Missouri Beginning Farmer Program Presents:

The 2011 Missouri Blueberry School

Oct 7-8, 2011
MSU Darr Agricultural Center
2401 S. Kansas Expressway
Springfield, MO 65807
and 2 area blueberry farms
Sponsored in part by a grant from the USDA Beginning Farmer Program.

Blueberries offer huge potential for Missouri farmers. Though a challenging crop to produce, blueberries are in high demand for many markets. The Blueberry School will offer educational sessions and a tour of innovative blueberry farms. Join local and nationally known blueberry specialists to gain expertise on:

- Selecting adapted blueberry cultivars
- Establishing blueberry plantings
- The economics of blueberry production
- Constructing and maintaining blueberry irrigation systems
- Blueberry fertility management
- Experiences of Missouri blueberry producers
- On-farm tours of innovative blueberry producers

Workshop Registration:
Information, including a registration form, is included in this packet. Please contact Sabrina Brown at 417-881-8909 or BrownSabr@missouri.edu for more information on the Missouri Blueberry School.

Follow us on our Blog to get updated news and events:
missouribeginningfarming.blogspot.com
The Missouri Blueberry School

Friday, October 7, 2011  Blueberry Educational Sessions

8:30  Registration
9:00 - 9:45  The Missouri Blueberry Industry  Ben Fuqua, Patrick Byers
9:45 - 10:00  Break
10:00 - 11:00  Blueberry Planting Establishment  Bernadine Strik
11:00 - 12:00  Blueberry Cultivars  Martin Kaps
12:00 - 1:00  lunch
1:00 - 2:00  Cash Flow Realities with Blueberries  Ed Browning
2:00 - 2:45  Blueberry Nutrition Management  Bernadine Strik
2:45 - 3:00  Break
3:00 - 4:00  Blueberry Irrigation  David Bryla
4:00 - 5:00  Missouri Experiences  Grower panel
5:00 - 7:00  supper (on own)
7:00 - 9:00  Reception, round table discussions, Blueberry Council meeting

Saturday, October 8, 2011  Blueberry Farm Bus Tour

8:00  Tour bus departs from Darr Agricultural Center
8:30-10:30  Sunshine Valley Farm tour  Demonstration of blueberry irrigation design
10:30-12:00  Travel time
12:00-1:00  lunch
1:00-3:00  Persimmon Hill Berry Farm tour  Discussion of blueberry disease issues
3:00-4:30  Return to Darr Agricultural Center

Tour Stops

Sunshine Valley Farm, 8011 East AD Highway, Rogersville, MO 65742

Sunshine Valley Farm is located east of Springfield in Greene County. Owned and managed by Jan and Mike Wooten, the farm produces blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, apples, peaches, plums, pears, and asparagus. In addition to fruits and vegetables, the farm includes a café and bakery. A high tunnel for berry production was added in 2011. Sunshine Valley Farm was established in 1990.

Persimmon Hill Farm, 367 Persimmon Hill Lane, Lampe, MO 65681

Persimmon Hill Farm is owned and managed by Earnie and Martha Bohner. Though regionally known for blueberries, Persimmon Hill also produces blackberries and shitake mushrooms. Earnie and Martha also specialize in value added products such as fruit based BBQ sauces, jams, and juices. The farm includes a bakery that produces the famous “blueberry thunder muffins” as well as a range of baked goods. The first blueberries at Persimmon Hill were planted in 1984.
Speakers

**Dr. Bernadine Strik, Professor, Oregon State University**

Dr. Strik conducts research on the following crops: blackberry, blueberry, raspberry, strawberry, hardy kiwifruit, cranberry, and minor berry crops. She is also the OSU lead on the cooperative OSU-USDA berry crop breeding program and coordinates the evaluation of selections of strawberry, raspberry, blackberry, and blueberry at the North Willamette Research and Extension Center (NWREC) with the objective of finding new commercial cultivars for the Pacific Northwest.

**Dr. David Bryla, Research Horticulturist, USDA-ARS**

The objective of Dr. Bryla’s research is to evaluate horticultural practices for growing berry crops. Specific areas of study include: irrigation, fertilization, and soil management; pruning and cropping practices; pest, disease, and weed management; cultivar selection; and identification of new small fruit crops. Results of this research will be the basis for modifications and improvements in production strategies used by growers of berry crops, and will clarify the impact of specific production factors on yield and quality of these crops.

**Dr. Martin Kaps, Research Professor, Missouri State University**

Dr. Kaps has conducted research on a wide range of fruit crops for over 25 years at the MSU State Fruit Experiment Station. He has investigated production practices for fruits under Missouri’s challenging environment, and in particular he is recognized for his work with fruit cultivar trials, including blueberry.

**Mr. Ed Browning, Natural Resource Engineer, MU Extension**

Ed Browning is new to blueberry production; however, having managed an 800 acre farm and having sold grain storage and handling facilities in addition to nearly 30 years of MU Extension experience, he is well aware of capital needs and cash flow issues. As a natural resource engineering specialist he’s concerned with water conservation and irrigation systems for use with blueberry production and harvesting methods.

**Mr. Patrick Byers, Horticulture Specialist, MU Extension**

Patrick Byers has worked with blueberry research and outreach education for the past 28 years. His particular interests lie with production systems for blueberry growers in Missouri, and blueberry marketing. Along with Dr. Fuqua, Patrick will present an overview of the Missouri blueberry industry.

**Dr. Ben Fuqua, Professor, Missouri State University**

Ben Fuqua, Emeritus Professor of Agriculture at Missouri State University has been conducting research on highbush blueberries since 1975. Specific projects have included cultivar selection, soil modifications, irrigation, fertilizers and plant nutrition. He has published numerous newsletter articles and co-authored 3 bulletins on blueberry culture in Missouri.
Registration and Meeting Information

The 2011 Missouri Blueberry School

Why should you consider attending the 2011 Missouri Blueberry School? Are you a commercial blueberry grower, with specific production issues? Are you considering blueberry production for the first time, with basic questions concerning growing and marketing blueberries? Are you a home blueberry grower, with a desire to build your blueberry knowledge? All of these topics, plus more, will be part of the 2011 Missouri Blueberry School.

Friday, October 7, 2011  Blueberry Educational Sessions

The October 7 Blueberry Educational Sessions will take place at the Bond Learning Center, located at the MSU Darr Agricultural Center, 2401 S. Kansas Expressway, in Springfield. The Friday program includes presentations on a wide range of blueberry topics, by national experts and local blueberry specialists. In addition, the Missouri Blueberry Council will meet Friday evening, following the reception, with an educational program as a part of the meeting.

Registration for the educational sessions is per family or farm, with the first registration from a family or farm at $50.00. This registration is for one person per family or farm, and includes lunch, refreshments, educational resources, complimentary evening reception, and a complimentary copy of Highbush Blueberry Production Guide (a $48 value, one per family or farm). In order to make the Blueberry School as affordable as possible, additional registrations from the same family or farm are at the reduced rate of $35.00 each, which includes lunch, refreshments, and the evening reception. Please fill out the enclosed registration form, and return with payment to register. Please include an email, as we will send registration confirmation and updates by email.

Saturday, October 8, 2011 Blueberry Farm Bus Tour

The Missouri Blueberry School bus tour will visit two premier blueberry farms, interact with the growers, and provide plenty of time to ask questions. Learn how to get started in blueberries, how to address the challenges related to blueberry production, and how to market the blueberry crop. In addition, two special on-farm presentations will be delivered. The first presentation will focus on design and use of drip irrigation systems, and the second presentation will give an up-to-date picture of the blueberry disease situation in Missouri.

Registration for the blueberry farm bus tour is $50.00 per person, and includes the bus trip, lunch, refreshments, and educational resources.