



Northern New York Agricultural Development Program News

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NNYADP Releases New Report on NY's First Juneberry Research Nursery

Northern NY - The farmer-led Northern New York Agricultural Development Program has posted a new report on establishing New York's first Juneberry research nursery. The planting at the Cornell Willsboro Research Farm in Willsboro, NY, will be one of the largest nurseries of its kind for studying this 'superfruit.'

Juneberry, scientifically known as Amelanchier, has the potential to be a major novel fruit crop in northern New York, and perhaps the Northeast, say researchers Michael H. Davis, Cornell Willsboro Research Farm Manager, and botanist Michael B. Burgess of the State University of New York at Plattsburgh.

"The announcement of this project last summer and earlier this year has generated a lot of interest from commercial fruit farmers," says Davis.

"The objective of this Northern New York Agricultural Development Program project is to build a living collection of Amelanchier plants as the foundation material for identifying varieties that are well-adapted to regional growing conditions," says Burgess.

Burgess and Davis, working as part of a multi-state collection team, gathered wild juneberry specimens in four Northeast states: Maine, New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont, for planting at the Willsboro farm.

Seed, stem cuttings and dug plants were taken to Burgess's greenhouse at SUNY Plattsburgh last fall. The stem cuttings did not successfully set roots. The germinated seedlings and dug plants will be transplanted into the field nursery at the Cornell Willsboro Research Farm this spring.

The new nursery will also evaluate six juneberry varieties currently grown on commercial fruit farms in western Canada where the fruit is popularly known as Saskatoon berry.

The NNYADP project leaders have already held Juneberry workshops at the Willsboro farm, and are now partnering with Ontario County Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Agriculture Program Leader Jim Ochterski, who has helped pioneer juneberry plantings with commercial growers in the Finger Lakes region of New York State.

On April 11, 2014, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County will hold a Juneberries for the Home and Small Farm Workshop in partnership with Sollecito Landscaping Nursery in Syracuse, NY. The workshop will address site selection, natural history, planting, pest control and harvesting. There is a fee to attend; contact Erin Hull at 315-424-9485 x224 for details.

The Northern New York Agricultural Development Program provides practical, on-farm research, technical assistance, and outreach on a diverse range of crops to farmers in Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties. Learn more about agriculture in Northern New York and find NNYADP project results at www.nnyagdev.org. -30-



Photo: Dr. Michael Burgess and Jessica van Splinter root Amelanchier/juneberry cuttings in Philadelphia, PA, one of eight Northeastern U.S. locations where the plant was collected to support development of the first Juneberry research nursery in New York state. Photo: Michael H. Davis