

## **The Way We Grow Bean for The Farm Stand; Harvesting by Machine**

Paul Gove, Gove Farm, Leominster, Mass.

### **Site Selection:**

Dry land- we can always irrigate, but wet sites create problems  
Less fertility- we try to stay away from land that was heavily manured the previous year

### **Soil Preparation:**

Plow, harrow, fertilize very lightly if necessary  
Preplant incorporate herbicide using chain link drag

### **Planting:**

Spacing: ideally 2" apart in 36" rows  
Timing: usually 3 to 5 days between batches, when the plants are just emerging, seed again

### **Growing:**

Cultivate, side dress very lightly in wet years  
walk the rows once for large weeds  
spray, usually for leafhoppers

### **Mechanical Harvest:**

Pixall Pullpix one row harvester  
Operates best when plants are dry, early afternoon is optimal  
Use slowest gear on the tractor  
Depth control critical, especially on early, shorter plants  
Picks about one bushel per minute

### **Grading and Sorting:**

Vibratory sorting table- removes short and broken beans  
White belt grading table- to manually remove defective beans

### **Comments:**

We wouldn't grow beans if we couldn't pick by machine, due to the labor commitment at harvest.