



## The Official Newsletter of the Gulf South Blueberry Growers Association

September 8, 2008

Dear Member:

### **The 2008 Fall Blueberry Growers Association Field Day will be held 9:00 AM, November 4, 2008 at Blue River Blueberry Farm in Covington County.**

This Field Day will be an excellent opportunity to see blueberry management and production techniques and learn about innovative ways to plant and produce blueberries. Blue River Blueberry Farm at 1876 Highway 532, Mount Olive, MS, is owned by Max Draughn and managed by Greg Saulters. This 54 acre blueberry farm has been rejuvenated and brought back into production with impressive results. Intensive management techniques and close attention to detail has transformed this established, 20 year old blueberry farm from mediocre production to a highly productive, vigorous blueberry planting. All phases of blueberry production is involved including propagation of plants, planting and establishment, plant maintenance, harvesting, grading, packing and shipping. We will tour this highly productive farm and discuss the techniques used to vitalize and manage this productive blueberry farm. We appreciate Blue River Farm opening their operation to our group and showing us their keys to success.

Management is the theme of this Field Day. The blueberry market is becoming increasingly competitive and efficiency is the key to survival in this industry. We will discuss trends in the blueberry industry and practices necessary to make your farm productive and profitable. Some topics to be discussed include:

**Blueberry Farm Management** - Four successful blueberry growers will discuss the management systems that have made their farms productive. These growers consistently attain high yields and good vigor of their plantings. Their success is no accident; their program is carefully designed and carried out to achieve high yields and maximum profits. They will describe their year-round program and the things they pay close attention to successfully compete in today's market.

**Labor Issues** - Officials from the U.S. Department of Labor will explain the laws that govern visa regulations for foreign workers and wage and hour laws that affect workers in the agricultural industry. Farm labor supply is becoming increasingly tight, regulations more stringent and enforcement more punitive. We need a clear understanding of labor regulations to comply with laws affecting farm labor. Many growers are taking steps to become more mechanized to reduce our dependence on labor. We will discuss labor problems facing the blueberry industry and how some growers are dealing with them.

**Irrigation and Fertigation** - Mike Goree of Polydrip Irrigation will discuss the development of an irrigation system that will deliver the right amount water to all parts of your field and the establishment of

a fertigation system to deliver fertility through your irrigation water. He will demonstrate equipment to setup an efficient irrigation and fertigation system.

**Plant Nutrition** - Dr. Justin Tuggle, Plant Nutrition Consultant, will discuss nutrient relationships, nutrients essential for plant growth and how some elements interact and affect the uptake and utilization of other elements. He will discuss evaluating soil samples and tissue samples to determine plant nutrient needs. Basically, how to fine tune your plant nutrient needs.

Daniel Britt with Delta Ag will discuss nutrient and fertility options for blueberry production.

**Exhibitors** will be on hand with blueberry harvesters, tractors, production and grading equipment and other materials to use in your blueberry operation.

**Please pre-register**, if you plan to attend the Field Day. Registration is \$20.00 per person. Please fill out and return the enclosed registration form by October 29. This will be a very informative day. Lunch, drinks and refreshments will be provided. I hope you will be able to attend.

**Directions to Blue River Farm** – The farm is located between Mount Olive and Hot Coffee, MS on Highway 532. The address is 1876 Highway 532, Mount Olive, MS 39119

From U.S. Highway 49 at Mount Olive, turn East on Highway 35, cross the railroad track and bridge, take a right on Highway 532, travel 9.3 miles, Blue River Farm is on the Right.

From Laurel, turn West on Highway 84 and travel 16.6 miles, turn North on Highway 532 just past Leaf River bridge, Blue River Farm is 6.5 miles on the Left.

From Collins – turn East on Highway 84 and travel 10.4 miles, turn North on Highway 532, Blue River Farm is 6.5 Miles on the left.

The phone number at Blue River Farm is 601-797-3896, if you have trouble finding it

**The Deep South Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference** will be held December 3 & 4 at the Riverview Plaza Hotel in Mobile, Alabama. An excellent, all day session on Blueberry Production will be held on Thursday December 4 with some very informative talks. A number of exhibitors will be on hand with blueberry harvesting, grading, irrigation and other equipment. Nurseries with blueberry plants and other supplies for your blueberry operation will also be on hand. A program is being mailed to you under another cover and you should receive it within the next 3 weeks. If you do not receive one, give me a call and I will put one in the mail to you. Please reserve these dates on your calendar and plan to attend.

Sincerely,

John Braswell, Ph.D.  
Executive Secretary

Serving the Blueberry Industry in the Gulf South

P. O. Box 193 Poplarville, MS 39470

Phone 601-403-8939 Fax 601-795-0653 Email braswell@ext.msstate.edu

**Blueberry Field Day**  
**9:00 AM, November 4, 2008**  
**Blue River Blueberry Farm, Mount Olive, MS**

The Gulf South Blueberry Growers Association Fall Blueberry Field Day will be held at Blue River Blueberry Farm, 1876 Highway 532, Mount Olive, MS. Owned by Max Draughn and managed by Greg Saulters, this 54 acres of blueberries has been rejuvenated and brought into production with impressive results. Intensive management techniques and close attention to detail has transformed this established blueberry farm from mediocre production to a highly productive, vigorous blueberry planting. All phases of blueberry production is involved including propagation of plants, planting and establishment, plant maintenance, harvesting, grading, packing and shipping. We will tour this highly productive farm and discuss the techniques used to vitalize and manage this productive blueberry operation.

Other informational activities at the Field Day include:

Management is the theme of the day. We will discuss trends in the blueberry industry and practices necessary to make your farm productive and profitable.

- Successful blueberry growers will discuss management practices of highly productive farms.
- Labor officials will discuss regulations involved in procuring and employing farm labor.
- Nutritional experts will discuss evaluating soil and tissue samples to determine plant nutritional needs, nutrient relationships, interactions that affect elemental uptake and fine tuning plant nutrition management.
- Irrigation experts will discuss water and nutritional management through a well managed irrigation system.

Exhibitors will be on hand with blueberry harvesters, tractors, handling and grading equipment, and other products to use in your blueberry operation.

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**Blueberry Field Day**  
**November 4, 2008**  
**Registration Form**

Please complete and return this form before October 29. Registration cost is \$20.00 per person.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks payable to Gulf South Blueberry Growers Association and mail to:

Shirley Haddox, Treasurer  
60 Hardie Rd.  
Sumrall, MS 39482

If you have questions, contact Dr. John Braswell at 601-403-8939 or [braswell@ext.msstate.edu](mailto:braswell@ext.msstate.edu) or Carolyn Smith at 601-403-8940 or [carolynk@ext.msstate.edu](mailto:carolynk@ext.msstate.edu)

**GULF SOUTH BLUEBERRY GROWERS ASSOCIATION**  
**CLASSIFIED ADS**  
**September, 2008**

**For Sale: JDV Guide Mount Sway Type Blueberry Harvester**, dual blower – Good condition - \$7,500.00. Call 601-735-1416 or 601-755-0622.

**For Sale: Weed Badger (need hoses), Pump and Motor** good. Must sell – make offer. Call Bobby Smith at 318-868-8234.

**Wanted: Large Ropak Picking Lugs** (need the ones that do not have the center rib). Call Joseph Robinson, Jr. at 251-937-8175.

**For Sale: Blueberry Plants** – Brightwell, Premier, Climax and Powderblue varieties. Contact Tim Goggans, Sandy Run Farm & Nursery at 601-270-7952.

**For Sale: Rabbiteye blueberry plants** - Alapaha, Austin, Climax, Premier, Brightwell and Powderblue. **Southern Highbush** – Star and Legacy. 2 and 3-year old plants. All varieties - \$1.50 per plant except Star and Alapaha - \$1.75 per plant. Contact James Craft at 601-722-4956.

**For Sale: Pine Bark Planting Mix and Bedding Mulches.** Contact Steven, Hartfield Wood Products, Petal, MS at 601-544-1955.

**Bee Hives for Blueberry Pollination.** Call to reserve your hive. Contact J. T. Crownover of Crown Honey at 601-953-4804.

**For Sale: Pine bark** - contact Pearl River Chip Mill, Inc., Bobby or Jeff Dickens, Poplarville, MS - 601-795-4555.

**Irrigation and Drainage Systems and parts and supplies.** 1-800-say-rain (729-7246) or [www.irrigation-mart.com](http://www.irrigation-mart.com)

**Capital Leasing Corporation provides leasing services** to growers for harvesting, grading and other farm equipment. Please call us for a quote on a customized lease for your next equipment acquisition. 1-800-880-4532 or (601) 981-3442.

**Irrigation Supplies** - Poly Drip Irrigation, Mike Goree, **1-800-676-0979**, Baton Rouge, LA

**For Sale: Gallon Pails, Boxes, plain white berri flats, plastic pints and clam shells.** Contact Tommy Pratt with J & M Industries at 1-800-989-1002.