

Massachusetts News

Massachusetts Fruit Growers' Association Holds Annual Meeting, New MFGA President Elected

The Massachusetts Fruit Growers' Association (MFGA) held its Annual Business Meeting on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 at the New England Vegetable & Fruit Conference in Manchester, NH. Before the MFGA membership was a slate of Officers and Directors to be elected including President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Auditor, and Directors at Large (5 nominees). Joanne Dinardo of Sholan Farms, Leominster was elected President. Joanne is the first female President of MFGA and is also President of the Friends of Sholan Farms where she is active in managing staff and volunteers overseeing the approximately 20 acres of apple orchard owned by the City of Leominster.

In a statement to the MFGA audience, Joanne said "I believe in the cause of this organization, that of to be a proponent of fruit growing in Massachusetts and New England. I owe my success and the success of Sholan Farms to the support I have received from every one of the members of this organization. I thank you all for your support and look forward to serving in this role."

Joanne recently retired as Conservation Administrator for the City of Leominster. Before that she had a career at Bell Atlantic/Verizon for 37 years as Operations Director. Her farming background dates back to when her grandparents owned and operated Johnson Farm (an orchard and dairy farm) on West Street in Leominster. Her education includes Business Management and Administration degrees from Mt. Wachusett Community College



Joanne Dinardo, new Massachusetts Fruit Growers' Association President

and Boston's Emmanuel College. Joanne has dedicated her life to helping improve lives of fellow citizens and has served in leadership roles for the American Cancer Society, and numerous other organizations. Now that she is "retired" Joanne can devote her time and energy to Sholan Farms, her winemaking hobby, and MFGA, which will be well served by Joanne's business experience, management skill, and dedication to the fruit industry.

Vice Presidents elected were Ben Clark of Clarkdale Fruit Farms in Deerfield, Chris Smith of C.N. Smith Farms in East Bridgewater, and Mark Tuttle of Breezeland Orchards in Warren. Wes Autio of UMass was re-elected Secretary-Treasurer, and Ken Nicewicz of Nicewicz Family Farm in Bolton was chosen to continue to be Auditor. Five Directors at Large were elected: Franklyn Carlson of Carlson Orchards in Harvard, Sean O'Neill of Fairview Orchards in Groton, Al

Rose of Red Apple Farm in Phillipston, Tim Smith of Apex Orchards in Shelburne, and Andre Tougas, Tougas Family Farm, Northboro. Directors typically serve a three-year term.

Also at the MFGA Annual Meeting Tom Smiarowski and Paul Russell of the UMass Risk Management Program presented a draft letter requesting USDA-Risk Management Agency consider all Counties in Massachusetts to be eligible for peach crop insurance. Currently crop insurance for peaches is only available in Hampden, Hampshire, Middlesex & Worcester Counties unless a written agreement is entered into. Making all Counties eligible will make it much easier for growers to purchase peach crop insurance across Massachusetts. A motion was made and passed to finalize the MFGA letter of support for Tom and Paul to pursue this, and thanked for taking the initiative.



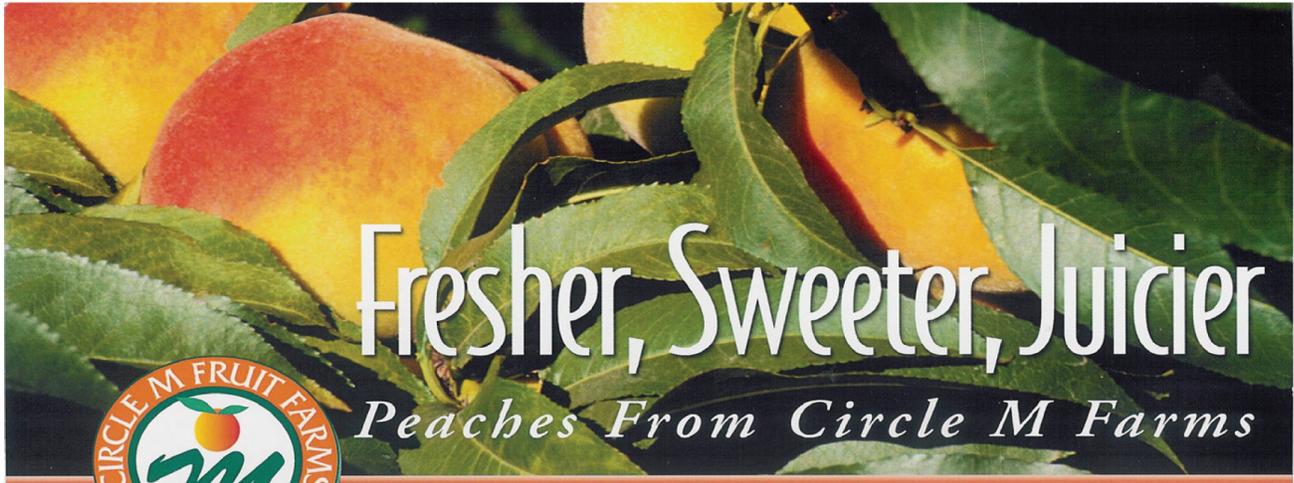
Wes Autio and Jon Clements Attend NC-140 Annual Meeting

Professor Wesley Autio of the UMass Stockbridge School of Agriculture, and Jon Clements, UMass Extension attended the NC-140 Regional Rootstock Research Project Annual Meeting November 14-15, 2017 in Wenatchee, WA. Wes and Jon are both members of NC-140, whose mission is “Improving economic and environmental sustainability in tree fruit production through changes in rootstock use.” At the Annual Meeting, they both presented results from four rootstock

plantings at UMass: one peach rootstock planting and two apple rootstock plantings at the UMass Orchard in Belchertown, and an organic apple rootstock planting at Small Ones Farm in Amherst. Their report to NC-140 is available on the NC-140 website, <http://nc140.org> under “State Reports.” The NC-140 group also visited Washington State University’s Sunrise Research Orchard south of Wenatchee, and McDougal & Sons, Inc. Legacy Orchard just outside of Wenatchee.



NC-140 Technical Committee members at WSU Sunrise Orchard, November 15, 2017.



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