



NYS BERRY GROWERS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

New York berry growers are invited to participate in a 2-part research study aimed at 1) developing a better understanding of communication between berry growers and researchers in New York State, and 2) identifying best management practices for improving berry production efficiency. The first part of the study involves a survey that will be mailed to those identified as berry growers and members of the New York Berry Growers Association, the Northeastern Organic Farmers Association of New York, their local Cooperative Extension, or as a berry farm listed with <http://www.pickyourown.org/NY.htm> to collect information for the study. (Note: If you are not a member of one of these organizations, but would like to participate, please contact one of the researchers listed below.) The second part of the study involves a short one-on-one interview with a researcher.

Purpose of the study:

The objective of this study is two fold: 1) identify and evaluate the various ways that growers acquire berry production information in New York and 2) identify management practices that are considered by growers to be the most efficient and effective.

Your participation in this study would be extremely valuable and we hope the results of this study will lead to improved communication and information delivery between growers and researchers.

In addition, the most promising berry management practices identified will be implemented in small on-farm trials and, if successful, shared with the berry industry. One article will be written in each monthly issue of New York Berry News related to this topic.

What's involved?

There are two components to this study; a *survey* and an *interview*. If you chose to participate, *you may participate in one or both components of the study*; participation in either component is voluntary, you may chose to skip any question you do not want to answer and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

The survey can be completed either online or in hard copy. We anticipate it will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Information letters, consent forms, and hard copies of the survey will be mailed to growers on November 1, 2007. Please fill out the hard copy survey and return it in the envelope provided or complete the on line survey by November 15, 2007.

The interview will include questions about your farming background and how you have acquired information about production practices over the course of your experience as a grower. With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded in order to ensure accurate recording of responses.

All responses will be confidential. Any reported results will not include information that would allow identification of participants. Reports will be kept in a confidential file and will only be accessible to the researchers. If you agree to have the interview recorded, the recording will be destroyed after transcripts, which will not include identification of interviewee, have been completed. We anticipate this to be 2 months after the interview.

What's in it for me?

Information collected in the study will be compiled and reported back to participants by mail, and shared with other growers through New York Berry News articles. In addition, study participants will automatically be entered in a drawing to receive one of the following prizes:

- 1st prize: A complete set of NRAES Production Guides for Small Fruit, including strawberries, blueberries, and brambles (\$128 value)
- 2nd prize: 2007 Cornell Pest Management Guidelines for Berry Crops (\$25 value)
- 3rd prize: *Greenhouse Raspberries and High Tunnel Raspberries and Blackberries* (\$18.50 value)

If you have any questions at any time please feel free to contact the researchers conducting the study; Rebecca Harbut (email: rmh44@cornell.edu phone: 607-254-2945), Cathy Heidenreich (email mcm4@cornell.edu, phone 315-787-2367), Laura McDermott (email lgm4@cornell.edu, phone 518-642-1007) or Dr. Marvin Pritts (email: mpp3@cornell.edu, phone: 607-255-1778).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the University Committee on Human Subjects (UCHS) at 607-255-5138 or access their website at: <http://www.osp.cornell.edu/Compliance/UCHS/homepageUCHS.htm>.