



Farmland & Wildlife NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2022
Volume 27 | Issue No. 1

*PARTNERS IN
STEWARDSHIP*



Blueberries grown in Delta are ensured to be of top quality. CREDIT: Morgan Powell

Feature Story Down the Pacific Coast

The coastal regions of British Columbia and Costa Rica share a striking number of similarities in their approach to agricultural production

MP MORGAN POWELL | Communications Coordinator @ DFWT

Delta, a quaint city in southern British Columbia, can be characterized by its marriage between vast farmlands and the surrounding Fraser River Estuary. If you take a drive around Delta, you will likely take note of the tall bushels of berries garnishing the roadsides. Plump and purple by nature, high-bush blueberries have become one of Delta's most expansive commodities.

The Fraser River Estuary has gifted our agricultural sector with nutrient-rich, fertile soil that supports a wide array of crops including blueberries. In order to yield a high-quality crop, blueberries require a low pH between 4.5 and 5.5. Meaning that, the soil must be more acidic than a neutral pH balance that is typical for growing other fruits and vegetables.

Canada currently holds a position of being one of the top exporters of high-bush blueberries, with a stark 96% of the berries being cultivated right here in British Columbia. Our provincial economy has fared well, with a total of \$7B having been acquired through blueberry production. But as the estuary's ecosystem continues to be threat-

IN THIS ISSUE:

DOWN THE PACIFIC COAST

A comparison between Delta's blueberry production and Costa Ricas' coffee production

IN MEMORY OF WAYNE TEMPLE (1955 -2021)

A personal letter thanking Wayne for his contributions to local agriculture

DELTA FARMLAND WORD SEARCH

An interactive puzzle exploring themes found throughout this newsletter edition

WILDLIFE TIDBITS

A small word of advice from the late John Hatfield



Help Us Conserve Paper! Subscribe to the electronic version of this newsletter by sending an email to dfwt@dccnet.com with subject line "electronic newsletter".



Printed on FSC certified stock that is 10% post-consumer recycled waste.

-ened, and looming concerns of food insecurity become more present, one question remains: “how can we ensure the blueberry’s future is one of exceptional quality?.”

When discussing the chain of food production, it is crucial to expand our scope. Economic impact is largely generated through global exports, so our approach can too follow a global pursuit. If we travel further down the Pacific coast, gracing the equator, we will find ourselves in the tropics of Costa Rica. A country defined by its vibrant ecosystem and agricultural networks, Costa Rica bears similarities to our local Delta region. As Delta is an ideal growing location for blueberries, Costa Rica harnesses the conditions generated by their higher altitude regions and warm climate in order to create the ideal Arabican brew.

Costa Rica’s coffee stands out in the pre-saturated realm of global coffee exporters. Not just because of the growing conditions, but because of the high agricultural standards that maintain the quality of the product. In Costa Rica, it is prohibited to grow any coffee beans that aren’t 100% Arabica beans, which aids in ensuring premium-level exports.

Here in British Columbia, the BC Blueberry Council supports the



Blueberries are one of Delta’s biggest commodities. CREDIT: Morgan Powell



Wildlife Tidbits

*with the
late John Hatfield*

Here’s a suggestion for the ranchers who range their livestock out in the open backcountry: paint a pair of fangs on the rear end of your livestock. Apparently this will help to keep cougars and bears away from your livestock.

local blueberry sector representing over 600 growers across the province. Through communication with local growers, the council assists in “producing the safest and most nutritious berries.” Similar to Costa Rican standards, the BC Blueberry Council aims to overcome the “lack of universal standards” currently present in global agricultural production.

High agricultural standards are not the only factors determining the presence of a product on a global scale. The culture of accessibility surrounding an export acts crucially in representing the reputation of a given product. Agricultural sectors can showcase the accessibility of a product through formulating a strong link between grower and consumer. In Costa Rica, agritourism is a dominant type of excursion for global travelers. Visitors are invited to interactive farms in order to demonstrate how coffee beans are produced and sold.

The BC Blueberry Council promotes a similar process. Several Delta farmers participate in an agritourism strategy classified as “U-Pick.” Participants are granted the opportunity to pick their own blueberries off of the bush as opposed to buying them from a supermarket or farm-stand. In doing so, the consumer better understands the origins of their food and can begin to grow pas-

MY DONATION TOWARDS FARMLAND AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

I would like to contribute \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City & Postal Code _____

Email _____

Phone Number _____

PLEASE MAIL CHEQUES TO:

Delta Farmland & Wildlife Trust
205-4882 Delta Street
Delta, B.C. V4K 2T8

OR DONATE ONLINE AT:

www.deltafarmland.ca

Charitable Society Number: 138397740 RR0001

*Thank you for
your support!*

QUESTIONS?

604-940-3392



Costa Rica is well known for their coffee production. CREDIT: Morgan Powell

DELTA FARMLAND WORD SEARCH

U	L	O	W	Q	S	R	I	H	F	W	B	C
G	S	E	I	R	R	E	B	E	U	L	B	I
Z	H	X	C	K	V	W	C	V	F	R	H	A
Y	F	X	F	N	S	J	Z	Z	V	X	N	U
N	F	U	E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	E
A	G	R	I	C	U	L	T	U	R	E	B	U
B	D	C	T	R	A	P	T	O	R	L	D	J
C	J	F	F	V	Z	L	T	T	Z	A	K	C
H	S	V	M	A	P	R	Z	D	L	S	I	
W	B	I	O	D	I	V	E	R	S	I	T	Y
M	N	F	N	S	J	V	N	U	M	P	L	V
X	U	E	Y	D	X	E	Q	W	B	S	R	P
J	R	Z	T	Y	B	T	E	E	F	F	O	C

LADNER
BLUEBERRIES
COFFEE
RAPTOR
AGRICULTURE
BIODIVERSITY

-sionate about where their food comes from. With the assistance of the BC Blueberry Council, we can remain confident that our blueberries have the potential to be globally recognized as superior quality.

However, in order to ensure healthy soil, the maintenance of our local ecosystems are crucial. A contributing factor to Costa Rica's quality brew relationship is the healthy agriculture maintains with local wildlife - over a quarter of Costa Rican land falls under conservation. This challenge is precisely what our organization aims to tackle. At Delta Farmland & Wildlife Trust, we support farm-ers in providing wildlife habitats on their agriculture fields while improving the health of their soil. In our own procedural planning, we often take inspiration from innovators in the global agriculture sector. By following the strategies of regions like Costa Rica, we not only promote a sustainable future of food security, but we also prioritize the necessary preservation of our local ecosystems.

“Canada currently holds a position of being one of the top exporters of high-bush blueberries”



Wayne and Delta Farmers Institute members at a 2009 grains field day.

In Memory

“Wayne’s World”

Wayne passed away peacefully on December 5th (World Soil Day) at his home in Comox, BC.

AB ART BOMKE | Professor Emeritus @ UBC Faculty of Land and Food Systems

I’m writing this note as a long-time friend and research associate with the intention of remembering Wayne’s contributions to BC agriculture and especially his dedication to the community of farmers and conservationists on the Fraser delta.

My collaboration with Wayne at UBC started in 1981 with his Ph.D. project on uses of seaweed in crop and soil management, including field work on the Reynolds Farms on Westham Island. In 1991, federal/provincial funding for soil conservation research and demonstration work became available leading to a Delta Farmers Institute project centred on the highly degraded soil of The Reclamation Site at the corner of 33rd Avenue and 34th Street. This Site became known by various farmers as “Wayne’s World” and is indicative of the friendly, respectful and effective working relationships that extended for the next 20 years of Wayne’s work in Delta. The site was the location of the first grassland set-aside and displayed the rapid improvement of soil structure under grassland, which eventually led to DFWT’s important Grassland Set-aside Program.

A subsequent research project to evaluate European grain production practices not only set a Canadian wheat yield record at Hugh Reynolds’ Farm, but was also subject to intensive waterfowl grazing. This experience convinced us that a community based approach was needed to tackle the intensifying impacts of waterfowl on a shrinking delta land base.

Delta Farmland & Wildlife Trust

Directors

David Bradbeer (Chair), Jack Bates (Vice-Chair), Michelle Laviolette (Treasurer), Barry Belec, Clayton Botkin, Nicki Brockamp, Katie Leek, Sean Smukler, and Liz Walker

Staff

Drew Bondar (Executive Director), Valerie Miller (Office Coordinator), Morgan Powell (Communications Coordinator), Connor Hawey (Research & Field Technician)

Subsequent research on cover crops led to Wayne coining the term “Greenfields” as a label for the initial start-up project that led to the current Winter Cover Crop Program. Cover cropping has become one of the core approaches of the DFWT to accommodate wildlife on farmlands and improve soils.

Prior to the DFWT obtaining sufficient funding to staff a full-time position, Wayne took on the administrative responsibility needed to launch the DFWT, a small but arguably one of the best community-based organizations facilitating the delivery of ecosystem services from farmland.

When DFWT funding permitted, Wayne returned to his first love carrying out collaborative, on-farm research, largely in support of Delta farmers. Projects included cooperating with Fraserland Organics to develop on-farm composting methods, assessing the fertilizer value of poultry manure, comparing mulches for blueberries, and evaluation of small grain varieties for yield, disease resistance, and quality.

Upon retirement from UBC, Wayne continued his collaboration with farmers in the Comox Valley assisting with grain variety evaluation, organic blueberry establishment, soil management for wine grapes and generally supporting local small-scale farmers. His time in Comox was graced by his connections with his good friends in his community and hobbies such as making some fine whiskey using Vancouver Island ingredients. In summary, Wayne Temple was an unassuming, yet competent researcher who dedicated his efforts towards sustaining farmers and the land they depend on, especially on the Fraser delta. He is greatly missed by his friends and neighbours.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM SUPPORTERS!

