

# Changing Business Models for Wild Blueberry Growers in Maine

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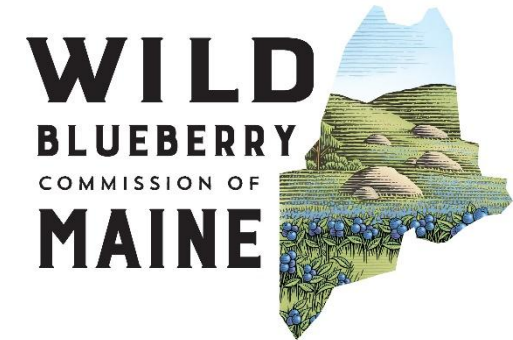
# Challenges in the Maine Wild Blueberry Industry

- Significant generational shift – previous gen didn't need to market
- Consolidation
- Low prices triggered shift away from commodity markets



# Solutions... It Takes a Village!

- Diversification
- Emphasis on Quality
- Marketing to Millennials
- Industry Support
- SCB Grant
- Maine Farmland Trust Business Course
- UMaine Production Course
- Knowledge Exchange
- UMaine “Looking for Berries”



# 1. Diversification

- Maine Wild blueberry farmers typically grow ONE crop.
- Diversification into value-added products
- 95% of the crop sold as frozen fruit

Changes:

- Now more value-added products are made
- Increased direct sales

# Fresh Pack

- Increased demand



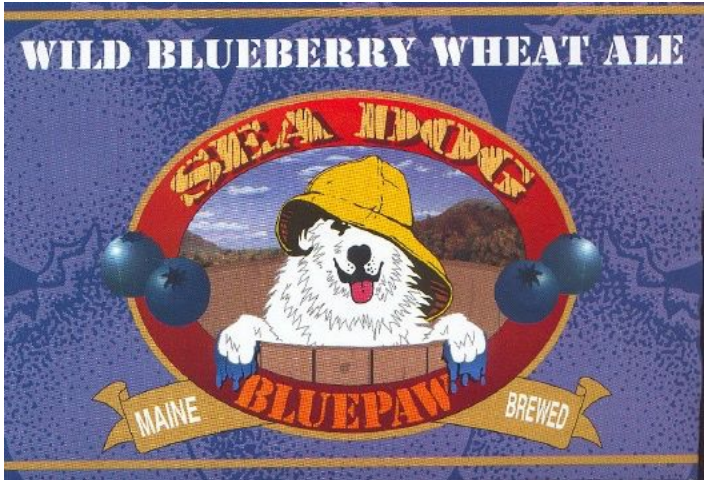
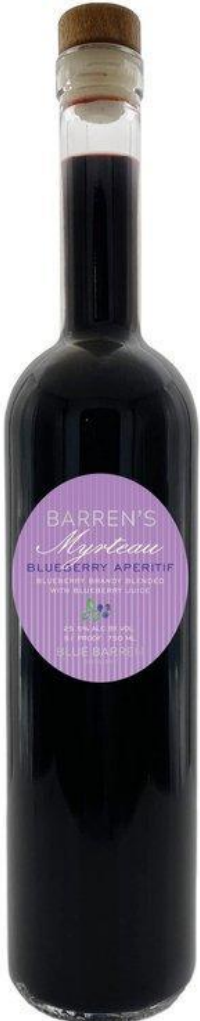
# Wine

2 lbs/bottle



Bluet & R.A.S. Wines

# Beer & Distilled Beverages



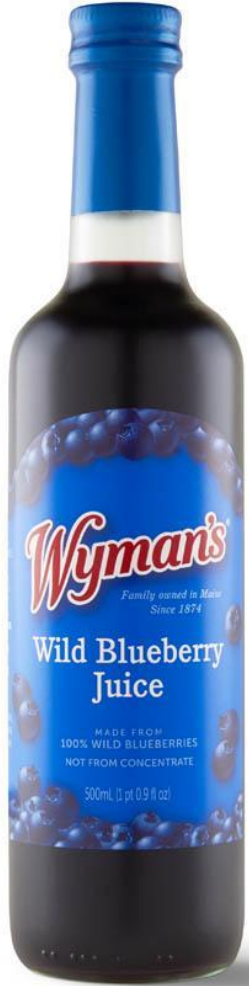
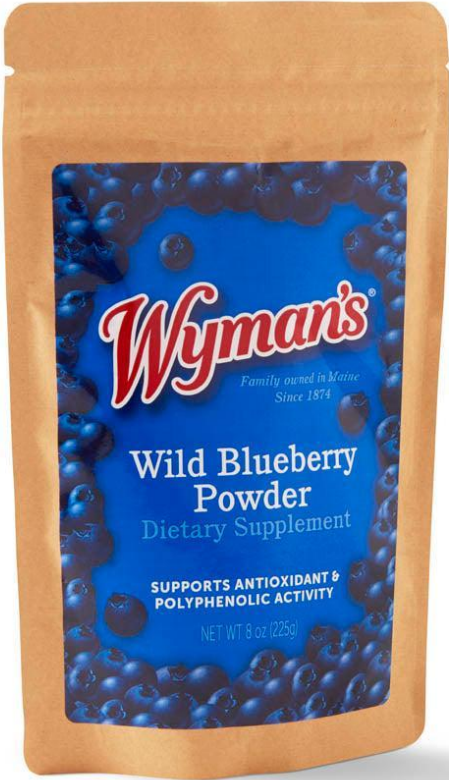
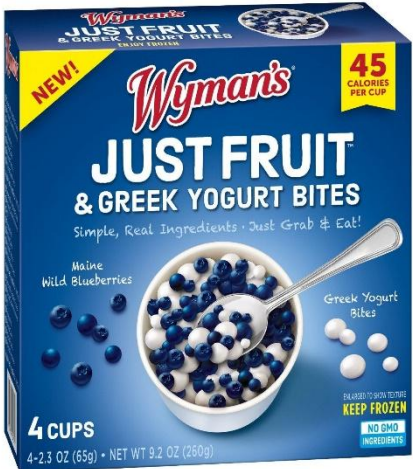
# Vinegar & Hot Sauce



Ewing Fruit Co & West Maquoit Vinegar Works



# Wyman's



# Fields Fields Wild Blueberry Farm (40 acres)



*10lb Box - Fresh Frozen  
Organic Wild Blueberries*

\$56.00



*30lb Box - Fresh Frozen  
Organic Wild Blueberries*

\$140.00







# Fields Fields

Wild. Organic. Blueberries.

[www.fieldsfieldsblueberries.com](http://www.fieldsfieldsblueberries.com)

  @fieldsfieldsblueberries

# Brodis Blueberries (170 acres)



## 2. Emphasis on Quality

- **Quality** over Quantity
- Northeastern farms can't compete in quantity so it must be **quality!**
- Farmer - Buyer Relationship



# 3. Marketing for Millennials

Simple Text, No Shadows, No Italics

*Farm*

**Farm**

Fonts & Colors: Mat finish is in.



# 4. Industry Support

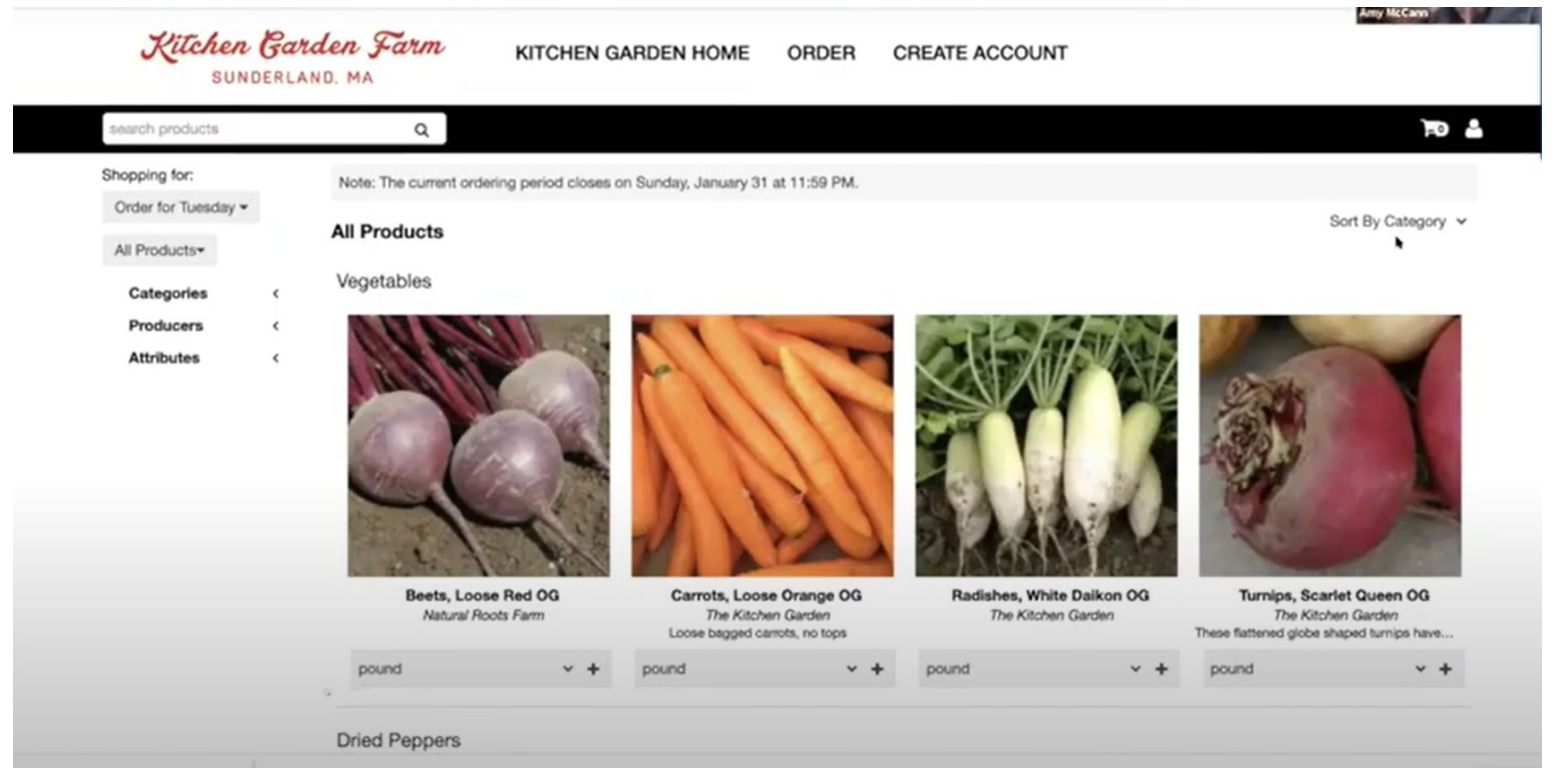
- Fresh Pack and Value-Added Committee (formed in 2019)
- Wild Blueberry Weekend
- Tastings on Rt 95
- Marketing MAINE





# 5. Online Sales and Distribution

- State of Maine Specialty Crop Block Grant
  - Submitted by Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine
  - Collaboration: MEFTI, Local Food Market Place, Forager, & Extension
  - Goal: Connect farmers with online distributors/hubs



# 5. Farm Calc & Maine Farmland Trust

- FarmCalc: FREE Enterprise Budgeting and Whole Farm Financial Planning
- Wild Blueberry Cohort Workshop Series on their Business of Farming Program



# 6. UMaine Wild Blueberry Course

- Open to Students AND the Public
- 1 credit, 5 week course
- Goal: recruit & train new and beginning farmers



## Announcements ▾

### Climate change poll questions-3 Extra Points ▾ ×

Yongjiang Zhang posted on Sep 28, 2022 6:45 PM

Dear all, due to technical problems, you didn't get a chance to answer poll questions during the climate change lecture. If you want to get 3 Extra points, please take a few minutes to answer 12 poll questions [Climate change and wild blueberry poll questions](#)

### 2021 Field Mgmt Costs ▾ ×

Lily Calderwood posted on Sep 27, 2022 8:52 PM

2021 Field Mgmt Costs  
Attachment(s):

## About Instructor ▾

INSTRUCTOR PROFILE

Dr. Lily  
Calderwood et al.



About Us

# 7. UMaine Buyer-Seller Connection

- Extension webpage
- 53 requests in 3 years (2020-2022)
- 4800 lbs of berries connected
- 53 relationships built

## Looking for berries?

Enter your request here and we will connect you to the berries you need.

**Name of Your Buisness or Organization**

**Berry quantity that you're looking for? (in pounds please)**

**Are you looking for organic berries?**

- Yes
- No
- No Preference

**Where are you located?**

City

State / Province / Region

ZIP / Postal Code

**Prefered Method(s) of Contact \***

- Phone
- Email

Other

# 7. Knowledge Exchange (Farmer-Farmer)

- Farmer-Farmer
- Farmer-Entrepreneur
- Farmer-Seasoned Business



# Questions?

## Resources

[Lily.Calderwood@maine.edu](mailto:Lily.Calderwood@maine.edu)

<https://extension.umaine.edu/blueberries/>

- Newsletter
- Field meetings
- Research reports
- Virtual conference recordings
- Enterprise budgets (email Lily)

