

Policies and Procedures Blueberry Hill Farm

Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station
College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture
University of Maine

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Introduction

This document describes the policies and procedures for use of Blueberry Hill Farm. Blueberry Hill Farm supports teaching, research and public outreach activities related to wild blueberry agriculture.

Blueberry Hill Farm is available for use by faculty and students of the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture (NSFA) and University of Maine Cooperative Extension. Blueberry Hill Farm is also available for use by other University of Maine faculty and students at the discretion of the associate director and facility superintendent. Faculty with appointments in the Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station have priority for land and laboratory allocations.

Please note that information on safety policies is provided elsewhere (“Safety” link on the Blueberry Hill Farm web page). The policies and procedures for Blueberry Hill Farm apply to all facility users including faculty, instructors, staff, graduate and undergraduate students, and student employees.

Staff, Contact Information, and Availability

Superintendent

Jeff Brann, Farm Superintendent

(207)-434-2291 - office

(207)-460-0571 - mobile

(207)-434-7481 - fax

jeffrey.brann@maine.edu - email

Support Staff and Student Employees

Blueberry Hill Farm has three full-time employees and one part-time employee. Employees are generally not available for research or project activity. It is the responsibility of facility users to provide staffing for their projects. Users must notify the superintendent of new project employees at least two weeks in advance. It is recommended that faculty introduce new employees to the superintendent and other facility staff. All employees and visitors must check in with farm staff before entering fields for safety reasons.

Mailing Address

Blueberry Hill Farm

PO Box 189

Jonesboro, ME 04648

Main Office: (207)-434-2291

Physical Addresses

Blueberry Hill Farm

Rte. 1 House 1649

Jonesboro, Maine 04648

Normal business hours are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Use of the facility outside of business hours is allowed with approval of the superintendent.

Emergency Contacts

Emergency	911
UM Public Safety	581-4040
Jeff Brann, Superintendent	460-0571
Safety and Environmental Management	581-4055
Maine Agricultural and Forest Exp. Station	581-3205
College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture	581-3202

Facilities Description

Blueberry Hill Farm primarily supports teaching, research, and public outreach activities associated with blueberry production and research. Much of the acreage at Blueberry Hill Farm is broken into small research plots ranging in size from 100 sq ft. to almost an acre in size.

Blueberry Hill Farm consists of a variety of buildings and amenities:

- (2) equipment storage building
- (1) garage
- (1) pesticide storage
- superintendent's house
- laboratory
- main laboratory building consisting of a conference room, laboratory, and offices.

Facility Acknowledgement

When users acknowledge that project activity occurred at the Blueberry Hill Farm, identify the facility as Blueberry Hill Farm, College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture. An image of the college logo is also available.

Regulatory Oversight

Due to the nature of research and teaching activities, the Blueberry Hill Farm is subject to regulatory oversight from federal, state, private, and university agencies:

- United States Department of Agriculture
- Maine Board of Pesticides Control
- Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
- University of Maine Department of Safety and Environmental Management

Prior to the start of research and teaching activities, users should consult with the superintendent to ensure the proposed activity is compliant with regulations set forth by the above agencies and associations.

Superintendent and User Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Superintendent

- Oversees daily management of Blueberry Hill Farm operations.
- Facilitates research, teaching, and outreach activities of faculty and students.
- Maintains communication with facility users on projects and activities.
- Provides recommendations to facility users on facility, and field use.
- Receives and approves requests for facility space, and field space.
- Supervises staff and students employed by Blueberry Hill Farm.
- Ensures safety and environmental compliance by all users and staff and notifies supervisors of noncompliance.
- Maintains the facility infrastructure and associated equipment.

- The superintendent is the primary contact to the University of Maine’s Facilities Management and outside contractors regarding infrastructural additions, maintenance, and repair.
- Oversees all pesticide applications and maintains appropriate documentation for the Maine Board of Pesticides Control.
- The superintendent reports to the associate director of the Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station.

Responsibilities of Facility Users

- Provide superintendent with advance notification of needs and future requests.
- Maintain communication with the superintendent regarding project activity.
- Adhere to all safety and use policies.
- Ensure that all staff, student employees, and students enrolled in courses complete all required safety training before working or using Blueberry Hill Farm facilities.
- Supervise employees, student employees, and students using the facilities under their direction.
- Adhere to all operational policies listed below.
- Begin using space, fields only after approval of such request has been granted.
- Notify superintendent when project is complete.
- Provide material and supplies needed for research, experiments, or teaching.
- Manage and maintain experiments, research projects.
- Clean up all areas after each activity (classroom, barns, handling areas, break rooms, computer laboratories, etc.).

Operational Policies—Facilities

Security, Safety, Chemicals, and Pharmaceuticals

Security

Blueberry Hill Farm is open to the public from 7:00-3:30 M-F. After-hours use for teaching, research, and other working activities is permitted after consultation with the superintendent. After-hour’s use of Blueberry Hill Farm is also permitted upon consultation with the facility manager.

Safety

All facility users must adhere to all university, college, and Blueberry Hill Farm safety policies. All required training and documentation must be completed before conducting any activity associated with Blueberry Hill Farm facilities and lands. Information on safety policies can be found via the link for “Safety” on the Blueberry Hill Farm web page.

Chemical Use

Chemicals may not be brought into Blueberry Hill Farm without approval of the superintendent and/or facility manager and submission of material safety data sheets (MSDS). Chemical use requires appropriate safety training. Chemical storage space is limited and approved chemicals should be purchased in the smallest quantity possible.

Supplies, General Storage, and Crop Storage

Supplies

Users are responsible for providing their own materials and supplies for experiments, research projects, outreach, and teaching. Contact the superintendent when the joint purchase of common supplies by Blueberry Hill Farm and faculty may reduce costs.

General Storage

- Request for storage space must be approved by the superintendent.
- Storage space is limited. Project-related storage is only available for short periods and should never extend past the end of the project. Supplies and materials should be purchased in quantities that will be used during the current project.
- Some long-term storage for unique studies may be available. Requests should be directed to the superintendent.
- Materials should be clearly labeled with owner's name. Unlabeled items will be disposed of or relocated.
- Project materials should be stored in designated locations approved by the superintendent.
- Stored materials must not block access or egress
- It is the user's responsibility to keep storage areas clean and tidy.

Computers and Printing/Copying Services

Computers

The computers at Blueberry Hill Farm are available to staff, faculty, and students.

Printing/Copying Services

Printers and copiers owned by Blueberry Hill Farm are for farm staff use and official farm business only. All printing and copying in support of research, teaching, or public outreach activities are the responsibility of faculty.

Maintenance Shops and Laboratory

Maintenance Shops

Generally, only Blueberry Hill Farm staff and authorized student employees are permitted to use the maintenance shops. Specialized training is required when working in these areas. All equipment fabrication and repair must be approved by the superintendent and work must be performed by trained staff personnel.

Laboratories

Use of laboratories not managed by specific academic departments must be approved by the superintendent. Use of the field lab at Blueberry Hill Farm must be approved by the facility manager.

Operational Policies—Pesticides

Blueberry Hill Farm complies with the University of Maine Worker Protection for Pesticide Exposure (<http://www2.umaine.edu/SEM/Documents/Programs/Worker Protection for Pesticide Exposure.pdf>), which meets federal and state regulatory requirements for pesticide use. All faculty, staff, and students must review the following two documents as part of annual safety training (details found under the “Safety” link on the Blueberry Hill Farm web page): University of Maine Worker Protection for Pesticide Exposure and Blueberry Hill Policies and Procedures. Visitors will receive training appropriate to their farm activities.

The following additional policies apply at Blueberry Hill Farm:

- The superintendent is responsible for providing appropriate training programs. Faculty and project/program directors are responsible for ensuring that their staffs, students, and visitors are aware of training requirements required before undertaking activities at the farm. The superintendent may designate staff members or faculty as trainers. The safety of visitors is the responsibility of their hosts.
- The superintendent is responsible for ensuring compliance with pesticide regulations and maintaining a safe working environment. Farm users and staff must report pesticides brought on-farm. MSDS sheets are required before storing pesticides in pesticide-storage buildings.
- Pesticide-storage space is limited, which makes material disposal a high priority. It is the user’s responsibility to remove and properly process unused pesticides for disposal. If possible, pesticides being evaluated for industry should be returned to the company sponsoring the project.
- Pesticide storage at Blueberry Hill Farm is in the pesticide-storage building. All containers must be clearly labeled with the owner’s name. The building must remain locked when not attended.
- Only licensed personnel of the University of Maine may handle or apply pesticides.
- Farm applications greater than one acre must be posted at the farm gate. Treatment plots less than one acre in area must be posted at the plot location and be compliant with the 360-degree rule. Gates and plots must be posted at the time of pesticide application.

Faculty, staff, and other farm users are required to report incidents of noncompliance with university, college, and farm pesticide policies to the superintendent. The superintendent must take action to eliminate immediate hazards and then work with the farm user to identify corrective actions or alternatives to meet project or activity needs. The superintendent must report incidents of noncompliance to the immediate supervisor of the farm user. If issues are not easily resolved the superintendent or farm user should contact the associate director.

Operational Policies—Equipment and Vehicles

Motorized Equipment and Vehicles

Motorized Equipment

Generally, motorized equipment (tractors, utility vehicles, and lawnmowers) are for Blueberry Hill Farm staff use only. Any equipment brought onto Blueberry Hill Farm facilities must be approved by the superintendent.

Vehicles

Vehicles owned and maintained by Blueberry Hill Farm are for staff use only.

Power Tools and Hand Tools

Power Tools

Generally, power tools (grinders, drills, chainsaws, string trimmers, tillers, skill saws, etc.) are for Blueberry Hill Farm staff use only. Exceptions can be made with authorization of the superintendent. Specialized training and personal protective equipment (PPE), is required to use this equipment. Any power tools brought onto Blueberry Hill Farm facilities must be approved by the superintendent.

Hand Tools

Some tools are available for general use such as rakes, shovels, hoes, and other hand tools. These should be kept in good condition, cleaned, and returned immediately after use. Tools should not be removed from the facility.

Project-owned and Donated Equipment

Project-owned Equipment

Users are responsible for all costs (parts, maintenance, transportation, and labor) associated with project equipment purchased or acquired and brought onto the facilities. Storage of equipment must be approved by the superintendent. Special circumstances where equipment is shared between users and Blueberry Hill Farm should be discussed with the superintendent before the equipment arrives at the facilities.

Donated Equipment

Approval must be received from the superintendent before accepting donated equipment for the facilities. Cost for future maintenance and use will be considered. The user who facilitates the donation is responsible for submission of required university forms to accept donations.

Operational Policies—Field Operations

Crop Amendments and Protectants

Fertilizer

Fertilizer purchases for specific research projects will be the responsibility of the user. Blueberry Hill Farm staff will spread fertilizer with a broadcast spreader or a drop spreader. Fertilizer can also be applied through certain planters.

Lime

Lime purchase and application at the field level will be the responsibility of Blueberry Hill Farm. If lime is needed for multiple projects, users should communicate with each other and with the superintendent to minimize transportation costs and take advantage of any bulk- order discounts.

Pesticides

Pesticide purchases for specific research projects will be the responsibility of the user. Only licensed personnel are authorized to make pesticide applications. Blueberry Hill Farm staff is available to make pesticide applications using tractor-mounted spraying equipment. Hand-spraying applications will be the responsibility of the licensed user or their licensed designee.

Field Preparation

Mulching

Mulch purchases and hand application for specific research projects will be the responsibility of the user. A stacking site for bulk mulch orders is available at Blueberry Hill Farm.

Pruning

Mowing or burning fields for research projects will be the responsibility of Blueberry Hill Farm staff. Users should consult with Blueberry Hill Farm staff to ensure desired equipment is available.

Crop Production

Planting

Blueberry Hill Farm staff will assist in planting sods. Properly trained users may also perform planting operations with permission from Blueberry Hill Farm staff.

Irrigation

Irrigation wells are found at multiple locations at Blueberry Hill Farm. Irrigation systems are limited and users should consult with Blueberry Hill Farm superintendent to ensure desired equipment is available.

Harvesting

Mechanical harvesting operations will be the responsibility of Blueberry Hill staff. Properly trained facility users may also perform mechanical harvesting operations with permission from Blueberry Hill Farm staff. Hand-harvesting operations will be the responsibility of the user.

Data Collection and Sampling

Data collection and sampling of research plots will be the responsibility of the user.

Operational Policies—Events

Public Events

Blueberry Hill Farm is available for hosting university-sponsored events upon consultation with the superintendent. An event-request form must be submitted to the superintendent a minimum of 45 days before the date of the event.

Student groups requesting to hold events at Blueberry Hill Farm must have a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor will act as a liaison between the student group and superintendent and will be

responsible for coordinating the event with the superintendent and completing the required forms.

Request Forms

Field and Plot Request Form

Request for space or services must be made on the Crop Land Use and Staff Request Form ([pdf](#) or [Word document](#)).

Event Request Form

Facility Use Charge

Effective October 1, 2011, all project or activity directors requesting services at Blueberry Hill Farm must provide funds for facility fees for basic services and/or labor costs for other services except when the activity is part of contract initiated prior to July 1, 2011. Fees and labor rates are set by the college to provide reimbursement for *direct costs* incurred at its facilities for services provided in support of individual projects and activities. Fees and labor rates apply to all research, teaching, outreach and other projects and activities requiring or requesting services. Specific information on fees and administrative procedures is provided on the Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station web site ([Service Fees and Labor Rates at Farms and Greenhouses](#)). Fees and labor rates for services are established consistent with the [Policies and Procedures on Direct Cost Recovery and Sharing at Crop, Greenhouse, and Livestock Facilities](#) of the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture and policies of the University of Maine Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

Blueberry Hill Farm Advisory Committee

The Blueberry Hill Farm Advisory Committee advises the superintendent and dean/director on policies, procedures, and priorities for Blueberry Hill Farm.

The Blueberry Hill Farm Advisory Committee meets at least annually. The committee advises the dean/director in the following areas:

1. Priorities for equipment maintenance and replacement.
2. Priorities for infrastructure maintenance and improvement.
3. Long-range operational planning.
4. Budget management for meeting facility missions, goals, and objectives.
5. Planning and procedures for the allocation of facility space and related resources.
6. Implementation of safety procedures.

The committee also is charged with developing 5-year missions, goals, and objectives for facilities for approval by the dean/director. The committee seeks input from appropriate academic unit chairs and teaching coordinators when advice to the superintendents or dean/director may influence teaching programs.