Wild Maine Blueberries

MR. ERIC BROOKS
Low Bush Wild Maine Blueberries
Blueberry History

- Native Americans were the first to use blueberries for dye, medicines, and food.
- Started raising for farm production in 1840s.
- Blueberries were canned during the Civil War and sent to Union Soldiers.
- 90% of the world’s WILD blueberries come from Washington County, Maine.
- There are nearly 60,000 acres!
Why Blueberries in Maine?

- Glacier took our rich top soil
- Maine blueberries are NEVER planted = wild
- Acidic soil
  - Blueberries need a pH level of 4.0-6.0

![The PH Scale](image)

Wild Maine Blueberries ~ Eric Brooks
Spring Pollination

Thousands of beehives visit the blueberry fields in late April/early May.
Spring Blossoms

Wild Maine Blueberries ~ Eric Brooks
Blueberry Harvesting/History

- First blueberry rake created in Columbia Falls, Maine by Abijah Tabbutt

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95% of blueberries are mechanical harvest because of land improvements.
Maine Low Bush Blueberries
Getting Ready for the Factory
“Walk Behind” Harvester

Wild Maine Blueberries ~ Eric Brooks
After the Harvest

Fields are mowed and then burned either in the fall or spring.

This helps control weeds and insects while yielding a larger crop.
Burning (con’t.)
Blueberries are a SUPER FRUIT
After Harvest

- Blueberries are cleaned and graded at factory.
- Berries are flash frozen within 24 hours to ensure freshness.
- Sent to other factories, retail, and school lunches!
Health Benefits

- Improves eye sight
- Reduces risk of cancer
- Helps memory
- Prevents heart disease
- Protects against signs of aging
WILD MAINE BLUEBERRIES