



# WASHINGTON RED RASPBERRY COMMISSION NEWS

MARCH, 2005

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## Grower Participation needed for Test of new Phytophthora Root Rot Detection Method

There are a number of causes of root rot in raspberry fields, including in some cases, a specific fungal pathogen, Phytophthora. Currently accurate diagnosis of the specific root rot organism Phytophthora is not available to growers in the U.S. The raspberry industry is on the verge of having a new, powerful tool in our efforts to combat Phytophthora root rot and the next step in this process is in the growers' hands. A much more accurate method of testing for this disease in both fields and root stock is being implemented this year and if you are a raspberry grower in the state of Washington, your participation is needed.



*Dr. Pete Bristow is retiring as WSU's plant pathologist for small fruits. Pete has been a crucial part of our industry for many years. He will be missed by all of us. Thank you Pete!*

What will you get from this? If all goes as planned, you will have a much better knowledge of whether your fields have this disease or whether the symptoms you might be seeing have another cause. This can lead to a more effective use of some very expensive chemicals and the knowledge needed to increase yields on compromised fields. Once implemented, this test will also help keep fields free of Phytophthora by allowing for better detection of the disease organism in planting stock.

This year a statewide survey of growers' fields is planned. Samples from as many growers as we can get to participate will be tested using what is called PCR testing. This method has been used for years in the European raspberry industry and has had a dramatic impact in reducing their losses from Phytophthora root rot. It is also now being used by the Washington and Oregon nursery industries to detect their major new disease, Sudden Oak Death.

This last fall Craig MacConnell and Dr. Pete Bristow brought a proposal for this new testing method before the commission. It was viewed as having so much potential that the commissioners not only designated \$20,000 support funding but also applied to the Washington State Commission for Pesticide Registration for another \$20,000. This was just approved. In addition, Craig MacConnell has also been successful in

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## WASHINGTON RED RASPBERRY COMMISSION 2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **District #1** – Whatcom County

Rob Dhaliwal, President 722 Vine Street Lynden, WA 98264 <a href="mailto:rob@samsonestates.com">rob@samsonestates.com</a> 360-966-7787 FAX 318-8501	<i>Position # 2</i> <i>Expires – 2007</i>	Darryl Ehlers 2366 Halverstick Rd. Lynden, WA 98264 <a href="mailto:lingonberry1@aol.com">lingonberry1@aol.com</a> 360-988-5184 FAX 988-5184	<i>Position # 4</i> <i>Expires - 2005</i>
Ralph Minaker 6862 Nooksack Rd. Everson, WA 98247 <a href="mailto:minakerr@hotmail.com">minakerr@hotmail.com</a> 360-966-5645 FAX 966-5645	<i>Position # 3</i> <i>Expires - 2005</i>	Randy Honcoop 9696 Northwood Rd. Lynden, WA 98264 <a href="mailto:ranhonfarm@peoplepc.com">ranhonfarm@peoplepc.com</a> 360-354-1155 FAX 354-1155	<i>Position # 8</i> <i>Expires - 2007</i>

### **District #2** – Clallam, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Mason, Pierce, & Thurston Counties

Vacant <i>Position # 1</i> <i>Expires - 2004</i>	Vacant <i>Position # 7</i> <i>Expires - 2003</i>
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### **District #3** – Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Pacific, Skamania, & Wahkiakum Counties

Erin Thoeny, Vice-President P.O. Box 194 Woodland, WA 98674 <a href="mailto:thoenyf@pacifier.com">thoenyf@pacifier.com</a> 360-225-7133 FAX 225-2154	<i>Position # 5</i> <i>Expires - 2005</i>	Jon Cotton 2006 SW 11th Way. Battle Ground, WA 98604 <a href="mailto:JCatBttlGrnd@aol.com">JCatBttlGrnd@aol.com</a> 360-600-4949 FAX 256-0195	<i>Position # 9</i> <i>Expires - 2006</i>
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### **District #4** – San Juan, Skagit, & Snohomish Counties

Glenn Sakuma, Treasurer 17400 Cook Rd. Burlington, WA 98233 <a href="mailto:glenns@sakumabros.com">glenns@sakumabros.com</a> 360-661-4168 FAX 757-6611	<i>Position # 6</i> <i>Expires - 2006</i>	John Ozuna 1719 Douglas Street. Mt. Vernon, WA 98273 360-770-1182 FAX 757-3936	<i>Position # 10</i> <i>Expires - 2007</i>
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### **WSDA Representative**

Bill Dallas WSDA P.O. Box 42560 Olympia, WA 98504 <a href="mailto:bdallas@agr.wa.gov">bdallas@agr.wa.gov</a> 360-902-1925 FAX 902-2092	<b>2005 Officers and Committee Chairs</b>  Rob Dhaliwal, President Erin Thoeny, Vice President Glenn Sakuma, Treasurer  Ralph Minaker, Research Chair John Ozuna, Communications Chair Randy Honcoop, Promotions Chair
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### **Key Personnel Contacts:**

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## **Proposed Changes to WAC Fail**

The WA State Department of Agriculture has informed us that the referendum on the proposed changes to our governing document has failed. We had to demonstrate support from 60% of those voting and 60% of the production. The actual results indicated that 59.68% and 78.33% of the production supported the changes. Therefore it failed.

Unfortunately only 40% of our eligible voters bothered to return ballots. One more positive vote would have put this issue behind us and gave us more security about our continued existence. As a result of the vote we remain quite uncertain if the WRRC will have a long term future.

Nothing will change for the immediate future and the board will take up the question of what to do next following harvest. They will most certainly be watching a decision by the US Supreme Court this summer on the Beef Checkoff which will send a signal about the fate of the agricultural commissions nationwide.

## **Opportunity!**

The Food Institute Report is a weekly summary of the news surrounding the food industry. The WRRC is a member of the Food Institute which allows us to add individual members at a reduced rate.

Members receive the weekly report (approximately 24 pages) and a personal password to the Food Institute website which features a daily summary of the top food news.

Those interested in this educational opportunity must send \$175 payable to the WRRC by April 20th.

## **New Board Members Begin Service**

The Red Raspberry Commission is pleased to welcome back one of our current members, Rob Dhaliwal, who was reelected to a second term on the Board. Rob owns and operates Evergreen Farms and is a partner in the Lynden-based family enterprise, Samson Farms. He and his brother Dhar have opened a winery known as Samson Estates which produces a number of fine wines including a raspberry wine.

We also welcome Randy Honcoop back to the board after a six year hiatus. Randy and Leslie Honcoop and family have been active raspberry growers north of Lynden for 16 years. Randy currently serves as the raspberry representative to the Northwest Center for Small Fruit Research where he is able to apply his considerable interests and experience in research on our behalf.

John Ozuna from Mt. Vernon was appointed to fill the vacant position in district #4. John is a Mt. Vernon native who worked for Farm Credit Services for 15 years before starting his own raspberry farm in 1995. He owns and operated both Rainbow Ranch Inc. and Southern Cross Farms with 60 total acres of raspberries.

Thank you to each of the new board members and continued thanks to those who have just completed their terms and those still working on your behalf as WRRC Board members. They are always ready to listen to your concerns and suggestions.

## Fair Trade Update

Few actions taken by the WRRRC over the course of its history have been more controversial and misunderstood than the IQF antidumping suit against Chile initiated in 2001 and completed in 2002. The WRRRC spent over \$600,000 to pursue the case and has only recently completed payment for the legal expenses incurred.

Was it worth it? Opinions on this range from absolutely yes to absolutely no. Clearly most IQF producers saw direct benefits in strengthened prices once the duty was imposed. A strong case can be made that strengthened IQF prices result in higher B grade and juice prices as well. But without doubt the benefit is more indirect. Debate over the value of the action in proportion to the cost will go on forever.

What is not a matter of debate are the results of the agreements that the WRRRC had signed with each of the IQF growers that prompted us to take this action. The WRRRC Board made agreements with these growers in 2002 that we would continue to fund the original case only if contracts were signed with growers who stood to benefit from financial refunds flowing from the so-called "Byrd Amendment". These contracts designated that all funds received under the "Byrd Amendment" would first be returned to the WRRRC until it was completed refunded all the costs incurred in the suit.

The Byrd Amendment was enacted in the late 1990's and directed the government to return the dollars collected from products subject to antidumping duties to the companies damaged by the dumping action. The duties collected no longer went in the US general treasury but instead would be distributed at the end of each year to affected companies. In our case that meant the IQF growers had a chance to receive the funds collected from imported Chilean IQF raspberries.

The WRRRC Board had little optimism that these agreements would ever result in money returned to our commission. But it was only fair that if any funds should become available that the entire industry, not just IQF growers, would benefit.

Last year the small glimmer of hope became a reality. The Byrd Amendment has survived threatened sanctions from the World Trade Organization, and the President's commitment to do away with it. It is still in place and last year \$171,228 was released back to the industry. Fifteen farmers had these funds divided up among them based on the qualifying expenses they could demonstrate. Thirteen of these growers immediately turned these funds back to the WRRRC as agreed resulting in nearly \$150,000 added to the WRRRC's reserve account.

We are optimistic that we will receive at least as much again in 2005 and possibly in future years. This will depend on how long the Byrd Amendment survives. We are hopeful that it will survive long enough for us to return our entire original investment.

This arrangement is not without its costs. Each year there is an opportunity to challenge the duty through an administrative review process. The affected Chilean companies challenged it last year and are again this year. The industry has been served by seven IQF growers that have fronted the costs of defending the duty against these challenges. The WRRRC Board recognized the value of their efforts by agreeing that as long as we have Byrd funds coming back to us we would repay them for their costs of defending the duty. We appreciate their cooperation because if no one funded the defense against the challenge brought by the Chileans there is a high likelihood that the duty would be eliminated and therefore no Byrd funds would be available in future years.

The WRRRC is generally pleased with the where this venture has taken us. Raspberry prices have strengthened in part due to the fact that our case has made it clear to our competitors that we will fight to protect our industry from foreign fruit coming in below their costs of production. Our bills are paid and we have begun to be healed from the hole in our budget that has hampered our other tasks over the past five years.

## **PCR Testing** *Continued from Page 1*

providing even more support for this project through the Whatcom County IPM Program.

A fact sheet on correct sampling and submission procedures for this survey is being prepared. Growers will take samples, (or arrange for samples to be taken) and submit coded but anonymous samples for testing by a laboratory at Oregon State University.

Here's how this money is going to be used:

- About \$10,000 will be needed to pay for overhead, seasonal labor and lab set up costs.
- The rest, over \$30,000, is earmarked to go directly to subsidize the testing costs for raspberry growers.
- At the estimated cost of \$100 per test and a 50/50 split of the cost with each participating grower, this is enough for around 600 individual tests. Checks made out to the WA Red Raspberry Commission for 50% of the sample cost must accompany the sample.
- There are about 170 assessment paying growers in Washington and the commission has devised a distribution of these subsidized tests so that each grower can turn in a minimum of 2 samples each for testing. The rest of the subsidized tests would then be allocated according to the acreage of the grower. On May 1<sup>st</sup> the budget remaining will be available to growers on a first-come-first-served basis.

The results of these tests will be kept anonymous on the grower level but will be made available by county so that overall distribution of the disease can be made public. Please participate! This will help both you as a grower and the industry as a whole. Contact Craig MacConnell, email: [cbmac@wsu.edu](mailto:cbmac@wsu.edu), phone (360) 676-6736 or Tom Peerbolt, email: [tom@peerbolt.com](mailto:tom@peerbolt.com), phone (503) 289-7287 for more information.

## **Promotion Program**

The consensus of the WRRC Board is to examine our marketing and promotion program before we launch into any new projects. We have seen the value of a regional, multi-berry strategic plan in our research program and we hope to develop something similar in promotion. The Board is reviewing strategic plans done by other commissions and planning to go through an exercise where we ask companies that are in the market what actions the WRRC can take to help them promote sales of raspberries.

We also expect to foster partnering relationships with other berry associations in the region and nationally. There is a strong interest in multi-berry promotion and in leveraging our efforts with that of other berry promotion programs. We sense that small steps toward cooperation will provide us with opportunities to increase consumption that are not possible for us with our small promotion budget.

We welcome your suggestions and ideas. Contact Randy Honcoop, Promotion chair.

## **Berry Health Symposium in Corvallis**

Oregon State University and Berry Works has organized an International Berry Health Benefits Symposium in Corvallis June 13-14. This will be an opportunity for those interested in learning more about the positive health message surrounding berries. Registration for the conference is available by contacting our office or online at:

[www.oregonstate.edu/dept/foodsci/berryhealth.htm](http://www.oregonstate.edu/dept/foodsci/berryhealth.htm)

**Washington  Red Raspberry  
Commission**

Promotion, Fair Trade, and Research  
assistance for Growers

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### Calendar

April 4 - Field Day at R. Honcoop Farm  
Late June - Field Day at Abbotsford  
Early July - Field day at Sakumas  
Mid July - Field Day at Randy Honcoop  
Mid July - Field Day at Puyallup  
Late August - Field Day at Vancouver  
September 7 - WRRC Board Meeting

## WSU Research News

**Pete Bristow retires:** We received news this past month that one of our most valuable industry researchers is retiring. Dr Pete Bristow, the WSU small fruit plant pathologist has been actively solving our disease problems for over 25 years. We owe Pete a huge dept of gratitude. He has been in the fore front of the raspberry industry's battles with root rot, fruit rot and cane diseases and is responsible for many of the materials and methods we now use to control these problems. Thanks, Pete, you've done us great service over the years. Good luck in whatever your future plans are. We can only hope they include raspberries.

**New Small Fruit Plant Physiologist to be hired:** WSU is down to three candidates for a new small fruit researcher at the Mt. Vernon Station. Each will be interviewed in late March. If you are interested in attending the interviews, contact Dr. Pat Moore for the schedule. This person should be on board by late summer.

**Small Fruit Plant Pathologist Position being eliminated:** The position vacated by Dr. Pete Bristow is now slated to be closed out. WSU Plant Pathology chair, Dr. Tim Murray, sites impending cuts from both federal and state sources as the reason. This will leave a large gap in the small fruit research resources for not only Washington but Oregon and British Columbia as well. All the regions have come to depend on the work being done in this program and, with the major disease issues in all the berry crops, we'll need to band together and find a way to make up for this critical loss.

**WSU Whatcom County Field Day and Raspberry Beetle Trap Give-Away:** WSU Whatcom County Extension will be holding a field day to discuss raspberry IPM research projects. The new WSU Fact-sheet: "Integrated Pest Management for Raspberry Beetle" will be presented and sticky traps for the raspberry beetle will be given away to growers interested in using this new IPM tool.

Participants will also be introduced to the *Phytophthora* Survey Project. The goal of this project is to use PCR technology to determine the occurrence of *Phytophthora fragaria* in raspberry fields and in nursery plants prior to planting. Details of the project will be discussed and information on how to sample will be given.

**The field day will be held on Monday April 4 at 10:00AM at Randy Honcoop's Farm: 9696 Northwood Road. For more information, contact Craig MacConnell or Colleen Burrows at 676-6736 or at [cbmac@wsu.edu](mailto:cbmac@wsu.edu) and [cburrows@wsu.edu](mailto:cburrows@wsu.edu)**