

porizer site

the blueberry. The students had their idea introduced as legislation and conducted a lobbying campaign to see its passage, including media interviews, a letter and petition drive, presentations to local governing bodies and a trip to the state's blueberry festival in Whitesbog. In addition, the classes traveled to Trenton to make presentations before Senate and Assembly Committees.

The blueberry was first cultivated in the Garden State in Whitesbog by Elizabeth C. White, whose father, J.J. White owned a cranberry plantation. Wild blueberries grew in their cranberry bogs, but it was generally accepted that it was not possible to cultivate blueberries. In 1911, she read about Dr. Frederick V. Coville's work in blueberry cultivation, and began working with him to cultivate blueberries for sale. In 1916, their first blueberry was produced.

New Jersey produces 22 percent of the nation's blueberries, ranking second in production among all berry-producing states. A total of 42 million pounds of blueberries were harvested in New Jersey in 2002, generating cash receipts of \$46.8 million. Blueberries are grown on 8,000 acres in seven counties spanning central and southern New Jersey. Blueberries are typically in season from mid-June to late August.

The legislation, Assembly Bill 3344, was sponsored by Senator Andrew Ciesla, and Assemblymen David Wolfe and James Holzapfel.

The blueberry now joins a host of other official state symbols: the violet (flower), Eastern Goldfinch (bird), red oak (tree), honey bee (insect), horse (animal), square dance (dance), Hadrosaurus Foulkii (dinosaur), knobbed whelk (shell), brook trout (fish) and the A. J. Meerwald (tall ship).

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Clarification

A *Letter to the Editor* in the Jan. 15 edition of *The Central Record* made reference to a previous letter by a "Mrs. Clevenger." It should have been noted that the previous letter was written by Rose Clevenger of Southampton.

New Jersey — the blueberry state

To the editor:

Gov. James E. McGreevey signed legislation into law that will make the *Vaccinium corymbosum*, more commonly known as the blueberry, New Jersey's official state fruit.

The governor signed the legislation at Veterans Memorial Elementary School in Brick, where fifth graders (then fourth-graders) were actively involved in the legislative process.

Gov. McGreevey said that New Jersey has a strong history as the Garden State, and that naming the blueberry as our official state fruit is a fitting tribute to our culture and heritage, especially because it was first cultivated in Whitesbog.

Last year, as fourth graders in Mrs. Gail Damiano's and Mrs. Suzanne Kurasz's classes, the students learned that New Jersey lacked an official state fruit. Upon researching and debating different fruits, they ultimately decided on