



Who IS ON THE RESEARCH FARM

"Newfoundland and Labrador has some of the most delicious and powerful antioxidant berries you can find anywhere and they are right at your finger tips," says Dr. Samir Debnath, a research scientist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Atlantic Cool Climate Crop Research Centre.

For 13 years he has been focusing on wild berry improvement. He is currently examining conventional breeding methods and biotechnology to develop superior berries that would be suitable for commercial production.

"Commercial production of wild berries can be challenging, but we are



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Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture

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Who IS ON THE RESEARCH FARM



working with new techniques to speed up plant breeding and develop berries with better yields and high antioxidant levels," noted Debnath.

An increasing demand for high quality berries in Canada and the world has intensified the need to select superior berry plants.

"Our goal is to assist industry growth and help improve the overall quality of the

final product," he says.

The centre currently maintains the largest cool climate berry crop germplasm collection in North America.

"I find this research very intriguing and we have a great team working together."

"We have three technicians, two M.Sc. students and a Ph.D student working with us under the small fruits program."

In addition, the project team includes local research centre scientists and research specialists from the department's research centres in Kentville, NS, Agassiz, BC and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec.

"We also collaborate with the Provincial Department of Natural Resources, Memorial University, Michigan State University, University of Idaho and scientists from Norway and Estonia".

"My career in agriculture started early and my interests have always been focused around biotechnology and genetic research," says Debnath.

Dr. Debnath received his B.Sc.Ag (Honours) and M.Sc. (Ag.) at the Bangladesh Agricultural University and joined the university as a lecturer in 1977.

He was a professor of genetics and plant breeding at the university for 19 years.

During this time Dr. Debnath also completed his Ph.D. at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, India in 1982 and a postdoc in plant biotechnology at the Institute for Resistance Genetics in West Germany from 1984 to 1986.

He also spent a year working at the University of Nottingham, UK, before making his move to Canada in 1996.

Dr. Debnath had an early stint at the St. John's Research Centre in February 1996 where he worked on potato pathology and beech pea tissue culture. In November 1996, he accepted a position at AAFC's Atlantic Food and Horticulture Research Centre in Kentville, NS.

He worked at the Kentville Research Centre from 1996 - 1998

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Who IS ON THE FARM

in the area of biotechnology and genetic transformation of apples before coming back and settling down in St. John's, NL in November 1998.

Today, the majority of his work is with berries (cranberries, partridgeberries, lowbush blueberries, strawberries, raspberries and bakeapples).

In addition to his berry and medicinal plant (roseroot) research, Dr. Debnath keeps a very busy life outside the Centre.

He is currently a coordinator of an international development project that provides research and support for organic farming in Nepal.

He is an Adjunct Professor of Biology with Memorial University, Past President and current Registrar for the Newfoundland and Labrador

Institute of Agrologists and Vice-President with the Canadian Society for Horticultural Science.

He also finds the time to be an Associate Editor for the Canadian Journal of Plant Science and the Journal of Horticultural Science and Biotechnology.

In addition, Samir is very active in his community and is currently the Director of the St. John's Hindu Temple.

In his spare time, he likes to walk and spend time with his wife and two children.

"Newfoundland is very different from Bangladesh but it is our home and we really love it here," says Debnath.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Eugene Legge
President

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture would like to welcome the new Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) for Agrifoods Development, Keith Deering. Mr. Deering has held the ADM role in the forestry sector for years, and we look forward to working with him in his new role. We would also like to thank his predecessor, Jeff Whalen, for his years of hard work and dedication to the

industry, and we wish him all the best in retirement.

I am also very pleased that the NLFA has started our new initiatives in the areas of industry development, agriculture awareness, agritourism, and agriculture in the classroom. We hired coordinators for each of these areas in January and they have started work on implementing what the steering committees have set out. Christa Wright moved into the Agriculture in the Classroom position; Jamie Warren is Industry Development Officer; and Gerry Sullivan is taking on Agriculture Awareness and Agritourism.

In taking on these initiatives, funded through Growing Forward, we are working on behalf of the industry to advance the provincial farming sector to a more prosperous future and work on areas that have tremendous potential.

We are now half way through the Growing

Forward program. Farmers in the province have been availing of the funding available and taking on many interesting and valuable initiatives under the program. There will soon be consultations with industry to determine what is working and what is not under the program, to plan for the next generation program.

These sessions were postponed due to the federal election, but have been rescheduled in June. Farmers need to get out to these sessions and talk about what they like and don't like about the current program to ensure our interests are reflected in the next program.

Last fall, we also partnered with the Department of Natural Resources on the organization of the Agri-Food and Garden Show, which set record attendance with its return to the metro region and helped to spread agriculture awareness. This year, we are taking it one step further and doing more of the planning and coordination at NLFA for this year's Agrifood and Garden Show in Corner Brook.

Recently, NLFA also worked with the Kids Eat Smart foundation on their 'Rooting for Health' event. Eighteen schools throughout the province hosted the event on March 4th. The event saw visits from local farmers, who answered questions about their products while kids ate a breakfast with local farm-fresh eggs, berries and milk.

It is once again that time of the year where farmers are or will soon be back in the fields planting their crops for 2011. I hope that this growing season will be a great one and that the agriculture industry as a whole will grow again this year.

2011 Annual General Meeting a Success

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA)'s Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on March 18th, 2011 at the Albatross Hotel in Gander.

NLFA's AGM provided an excellent opportunity for farmers, government personnel, guest presenters, and Federation representatives to network.

"The agriculture sector comes together every year, at the Federation's AGM, to discuss current

industry trends and our future opportunities," said Federation President Eugene Legge. "This year our AGM coincides with Farm Safety Week and this provides a great opportunity to drive home the message that farm safety is important for the well-being of farmers, employees, and also for the farm's finances."

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister Responsible for Agrifoods Agency, Steve Kent was



Delegates listen to a presentation.



President Eugene Legge (L) and Parliamentary Secretary to Agrifoods Steve Kent at the signing of the 2011 safety week declaration.



Parliamentary Secretary to Agrifoods Steve Kent (L) presenting Curtis Somerton NLFA's Environmental Award.



President Eugene Legge (L) presents Melvin Rideout with the Hall of Fame Award.



also on hand to sign a proclamation recognizing safety week.

“Plan • Farm • Safety” is the theme of the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association’s three-year Canadian Agricultural Safety campaign. While the 2010 campaign promoted “Plan”, with an emphasis on planning for safety, this year’s campaign will focus on “Farm”, with a campaign highlighting implementation, documentation and training during Canadian Agricultural Safety Week

(CASW).

At the AGM, the NLFA Executive for 2011-12 was also selected by delegates. President Eugene Legge, Vice President Elaine Wells, and Secretary/Treasurer Melvin J. Rideout were all given a mandate for another year in their respective offices. Additionally, delegates elected Michelle Lester, and Curtis Somerton for the two Director-at-Large positions.

AGRICULTURAL MEMBER PROFILE

Raising Sheep in Roddickton

By Matthew Carlson

Jennifer Decker operates Wild Woods Farm in Roddickton on the Northern Peninsula. While Jennifer didn’t grow up on a farm, she has had an interest in farming throughout her childhood. Thanks to classroom projects like hatching ducks, the seeds of interest were planted early. As an adult she has been getting more and more involved in farming, constantly expanding her operation. As Jennifer puts it, “When my first lambs were born, I was hooked!”

Wild Woods Farm started as a small hobby farm when Jennifer and John Decker’s kids were young, eight or nine years ago. It began with chickens, turkeys, ducks, and peacocks. Recognizing that her family was far from traditional recreation for kids, Jennifer realized that having the kids help with the farm could be just as good or better.

Today, the family farm is a sheep operation spanning 18 acres with five acres of pasture. Jennifer still keeps other animals on the farm, but the focus is sheep. To keep up with all the work on the farm, Jennifer gets help from her husband John and her two sons – nine year old



Jennifer with some of her sheep.



Eddie, and eleven year old Christopher. Eddie looks after the smaller animals on the farm, learning the responsibility of taking care of animals. Christopher, in addition to helping out on the family farm, is the youngest member of the Sheep Producers Association of NL (SPANL) and recently completed a school project where he researched Newfoundland heritage sheep.

Christopher was also featured in the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA)’s 2011 calendar after a picture his mother submitted of he and one of Wild Woods’ lambs was selected as part of a recent contest.

Another part of Jennifer’s story that is different than most farmers in the province is that she is not from Roddickton, or anywhere else in the province, originally. She was born in the United States and moved to the province with her family when she was nine years old. But, while she wasn’t born in the province, Jennifer has strong roots here, as her mother is from New World Island. In the end, she settled in the small town on the Northern Peninsula because her husband is from the community and they rec-

AGRICULTURAL MEMBER PROFILE



Christopher and a lamb, as featured in CFA's 2011 calendar.



Eddie and the farm's geese.

ognized it was a great place to raise a family.

Undertaking a new farm operation in an isolated community with a cool climate is not without its challenges, but Jennifer knew early on that it wouldn't be easy. She was told before she even began that starting a sheep operation in Roddickton wouldn't work because it was 'too far away', 'too cold', and that 'it just can't be done up there'. She also has little background in farming and had to learn much of it as she went. Jennifer's main strategy for dealing with these challenges is to use the knowledge and resources available to her, primarily through asking questions to other farmers. She does this both face-to-face and through the internet and has learned a lot of valu-

able information which has helped her to get her farm up and running successfully.

In addition to challenges unique to the Northern Peninsula, sheep farming is a challenging activity no matter where a farmer lives or how much experience he or she has. Challenges like predators, primarily coyotes, are a constant problem. Through conversations with other sheep farmers, Jennifer discovered that another farmer had success with a guard donkey. She added a donkey and has not had any issues with predators since.

Looking toward the future, Jennifer has a plan for Wild Woods Farm and she intends to keep it on track. Her plans include clearing five more acres for hay production, diversifying into other areas, and working toward

becoming self sufficient. She is also looking at buying new farm equipment next year, and is interested in a possible expansion into agritourism sometime down the road.

Jennifer is not the only one at her farm thinking about a future in agriculture. Her son Christopher talks about becoming a farm vet – so this may be the beginning of a family with agricultural careers!

While Jennifer has made a lot of progress in setting up her farm, she is quick to point out, "I'm not a success story yet, just a start story." This may be true, but with her dedication to the industry, eagerness to learn and expand, and solid plan for the future, Wild Woods Farm is sure to be a success story soon enough.



Wild Woods Farm on a winter day.



Christopher, Eddie and the farm donkey.



Annual Farm Field Day – Brookfield Road

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada will host its 53rd annual Farm Field Day on Saturday, August 13, 2011 from 10am – 5pm. The event will take place at the Atlantic Cool Climate Crop Research Centre at 308 Brookfield Road in St. John’s. The day will feature research and agricultural displays, tractor rides, calf showmanship, farm animals, scavenger hunts, face painting, hay rides, line dancing and much more. Admission is free and so is the parking.

Visitors can speak one-on-one with AAFC scientists and staff about the latest research on small berries, corn, manure management, integrated pest management and drainage. Representatives from the Newfoundland and Agriculture industry will be on-hand to answer questions and talk about agriculture in the province.

For further information, please call 772-0461.


Federation of Agriculture Helps “Root for Health”

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA), working with the Kids Eat Smart Foundation, and School Milk Foundation celebrated Nutrition Month on March 4th at eighteen




Kids enjoying breakfast at Millcrest Academy in Grand Falls-Windsor.

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Students getting blueberry smoothies at Holy Cross Junior High in St. John's.



Students and volunteers at Peacock Primary in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

schools across the province by hosting an event called Rooting for Health.

This unique event brought together nutrition tips and facts, a visit from local farmers, and a nutritious breakfast. Farmers on site provided interesting facts and information on their products, how they are grown or produced, and helped to dispel any associated myths. Breakfast included fresh local eggs, milk, and berries. Students even get the opportunity to plant seeds in their own individual pots to try their hand at farming and growing healthy vegetables.

"This is a tremendous event, which ties in really well with nutrition month and this year's theme," said NLFA President Eugene Legge. "The role of farmers in providing healthy, safe food is important for kids to understand and we are delighted to

be part of this nutrition month event with the theme of 'Celebrating Food – From Field to Table.'"

Funding to host the event provided by Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

2011 Newfoundland and Labrador Agricultural Events

June

CME "Manufactured Right Here" Show
June 3-4th, 2011
Remax Centre, St. John's

July

Deer Lake Strawberry Festival Days
July 22-24th, 2011
Deer Lake Power Company Field, Polular Road
Deer Lake

North West River Beach Festival
July 23-24th, 2011
Lester Burry Memorial Park, North West River

August

Garnish Bakeapple Festival
August 6-14th, 2011
Community Centre, Garnish

Bakeapple Folk Festival
August 11-14th, 2011
Forteau, Labrador

Brigus Blueberry Festival
August 11-14th, 2011
Water Street, Brigus

Annual Farm Field Day
August 13th, 2010
308 Brookfield Road, St. John's

September

Springdale Craft and Trade Show
September 8-10th, 2011
Springdale Stadium Complex, Springdale

Roots, Rants and Roars Festival
September 9-October 2nd, 2011
Elliston, Bonavista Peninsula

Big Land Fair
September 10th, 2011



E.J Broomfield Memorial Arena
Happy Valley-Goose Bay

Humber Valley Agriculture Home/Handicraft
Exhibition
September 16-17th, 2011
Hodder Memorial Stadium, Deer Lake

Labrador Straits Craft and Agriculture Fair
September 17-18th, 2011
Labrador Straits Arena, L'Anse au Loup

Agrifood and Garden Show
September 22-25th, 2011
Pepsi Centre, Corner Brook

Partridgeberry Festival
September 22-23rd, 2011

West St. Modeste, Southern Labrador

Trinity-Conception Bay Agriculture Fall Fair
September 29-October 2nd, 2011
Harbour Grace, Conception Bay North

Eastport Agricultural Exhibition
September 29-October 10th, 2011
Beaches Heritage Centre, Eastport

October

Port au Port Agricultural Fall Fair
October 1-2nd, 2011
Our Lady of Mercy Church, Port au Port West

Fogo Island Partridgeberry Festival
October 8-9th, 2011

AGRI-ADAPT COUNCIL INC. UPDATE

The following are examples of a project recently approved by NL Agri-Adapt Council Inc. (AACI) with funding under Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP):

Investigating and Piloting Labour Sharing

Labour availability has been identified as a major barrier to the growth of the agriculture industry, especially with its seasonal nature.

The first component of the pilot project will evaluate and research current labour sharing models. The second component will assess local areas to determine if a pilot would be feasible based on labour supply, geography, logistics and potential partner industries.

Once all the necessary research has been conducted, the proponent will pilot an agriculture labour network, incorporating best practices and other practical considerations.

This project will benefit participating agriculture business owners, the unemployed and underemployed in the region, and the agriculture industry as a whole through the increased awareness of agriculture as a potential career in the province.

Funding to research and pilot this labour sharing initiative is being provided through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP). The Newfoundland and Labrador Agri-Adapt Council Inc. (AACI) committed up to \$74,168 towards the project.

The Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP) was developed as the successor to the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) Program, whose mandate expired March 31, 2009.

The CAAP program continues the innovative industry-led approach employed under the ACAA program with projects delivered at both the national and the regional level.

In Newfoundland and Labrador CAAP is delivered by the Agri-Adapt Council Inc. (AACI).

Piloting an Aquaponics Farm System

Aquaponics is a sustainable food production system that combines a hydroponics system (cultivating plants in water) with traditional aquaculture to create an environment which is mutually beneficial to both the fish and plants involved.

The system works by taking materials which accumulate in a standard aquaculture environment which are harmful to the fish and filtering them through the plants, which utilize the same material as vital nutrients.

This pilot project seeks to implement and evaluate an aquaponics system as an alternative means of crop production. The aquaponics system will be set-up on Lester Farms Inc. located in St. John's, NL.

The Agri-Adapt Council Inc. has joined other funding partners, including the Alberta Government's Crop Diversification Centre (CDC) South, the National Research Council, and the Marine Institute, to provide funding to carry out this project.

Plans will be developed for the pilot aquaponics system, including all equipment, infrastructure, plant and fish species requirements. The next step will involve construction of the system and performance monitoring. The project is scheduled to start spring 2011.

Nick Savidov with the Crop Diversification Centre will travel to NL to oversee the adaptation of this technology to the farm operation. The CDC is considered a world leader in aquaponics research.

Funding to research and pilot the aquaponics system is being provided through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP). The Newfoundland and Labrador Agri-Adapt Council Inc. (AACI) committed up to \$21,280 toward the project.

PROJECT UPDATES

A Green Paper on Strengthening Agriculture in the Atlantic Region

With agriculture in the Atlantic region facing many challenges, the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Nova Scotia and PEI Federations of Agriculture,

and the Agriculture Alliance of New Brunswick, enlisted GPI Atlantic, an independent, non-profit research and education organization to develop a green paper on the future of agriculture in Atlantic Canada.

There were two significant trends affecting the agriculture industry which were highlighted in the project rationale - a lack of young people seeking a career in agriculture, and competition from global markets. As a result, many farmers end up leaving the agriculture industry.

With an increased emphasis on the environment and food safety and quality, the agriculture industry is looking at innovative ways to build on the strengths of the sector to address emerging issues and create new opportunities.

Results of the project confirmed that young people are not seeking careers in agriculture in the numbers required to sustain the industry in Atlantic Canada, with only 6% of the farmers in Newfoundland and Labrador under the age of 35.

The research completed by GPI Atlantic also identified many opportunities and potential industry strategies to use moving forward. Strong links were found between consumers and farmers, who are natural allies. To capitalize on this connection, it is important that consumers be reminded of their power to influence retailers. When consumers request local products, they put producers in a better bargaining position.

Consumers must be educated that what is promoted as local in major supermarkets often comes from the other side of the country, and that they can and must demand truly local products.

Farmers' markets and open farm days were also highlighted as a valuable educational tool to make the connection between farms and food.

Additional recommendations from the report include: making more summer jobs on farms available to students; adapting the Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOOF) program from the organic sector to the rest of the industry; and placing a greater emphasis on agriculture education for children aged five to eight, a vital age for instilling the importance of farming.

The report also highlighted other approaches happening elsewhere. One great example of this would be an incentive for positive behaviour initiated by an insurance company in Wisconsin. The program, called Health Plan Partners, rewards participants in a farm-run initiative which delivers weekly food boxes at a cost of \$400-550 annually. The insurance company, seeing the value of more




healthy customers, offers families receiving these boxes a rebate up to \$200 per year on health insurance for consuming this healthy local food.

Funding to develop the green paper was provided through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Adaptation programming. The Newfoundland and

Labrador Agri-Adapt Council Inc., as well as the Prince Edward Island ADAPT Council, New Brunswick Agriculture Council Inc. and the Agri-Futures Nova Scotia each approved \$17,500.00 towards the project.

LABRADOR REPORT



Spring is here in Labrador, warm days and cool nights. With today being the exception, it's minus six with a half inch of fresh snow!

It has been melting and then freezing for the past month and that is sure to raise the 'dickens' with overwintering crops.

For one, we depend on snow for our winter protection on our strawberries. I ordered more than I usually do this year because of this type of spring and the expected losses.

We don't have locally produced straw which is the best cover for strawberries. We can grow grain here; I've proven that on a small-scale myself. But, right now, the harvesting is the problem. Strawberries do well as a u-pick crop. There is good demand, hardly any weed competition and the price is very good, with more people wanting to come and pick than there are berries.

I was lucky enough to be invited to the Growing Forward 2 Engagement Session in Nova Scotia. I feel the input from the NL farmers and representatives was well taken and what we got and heard

was welcome and valuable input. It was an intensive session, to say the least, and it was good to hear from and meet folks from the other three Atlantic groups.

We are still awaiting the outcome of the meeting our association had with the Department officials regarding the livestock restriction on the Mud Lake Road Agricultural Development Area. Livestock is usually a welcomed and encouraged addition to farming ventures.

It seems to me that anything farmers could do to increase food production would be welcomed and with the chance of a couple thousand hungry workers' mouths to feed, more local bacon and eggs, more local meat and potatoes, more local milk for tea, and local cream for strawberry shortcake would be an obvious need. This restriction has made it necessary for some of the farm development to be put on hold and others to revise plans and work in another direction. Some folks that would have maybe built a farm were discouraged with this limitation and didn't even try the entry process to this challenging life. For those of us sticking it out for now, at least, it's wait and see.

The proposed development of Muskrat Falls has been all over the news, especially the public presentations to the panel, which were held in Central

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AgriVIEW

LABRADOR REPORT

Labrador. I didn't have much chance to attend, but kept track as best as I could. It may come as a surprise to some of you, but the majority of Labradorians who presented are opposed to damming the river. To this majority, the negative impact is too high to outweigh the 'benefits', the very few and questionable 'benefits' for the Big Land.

It's good to see our Federation hiring on more staff and the youthful ideas and enthusiastic attitudes are a huge benefit to agriculture in this province. We need 'forward' thinking and young ideas.

We look forward to the coming growing season and getting our hands dirty!

James (Jim) Purdy lives in Happy Valley - Goose Bay, central Labrador. He grew up on a 17th century Acadian pioneered, mixed farm. Jim has always farmed and mostly had an off-farm job to make a living. Jim grew non-certified organics for several years in Nova Scotia, and worked for many years at a Massey Ferguson equipment dealership. His plan is to retire to the farm with Marge Goudie and grow lots of good food.

ASK THE SAFETY EXPERT

Terry Noseworthy is an Occupational Health and Safety Officer with the Department of Government Services' Occupational Health and Safety Division.

Q Are back-up alarms required on certain types of farm equipment?

A Back up-alarms are required on all mobile farm equipment. Section 255. (1)(b) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*, Warning signal device, states: "Mobile equipment shall be equipped with an audible warning signal device where mobile equipment operates in reverse motion, it shall be equipped with a suitable audible warning device that initiates automatically when the equipment starts to move in reverse and which continues to operate while the equipment is moving in reverse."

Q Is there a safe way to pull out a piece of equipment that is stuck?

A There is no ONE safe way to extricate a piece of equipment that is stuck. Obviously, every situation is different depending on the equipment that is stuck, the equipment to be used to pull out the stuck equipment, the location, the operators' abilities, the weather, the ability to safely secure tow lines to a piece of equipment, the methods that can practically be employed to get the equipment out, etc. The factors that must be considered are endless!

However, one thing that can define the success or failure of a towing operation is the choice of equipment used to tow one object by the other (i.e. chains, wire rope, web slings, etc.). Wire rope and web slings should never be used for towing a piece of equipment that is stuck.

High stress loads imposed on wire ropes or web slings may cause them to fail. These items will stress under tension and could cause serious damage or injuries if they were to fail. In addition, people must ensure that the connections to both pieces of equipment can withstand the forces that may be imposed upon them and there is no chance the towing medium will become dislodged during the operation. Although the forces that may be applied cannot be precisely calculated - plan for worst-case scenarios.

Prior to the start of a towing operation, people need to analyze and consider all of the associated risks. Appropriate controls should be put in place prior to towing the equipment. All per-





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ASK THE SAFETY EXPERT

sons not necessary to the operation should be kept at a distance to prevent any injury if something goes wrong. People should never be located between the two pieces of equipment or in areas that could be dangerous if there is an unexpected release of energy.

These are just a few things to consider. As already stated, there are so many factors that make every situation unique and presents different challenges. However, the goal must always be to SAFELY retrieve the equipment. If the operation injures someone or causes further damage to the equipment, then the extra time and materials required to complete the job safely would have been money well spent.

Q Who should have WHMIS training?

A Section 5. (1), Worker Education, of the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) Regulations state: "An employer shall ensure that a worker who works with a controlled product or in proximity to a controlled product is informed about all hazard information received from a supplier concerning that controlled product as well as any further hazard information of which the employer is aware or ought to be aware concerning the use, storage and handling of that controlled product."

To submit a question for a future *Ask the Farm Safety Expert* section, please contact Matthew Carlson at 747-4830 or mcarlson@nlfa.ca

NEW & EXCITING

New Wave of Farming... Using the Web to Monitor Cranberry Production

Cranberry production requires large amounts of water and effective management is crucial for maximizing yields and quality.

As climate change continues, variable weather patterns affecting Atlantic Canada have the potential to become even more unpredictable.

"Having the knowledge and ability to apply moisture to crops at critical points in development can mean the difference between a successful season and a poor one," says Peter Murphy, Soil and Water Technologist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Agri Environment Services Branch.

In summer 2010, the Agri Environment Services Branch (AESB) undertook a three-year project working with cranberry producers across Atlantic Canada to determine optimum soil moisture conditions for cranberry production.

Three web-based soil moisture monitoring systems have been established and evaluated on farms throughout the region.

After only one year, farmers who have been active in the project are enthusiastic.

"I really like being able to check and monitor soil moisture and weather conditions from my home. Knowing when to apply moisture to the crop is a great help in effectively managing my farm,"



says Paul Lomond, Cranberry Producer, NL.

"Currently, we are evaluating three Web-based soil moisture monitoring stations in Newfoundland and Labrador, and in Prince Edward Island," noted Peter.

"Each system will enable growers to monitor conditions from in-field locations and analyze the data either from home or on site."

The system also has the capability to create alarms that will warn the producer through email or cell phone to run their irrigation system when a maximum soil moisture tension is reached (soil becomes too dry), or when air temperatures drop below two degrees celsius.

"With this new technology, we hope to demonstrate and evaluate potential water and energy savings that could be generated through Web-based irrigation management systems," says Peter.

This is the first year of the project and AESB will continue to work with industry and its partners to evaluate and demonstrate the potential benefits of this technology.

Harvesting Pilot Project Takes Place in Southern Labrador

In 2009, the Labrador Straits Development Corporation (LSDC) and the Southeastern Aurora Development Corporation (SADC) commissioned a study entitled, "Labrador Wild Berry Strategic Development Plan – A Study to Expand the Capacity of the Wild Berry Industry in Southern Labrador."

Companies such as Labrador Preserves in Forteau as well as other companies throughout the



province are requiring more wild berries to meet market demands. Identified in the *Labrador Wild Berry Strategic Development Plan*, harvesting is probably the single most critical factor impeding expansion of the wild berry industry, both on the island and in Labrador.

Most year's residents of Economic Zones 4 and 5 can count on an average crop of bakeapples and partridgeberries to harvest for their own personal use and as a means to supplement their incomes. The importance of the pilot project is to determine the quantity of berries that can be harvested on an annual basis and will include; number of pounds an individual can harvest daily, earnings derived from harvesting berries, total cost of harvesting berries to the processor, collection practices, and quality control issues. This will guide the Development Corporations for Economic Zones 4 and 5, in conjunction with private enterprise, identifying the correct format to move the wild berry industry forward. The Harvesting Pilot Project, if successful, can then be applied to other jurisdictions in the province promoting a means to meet supply and demand issues currently experienced by processors in the wild berry industry.

TENDER NOTICE

Government of Canada Tender Notice Sale of Forage Crops

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is issuing a Tender Notice to sell the standing forage crops from several fields located at the Atlantic Cool Climate Crop Research Centre on Brookfield Road in St. John's.

Interested parties may respond to the Tender

which provides details on the crops available and the process to be used to select the successful bidder. Sealed tenders must be received no later than **2:00 p.m local time on June 10, 2011**. To request a copy of the Tender, contact Donna Finn at (709) 772-4620.

Agri-Adapt Council Inc. (AACI)



Now Accepting CAAP Applications

The Agri-Adapt Council Inc. (AACI) would like to notify producers that we are now accepting applications for the Canadian Agricultural Adaption Program (CAAP).

Producers interested in applying should contact AACI:

308 Brookfield Rd.
PO Box 1045
Mt. Pearl, NL A1N 3C9

(709) 747-4874
info@nlfa.ca



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