



Berry Gram

6658 Suwanee Rd
Beulah, Florida 32526

Season In Full Swing:

The 2010 Blueberry season is in full swing! The Blueberry field is open from 7 AM to 7 PM seven days a week. Our Southern Highbush plants have completed their season and have made room for the remaining Rabbit eye varieties: Tifblue, Premier, Climax, Alapaha, Savory, Vernon, Brightwell, Powderblue and Ochlockonee. We are extremely pleased with how the bushes are producing this season. Due to the heat, the best time to pick is from 7-9 AM and 5-7 PM. Take a break on the swing in the blueberry barn if you do pick during the main part of the day.

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Blueberry History:

Wild rabbiteye blueberries were first cultivated in northeastern Florida near Whitehouse in 1887. About five years later, Mr. Moses A. Sapp, a logging contractor, began the first commercial production. He selected plants from the wild in northwest Florida north of Crestview. About 2000 acres were planted in Florida between 1920 and 1930.

Research began on rabbiteye blueberries at the UGA Coastal Plain Experiment Station, Tifton, Georgia in 1926. In a cooperative research program, this station, the North Carolina Agriculture Experiment Station and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture in Beltsville, Maryland, seedlings were developed and sent to Tifton, Georgia.

Dr. W. Thomas Brightwell, in 1944 expanded the research on rabbiteye blueberries and a farm was acquired near Alapaha, Georgia. After 30 years of improving the wild rabbiteye, a selection was released in 1983 and named after Dr. Brightwell.

You will recognize the names Tif Blue, Brightwell, and Alapaha in our field. Now you know the rest of the story....

*Austin, Max E., Rabbiteye Blueberries, Auburndale: Agscience, Inc., 1994. pgs. 2-4.

Newsletter Spotlight

We want to thank everyone who has visited us down at the Palafox Market every Saturday.

Featured Recipe:

Beulah Berry Blueberry Tea

Blueberry Drink Base:

4 cups fresh or frozen blueberries,
rinsed & drained
2 cups water
sugar

Place blueberries in a saucepan with water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Set sieve or colander lined with cheesecloth over a bowl & pour in the blueberry mixture. Gently press out the juice with a spoon or by twisting the cheesecloth. (I use a jelly strainer, see ball canning supplies on the web. Also let it cool).

Discard the pulp* and measure the juice. Place in a saucepan. Add 1/2 cup sugar for each cup

of juice and cook over medium heat, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Bring to a boil and cook 2 minutes. Chill, cool, and store in frig. Makes about 1 pint.

The Tea:

Make a gallon of tea using Lipton Instant Ice Tea Lemon flavored.. Comes in a big container at Walmart. Takes 1 1/3 cup of the instant tea, per gallon of water. I usually mix it in a big bowl or pot....add 2 cups of the blueberry drink base, then pour into a gallon jug. Chill .

If you are doing it by the glass...make your tea and add 2 T of the drink base with a slice of lemon.

* Use the pulp to make a peach blueberry pie or cobbler.

THE BERRY THAT TAKES THE CAKE

This morning the Blueberry Patch kept ringing my chime. My flight to Newfoundland was coming soon. Like a bear preparing for hibernating I felt the need to store more blueberries away for the winter months. My final decision was to run out to the farm with plenty of water & ice for a final picking. Oh! were the berries flaunting their bluish glow. I go for the big ones--looking inside the bush & under the leaves for the prize winners. My yellow pail was heaping as I returned to the shed for a rest & water. The heat & humidity was some shockin' hot & I was soakin' wet from head to toe. After resting in the swing right next to the fan & watering up I headed out to my marked spot with my second pail. The longer I picked the hotter I got, but the berries were getting even bigger & obviously had not been picked over. When my gallon pail was 3/4 full a strange feeling came over me, a sick feeling & I became nauseated. My first thought was "I'll die in BeulahLand", as the farm is in Beulah. I scanned the area & found bushes big enough to make a nice shade & I sprawled out under them with a nice view of these prize winning blueberries hanging over me. Every now & then I would reach up & pick a few of the big ones. When I felt a wee bit better I knew I must head for the shed. I passed a lady picking on the same row & thought maybe I should ask her to go for help but instead I kept on going. She said to me, "It's hard to quit. You just want **ONE MORE BERRY, JUST ONE MORE BERRY.**" I told her that I did not get my pail quite full because I was sick from the heat & having to go in.

I trudged on to the shed & was greeted my friend of many years, Bill Flowers. He owns the farm, is a veterinarian & was a groomsman in my first wedding. Bill sings out, "Sharon, only fools pick blueberries at this time of the day." I responded, "Bill, I am sick!" I figured he was a dang good veterinarian & I qualified as a large animal. Doc would know what to do. He went into Code Blue action giving me water & putting towels dipped in icewater on my wrist, face & neck. I laid there thinking, "Bill buried my last dog, Scruffy, nearby under the oak trees. To save money I'll give him my final wish to be buried next to Scruffy. Nice place in the country, birdhouses all around with bluebirds & martins fluttering about. "

much TLC I began to cool down & feel better. I regained my senses. A quick funeral was no longer an option. This is when the news that **TAKES THE CAKE** came. One of the helpers braced herself & informed me that a lady had taken my berries. **TAKEN MY BERRIES?** I thought I was hearing things--this heat has fried my brain. **YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING. THIS IS A JOKE.** " For real, she replied. Of course, I wanted a full description of the thief. It was the lady that wanted **One More Berry, Just ONE MORE BERRY**". The lady who saw me laying comotose & dying in the Florida heat under the blueberry bush. I returned to the Recovery position with the iced towel over my head in horror & disbelief. **"WHAT IS THE WORLD COMING TO?"** How could **"ONE MORE BERRY"** have been this important to anyone? **" And, my yellow pail of prize winners at that!"** Tears tried to come but no water was there. It was all in my T shirt. Instead, I said a prayer for the lady who took my berries.

As I laid on the chaise lounge continuing to chill, a Shed Meeting was held. A unanimous decision was made for the helpers to pick me a pail of blueberries as I remained in RECOVERY. Another nice gentleman named Mack took real pity on me. He told me if I would return at 5:00 he would have me a bucket of berries ready for me. My spirits were lifted as well as my faith in mankind. **"one bad berry in the patch doesn't spoil the whole patch."** I gave thanks for the good berries, headed home, & returned at 5:00 to see the yellow pail of prize winners waiting for me.

Sharon
6-19-2010

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Questions or comments? E-mail us at beulahberries@bellsouth.net or 850.453.2383