



WASHINGTON RED RASPBERRY COMMISSION NEWS

AUGUST, 2007

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Calendar

September 5 - WRRRC Board Meeting, 1 pm - *WSU Mt. Vernon*
October 31 - WRRRC Board Meeting, 1 pm - *19th St. Fire Hall, Lynden*
December 3-5 - WSU Small Fruit Workshop, WRRRC Bd. Mtg. *Lynden*
January 29-31 - North American Berry Conference - *Hershey, PA*

Institute of Food Technologists Conference

By Dee Munson, WRRRC Promotions Coordinator

The Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) represents 22,000 professionals in food science and technology as well as those in marketing and nutrition research. These experts are the ones who determine what goes into the thousands of new food products offered each year. This year's Chicago conference offered scientific presentations and an expo of products, ingredients and technology.

Nutraceuticals – health benefits that come from foods – dominated the sessions and the expo floor. The speakers and the companies exhibiting demonstrated that there are opportunities and challenges for the Commission.

Dee Munson, Promotions Coordinator, and Rodger Wasson, Marketing Consultant, talked with processors, manufacturers, flavor companies, the other berry groups and trend experts. Dee and Rodger learned that the processors and manufacturers feel they will use and sell more raspberries when they have nutrition research to demonstrate the benefits of raspberries.



We saw several interesting and great tasting products that included raspberries and raspberry fla-

vors, including:

- The hot new nutrition “shots” – 3-ounce individual servings of fruit-flavored yogurt fortified with natural plant sterols “clinically proven to actively remove cholesterol.”
- Raspberries coated with a nutrient-fortified chocolate mixture to serve over fortified yogurt
- Raspberries in fortified cereal snack bars

We also learned that many of the major processors/manufacturers are using berries other than Washington's. Several processors are based in Europe and use European fruit. Others both source and process in South American – Brazil and Chile. There were more products featuring the exotic berries than raspberries: *acai* and *goji* predominated.

Scientific sessions related to phytonutrients and antioxidants (all benefits of raspberries that we need to be researching and promoting) covered blueberries and cranberries, because both have a significant body of research to present. Once we have significant nutrition research completed the Commission will be able to have a presence at IFT, present programs on the nutrition benefits of raspberries and influence food manufacturers and processors.

Trend experts focused on the significance of the Boomer market (50 – 64 year olds) and their demands for products to help them maintain vitality and live longer. These important and discriminating consumers represent the largest block of consumers and want products, backed by research, which fit their still-busy lifestyles and that taste good. Taste, all the speakers agreed, is key.

Opportunities are there for raspberries to be a part of new products. The challenge is initiating nutrition research studies whose results the Commission can merchandise to the food processors, consumers and to the foodservice industry.

Profitability is THE Goal

The WRRRC recognizes that its major task is to provide raspberry growers the tools to become and remain profitable as they provide quality berries and berry products to consumers. We seek to do this primarily through funding research into improved berry varieties, production practices, market and product development, and raspberry promotional campaigns.

WRRRC also seeks to provide information to growers so that they can make informed decisions on their farms. A new tool for growers is Cost of Production Study completed by Whatcom County Extension which helps raspberry producers understand, manage, and control their costs of production.

This computer based economic model is available at the WRRRC office and will be a feature of workshops this fall/winter. You are encouraged to pick it up or request us to send you a copy.



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
WHATCOM COUNTY EXTENSION

Washington Machine Harvested
Red Raspberry Cost of Production
Study for Field Re-establishment



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Commission**

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*Promotion, Fair Trade,
and Research assistance
for Growers*

News Notes

WRRC Submits Application for National Research and Promotion Program

WRRC board members Rob Dhaliwal and Erin Thoeny, along with Development Coordinator Tom Krugman, went to Washington, DC in May to deliver the final application for the creation of a United States Red Raspberry Council (USRRC). This application is being studied by the USDA who intends to solicit comments this fall leading towards a nation-wide referendum in early 2008.

The WRRC believes the creation of a strong national organization to promote raspberries is long overdue. The USRRC will provide raspberry growers an opportunity to invest many more dollars in market development and advertising than what has been possible with the limited budgets of the state berry commissions. We encourage your active involvement in the campaign to inform growers of the potential of the USRRC. We will have this issue prominent on our agendas in the meetings this fall and spring.

Raspberry Roundtable Conducted in Los Angeles

Leading scientists from North America were gathered in Los Angeles in April to attend an international conference. WRRC Marketing Consultant Rodger Wasson was able to corral several key scientists to stay an additional two days to participate in a roundtable discussion on the key health contributions that raspberries provide. These discussions were hosted by Paramount Farms and UCLA. The scientists participating were: Dr. Joe Powers of Washington State University, Dr. Venket Rao of the University of Toronto, Dr. Gary Stoner of Ohio State University, Drs. David Heber and Navindra Seeram of UCLA, Dr. Beverly Clevidence of the USDA-ARS Human Nutrition Center, and Dr. James Brooks from Wm. Bolthouse Farms. These scientists were joined by Erin Thoeny and Richard Sakuma of the WRRC and Raj Bathe and Jerry Alamwala from the BC Raspberry Improvement Council.

Key messages that resulted from the Roundtable include: frozen berries have a strong health message, raspberries have attributes that have a positive effect on obesity, raspberry flavour remains a strong positive point, esophageal cancer has been demonstrated to be counteracted by raspberry consumption, and raspberries have properties that address cardiovascular and inflammation concerns. The WRRC promotion team is arranging for further research to be conducted in these areas and will be concentrating on advancing the raspberry health message (*see page 1*).

New Promotions/Marketing Team Contracted by WRRC

Recent years have seen some disarray and lack of budget in the WRRC promotion program. The WRRC Board has addressed this issue with the adoption of a clear Marketing Strategy last fall, an investment in health based research and product development projects, and the development of a new Marketing/Promotions Team to guide and implement promotional activities. Dee Munson has been contracted to be our Promotions Coordinator through 2008. Dee has a long history of working with WA ag commissions on promotional programs and brings her abundant experience and numerous positive connections to our team. We have also kept Rodger Wasson, the architect of our Marketing Plan, involved to serve as a Marketing Consultant to the WRRC Board. Rodger's skills and experience complement Dee's providing us with the team we need to aggressively advance the positive story raspberries provide.

WSDA Provides Promotional—Technology Grants

The WRRC has been awarded two grants by the WA Dept. of Agriculture. \$20,000 has been provided under the WSDA Market Promotion and Trade Barrier Grant Program to educate food technologists, food editors, food manufacturers, institutional users and chefs on the nutraceutical benefits of red raspberries. We will use these funds to support participation in Trade Shows.

We also received \$28,000 from the WSDA administered USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to support a partnership with other Specialty Crop growers in exploring and developing pruning and tying technology that benefits raspberry growers. We intend to use these funds to support our participation in a national steering committee focused on technology in agriculture and to organize a grower workshop in the spring.

Nominations for WRRC Board Recruited

Nominations for upcoming board positions will be received by the WA Department of Agriculture in September. They will be contacting you to announce the nominating procedure. It is time for those of you in Districts #4 (Skagit, Snohomish) and #1 (Whatcom) to be thinking about who you want to represent you. Terms are expiring for John Ozuna, Rob Dhaliwal, and Randy Honcoop. Rob is prohibited from re-election as he has served 2 three year terms. Randy and John are eligible to be nominated. We also have vacant seats in the SW WA, Central Puget Sound, and Olympic Peninsula districts.

Production Reports Due

The Grower and Processor Report Forms are being mailed along with this newsletter. The State Auditor has been critical of the low percentage of these forms that have been returned. Only YOU can help address that concern. Please return your completed form to insure you are properly credited for your assessment dollars.