

Washington Red Raspberry

Commission

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Board of Directors

Adam Enfield, President
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Kristie Clark, Treasurer
Randy Honcoop
John Ozuna
Richard Sakuma
Bill Dallas

Henry Bierlink, Executive Director
Tom Peerbolt, Research Coordinator
Tom Krugman, Marketing Director
Rodger Wasson, Marketing Consultant

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

News Notes

Referendum for National Raspberry Research and Promotion Program

Raspberry growers in the US and international growers exporting to the US await a decision by USDA to conduct a referendum to create a United States Red Raspberry Council (USRRC). The WRRC submitted a petition to create this board in 2007 and the USDA recently published a proposed rule to create the council. Comments on the proposal were received in May and they are being reviewed with a pending decision to conduct a grower referendum. We anticipate this referendum will occur this fall. Copies of the proposal and a more complete rationale for its creation are available on our website.

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.

Food Safety Update

Anyone not concerned about the potential impact of a food safety violation should consider the fate of peanuts, pistachios, sprouts, tomatoes, melons, etc. One problem can negatively affect entire industries in catastrophic ways. Contamination of our food is a big deal and the WRRC is dedicated to helping the entire raspberry industry address the issue. We want an effective program that is reasonably easily implemented and is focused on true safety concerns not just increasing red tape. We encourage you to take the simple steps (proper field and field worker sanitation, record keeping, water testing, etc.) that could help reduce the risks of contamination. The WRRC has numerous resources that could help you along this path. Contact Darryl Ehlers, our food safety chair, or the office.

Nominations for WRRC Board Recruited

Nominations for upcoming board positions will be received by the WA Dept. of Agriculture in September. They will be contacting you to announce the nominating procedure. It is time for those of you in Districts #2 (Central Puget Sound), #3 (Clark, Cowlitz) and #4 (Skagit, Snohomish) to be thinking about who you want to represent you. Richard Sakuma's term is expiring and he is eligible to be renominated to a second term. The other seats are currently vacant. We encourage you to be part of the nominating and election process so that you can keep your Raspberry Board responsive to the top priorities for the success of your farm.

Production Research/Innovation/Technology Update

The WRRC maintains an active interest in insuring our growers have access to information that will help them compete well in the global berry marketplace. Our traditional search support network is always changing and we do our best to find ways to ensure your immediate needs are met as well as providing access to information about where the future of berry production may be going. A few of these efforts are:

1. Pathology - The loss of a WSU pathologist a few years ago has been a primary concern for the WRRC. A recent federal appropriation for the NW Center for Small Fruit Research shows promise to address this need. We expect to fully develop how this works into our grower's needs this fall.
2. Technology - We team with the Specialty Crop Research Team to advance discussion of innovation and technology in specialty crops. Our partners in this effort are the citrus, tree fruit, grape, nursery, and vegetable growers around the nation and world. Numerous equipment and information technology businesses also participate. A good way to track this information is at <http://www.berryinnovation.com>.
3. Product Development - The WRRC recognizes this area is one of our weakest links in the support system we seek to provide our growers. Expect more investments in developing marketable raspberry products this fall.

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.

Calendar

Contact the WRRC office for information on each of these upcoming educational opportunities

September 9 - WRRC Board Meeting, 1 pm - *WSU Mt. Vernon*

October 28 - WRRC Board Meeting, 1 pm - *19th St. Fire Hall, Lynden*

December 3 - Small Fruit Center Conference - *Kennewick, WA*

December 7-9 - WSU Small Fruit Workshop, WRRC Bd. Mtg. *Lynden*

February 25-27 - - North American Raspberry/Blackberry Conference - *Monterey, CA*