

NOURSE

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COMMERCIAL NEWSLETTER

Volume XVI – Fall 2006

Greetings from Nourse Farms

We have had another wonderful year, producing a spectacular crop of berry plants. We are looking forward to supplying our customers with very healthy and vigorous plants for 2007.

Our commitment to our growers doesn't end with the sale and delivery of our product. We would like to emphasize that we are here as a resource to help you make informed decisions on planning a new planting or helping you fine tune your cultural practices.

We were able to visit many growers and attend several regional meetings this summer. These opportunities were helpful for me to see the various situations that growers are dealing with. Consult my other articles in this newsletter for more detail.

For the second year in a row, we have experienced a very challenging strawberry fruit harvest. Starting a week late, we experienced excessively heavy rains and very warm temperatures during the peak of our season. These adverse conditions certainly were very challenging for growers here in the northeast.

Finally, Nourse Farms is pleased to welcome Dave Moskin to our Sales and Grower Support Team. Dave's primary role will be customer service. He has been getting acquainted with some of our customers, to review how our plant performance and customer service is being received. This spring he will assist in organizing refrigerated truck shipments. He looks forward to the opportunity of meeting and visiting with you.

We are offering early pay discounts and encourage you to place your order early for best selection. This practice assures you that you will receive the varieties that are best suited for your needs.

I look forward to seeing you at the winter Trade Shows or visiting on the phone.



Nate Nourse, Sales Director

PLASTICULTURE STRAWBERRIES: (LOOKING OUTSIDE THE BOX) NATE NOURSE

Plasticulture is the dominant system of producing strawberries throughout the world. Over the last ten years many growers here in the U.S. have adopted this system to produce most or all of their fresh market strawberries. As we have discussed in previous issues of our newsletter, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages.

A big advantage of plasticulture is weed control. Hardly a day goes by here at Nourse Farms, where we receive a call from a grower that is looking for a solution to control their weeds. Many growers, who have successfully controlled weeds may not realize how herbicides may be damaging their plantings and reducing yields. I feel that in many situations, the effect of certain herbicides

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2006 – 2007 Trade Shows

Dec. 5 – 7: Great Lakes Fruit, Veg. & Farm Market Expo, Grand Rapids, MI

Jan. 7 – 9: WI Fresh Fruit & Veg. Conf., Oconomowoc, WI

Jan. 15 – 17: Ohio Fruit & Veg. Growers Congress, Columbus, OH

Jan. 30 – Feb. 1: Mid-Atlantic Fruit & Veg. Convention, Hershey, PA

Feb. 9 – 12: No. American Straw. Growers Assoc. (NASGA) / Strawberry Symposium, Ventura, CA

Feb. 13 – 15: Empire State Fruit & Veg. Expo, Syracuse, NY

Feb. 27 – 28: Illinois Small Fruit School, Mount Vernon, IL

New Test Varieties for 2007 TIM NOURSE

Strawberry:

Wendy - (Patent Pending)

A new early variety developed by Andrew Jamieson, Kentville Research Station, Nova Scotia, Canada. Tested as K98-6, an Evangeline cross, fruits are larger than Evangeline; shape is wedge-shaped to conic, firm flesh with bright red color. Excellent fresh flavor. Ripens with Evangeline and Annapolis. Plants are vigorous and runner well. Moderately resistant to powdery mildew and red stele, but susceptible to verticillium wilt. Our trial showed Wendy to be

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OUT IN THE FIELD

NATE NOURSE

This summer I was able to attend grower meetings in Maryland, Wisconsin and Maine.

The meeting at the University of Maryland Field Station highlighted plasticulture and high tunnel production systems. The main focus of these systems is season extension through earlier harvest. The upside is getting started sooner and drawing customers to farm stands at a slow time of year. Many farm stands in Maryland that imported strawberries from Virginia or North Carolina, are now producing their own very early berries. Berries are harvested 2 to 4 weeks earlier through these systems. The downsides were extra nights frost protecting and customers who were not ready for local berries.

The Wisconsin Berry Growers held an early summer meeting at Zastrow's Farm in Mayville on June 2nd. Of the many interesting topics covered, black root rot was the one of most concern. Plant Pathologist, Patty McManus, described black root rot as a complex problem with many factors coming together which determine the overall severity. A very wet spring on heavy soils were some of the main contributors. I saw shortened rotations out of strawberries and heavy herbicide use also as contributing factors. Cultural practices can have a substantial effect on controlling this disease.

The North American Strawberry Growers Assoc. summer tour in Maine, August 22nd & 23rd, brought growers together from across the U.S.

and Canada. The tour was led by Dr. David Handley from the University of Maine and Lauchlin Titus, President of the Maine Fruit and Vegetable Association. Attendees were exposed to many diverse farming operations and growing practices. The trend seen there was to provide strawberries through the tourist season, late June through late August. Day neutral production was being tested on several farms with good results. Here at Nourse Farms, we see day neutral strawberries adding to growers profitability.

I encourage all growers to join their State and National Organizations, as well as attend the meetings. The hardship of being off the farm for a few hours or days will be rewarded with a fresh perspective and new ideas.

**Order
Early!**

We are here to answer your questions

*Feel free to contact us
via E-mail:*

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**For
Best
Selection!**

PLASTICULTURE STRAWBERRIES: (LOOKING OUTSIDE THE BOX)

(Cont'd. from Pg. 1)

are controlling weeds, but in the end, are reducing yields. Black plastic alleviates herbicide damage.

The greatest hurdle faced with plasticulture is planting by hand. But once growers have tackled the hand planting, plasticulture will have a huge payback!

Other advantages of Plasticulture include increased yields and harvest efficiency. Whether it's your PYO customer or your berry pickers, both will enjoy the bigger berries that are easier to harvest.

While plasticulture has been used to advance ripening times of mid-season varieties, straw mulch can be used to maintain normal season ripening because it covers the plastic, and provides the best winter protection. Here at Nourse Farms all fields are covered with straw mulch. In the spring, we remove the mulch from the middle of the rows, exposing the black plastic, which warms the soil for ripening 5 to 7 days earlier.

Many additional side benefits have also been realized. In wet seasons, water damage is greatly reduced, along with disease pressure. My opinion is that with heavy soils the plasticulture practice will reduce root rot diseases, due to the reduction of excess moisture.

We plan to update our Plasticulture Guide this fall. Please let us know if we can send you one. We also encourage you to call us and discuss how we can help you design a plan to fit your specific needs.

2006 VARIETY PERFORMANCE

TIM NOURSE

Every year seems to bring us different weather challenges, so it's difficult to know what varieties will perform if we end up with a normal season. Certainly 2006 was one of those seasons that many growers in Southern New England will remember for a long time, with its extended wet periods and the heavy rainfalls. However, there were some notable performances that I will review with you.

Strawberries:

1. **Clancy** – This newer variety has been with us for only a short time, but its performance in our field was excellent. Clancy has always been a very heavy producer, being more productive than Jewel. This year's production took all of our extreme conditions very well with its high yield and the fruit held condition in the field. So, it appears to be a tough variety, performing well under wet, hot conditions. If you have not trialed this variety, I recommend that you do.

2. **L'Amour** – I have taken many phone calls from growers who are especially happy with this
(Cont'd on Pg. 4)

NEW TEST VARIETIES FOR 2007

(Cont'd. from Pg. 1)

highly productive, good quality and held its fruit size throughout the season. We highly recommend this new variety.

Red Raspberry:

Joan J - (Patent Pending)

A very high yielding primocane raspberry variety, developed by Derek Jennings in the U.K. A cross between Joan Squire and Terri Louise, Joan J ripens in the same season as Autumn Britten. Fruit size is good, averaging 5 grams per berry. Berries are firm, very well constructed and shaped with excellent flavor. The plant is very vigorous, developing long fruiting laterals. Highly recommended for trialing. Trial quantities are available for the 2007 planting season.

Blackberry:

Ouachita – (U.S. Plant Patent Pending) Ouachita (pronounced WAH-shi-tah) has been released by Dr. John Clark at the Arkansas Experiment Station. This thornless variety has excellent quality fruit, with firm, sweet attractive berries. Fruit ripens before Navaho. Plant has very erect canes, and intermediate vigor. Winter hardiness appears to be less than Navaho, similar to Apache. Plants also appear resistant to anthracnose, double

blossom/rosette and no orange rust has been seen on any plants. Recommended for trial in the Mid-Atlantic and South.

Asparagus:

Jersey Supreme Hybrid

Asparagus - The newest release from the Jersey asparagus breeding program, Supreme has very high yield potential as demonstrated by trial results. The spear size is more uniform than the other Jersey hybrids. Supreme is quite early, cold tolerant and is adapted to temperate, warm and cool climates. This hybrid is best adapted to light - medium sandy soils. Supreme has demonstrated very good rust resistance and selected for its tolerance to fusarium.

Newsletter Contributors

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Blueberries:

You have probably read articles about the following two blueberry varieties released by Michigan State University. There has not been any experience with these varieties in the Northeast. **We will have limited supply available for testing purposes.**

Draper - (US Plant Patent #15103) A new productive early-midseason fresh market variety from a Duke cross, selected by Dr. Jim Hancock at Michigan State University. Fruit are attractive blue color, consistently large, firm with excellent low acid flavor. Fruit ripening is concentrated. The plant is vigorous, growing up right and is highly productive. We recommend it for fruiting trials to experience its performance at your site.

Liberty - (US Plant Patent #15146) A new late season fresh market variety developed at Michigan State University. Selected from a Brigitta x Elliott cross, it ripens about 5 days before Elliott. Berries are firm, slightly flat and have an attractive blue color. Fruit size is medium to large and the flavor is pleasant. The plant is vigorous and grows up right to slightly spreading. We recommend it for fruiting trials to experience its performance at your site.



2006 VARIETY PERFORMANCE (Cont'd. from Pg. 3)

variety. Fruit quality is very good, holds its size especially well and has very good flavor. If you haven't tried this one, I recommend it.

3. **Wendy** – We saw our first Wendy fruit this past season. I think that it has potential to be a good early performer. The fruit quality was very good, attractive red color and good flavor. The production was high and it held its fruit size well through its picking season. If you are now planting either Annapolis or Evangeline, compare them with Wendy.

4. **Darselect** – This variety continues to be a top performer for many growers. Its large size, very high yields, attractive appearance and good flavor identifies this variety and maintains its prominence with growers. It certainly performed well again for us this past season.

Raspberries:

1. **Jaclyn** – We picked our first commercial quantity of Jaclyn raspberries this past fall and I was impressed with its consistent high flavor and quality. With these qualities, it will be a strong performer for direct marketers. Everyone knows that size and flavor sells. For commercial shippers, the fruit is dark red, which is a problem in some markets. The berry does not release easily until it turns dark red. Picking later in the day reduces this problem. It appears that cooler temperatures further influence its late release.

***** ELDERBERRIES *****

We are pleased to add Elderberries to our list of small fruits. Many of our growers are interested in this fruit for its high nutraceutical value and for the demand of the berries in the marketplace. We have a limited quantity of plants for this year, but have a large enough quantity that growers can plant initial planting for trials.

SAMYL ELDERBERRY –

This variety is highly recommended for its excellent yields and desirable growth habit. Samyl plants are highly vigorous and productive.

<u>1-3 Plants</u>	<u>4-24 Plants</u>	<u>25-50 Plants</u>
\$ 7.60 Ea.	\$ 7.00 Ea.	\$ 5.95 Ea.

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January 15th, 2007 2%

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