THE VERMONT LATE BLIGHT SURVEY

Ann Hazelrigg wants to know

CROP INSURANCE FOR DIVERSIFIED FARMS

By Pam Smith, UVM Extension Crop Insurance Coordinator

The sales closing date for the AGR-Lite crop insurance policies and changes to existing policies is March 15, 2010. This is whole-farm insurance that offers protection against a loss in farm income due to falling prices or unavoidable natural disasters. It history of crops, animals, and animal products. AGR-Lite may be especially appealing to small, diversified, specialty farms, including greenhouse production and maple syrup. Other previously non insured crops, livestock, and animal products such as milk, wool and honey are insurable, as are organic and direct market products. Record keeping is simple as only one policy is needed to cover the entire farm. Policy costs are heavily subsidized by the USDA. Eligibility requirements include filing a farm report

Frost protection is not necessary since plants bloom so late, mid May in New York. Aphids on shoot tips, and leaf-eating beetles are possible pests, but plants are so vigorous that pest damage does not have much of a negative effect. Fire blight is a potential problem, but has not been reported as such. Aronia is mechanically harvested between August and September. Five to ten tons per hectare can be expected in about five years, once plants have matured. Some yield can be expected in the first years, but plants often have weak branches that fall over in the ground.

Elderberry is a member of the family Caprifoliaceae with 13 species native to North America. Commercially, we are interested in Sambucus nigra L. ssp. canadensis (North American, formerly classified as a separate species), and Sambucus nigra L. which is native to Europe. The fruit clusters (cymes) of the S. nigra cultivars are larger than those of S. n. canadensis. In addition, some of the S. nigra cultivars have superior growth habits. Elderberries are only partially self-fruitful, and planting of two or more varieties within 60 feet of one another is beneficial. It is assumed that any pair of cultivars will function as mutual pollenizers. Elderberry prefers a sandy to heavy loam soil with a pH of 5.5-6.5. It is recommended that plants be set out at 0.75 to 1.0 meter spacing, and that every other plant be removed after three to four years. This will improve chances of getting an economic return faster. The every

year in good numbers. Six to eight canes are maintained per plant to fruit the following year.

Elderberry flowering takes place in mid June in New York. In the fall after fruiting, the spent canes are removed, and a rotation is maintained. This way, canes are never left for more than a year, and plants are maintained as a five to seven foot bush. Aphids, leaf wrinkling mites, birds, cane borers, mildew, and botrytis blossom blight can be pest problems. Tomato ringspot virus has been a problem in the past with S. n. canadensis cultivars, but is less of a problem with S. nigra. Elderberry is picked by hand in the US, although mechanical harvesting is a possibility. Twenty tons per acre are produced in Denmark, while four to twelve tons per acre are recorded in New York. The S. nigra cultivars are higher yielding, especially when grown as hedge-rowed bushes. Fruits are picked as whole cymes and frozen until ready to use. A premium is paid for stem-less frozen berries. Harvest takes place from AETw8ETBTs ma52005 612

Day neutrals are typically planted at a density of 20,000 plants/A. They may be grown in annual or perennial production systems. Annual production is perhaps best accomplished on raised beds with

The same research indicated high tunnel production also increased yield as well as offering a method of season extension (3 weeks) and winter protection for primocane-fruiting blackberries. Double-tipping and protected production (tunnel) gave the most favorable response in growth, time of harvest, and yield overall.