

White blueberries

Do your taste buds do a joyful back flip at the mere mention of big, juicy New Jersey cultivated blueberries? If so, you should know about the remarkable woman who spent 40 years turning wild swamp berries into better and better cultivated blueberries.

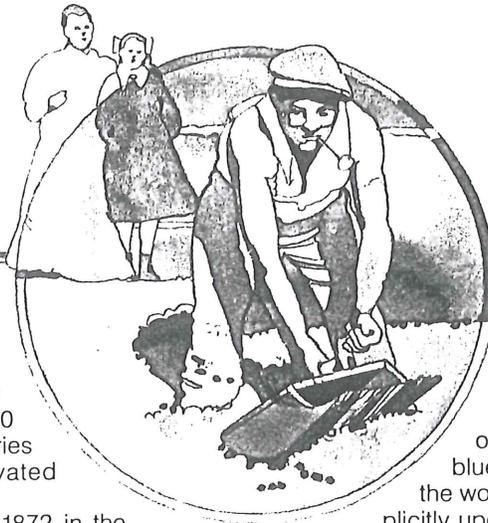
Elizabeth White was born in 1872 in the New Jersey Pine Barrens at Whitesbog, named after her family. Her grandfather pioneered in cranberry culture. Her father transformed wild swampland into acres of cranberry bogs.

Miss White lived all her life in the same place. She loved the Pine Barrens and its people.

One of her dreams was to cultivate swamp blueberries as well as cranberries. In 1910, she learned of U.S. Department of Agriculture experiments in blueberry culture. She offered to work with Dr. Frederick Coville and sent New Jersey seedlings to Washington, D.C.

Twenty years later, Miss White wrote a script for a radio broadcast she made describing her work. Here are excerpts:

"In a greenhouse in Washington, Dr. Coville cross-pollinated the varieties, started the seedlings and cared



for them until they were large enough for the field. The little plants were then shipped to Whitesbog.

"The help of the pine people was indispensable to the success of my search for fine (wild) blueberry bushes. When we got into the woods and swamps, I had to rely implicitly upon my piny guide.

"The bushes were each named for the person who found them. The Adams for Jim Adams, the Grover for Russell Grover. The bush that Sam Lemmon found had to be called 'Sam.' It would never do to have a Lemmon variety of blueberries.

"One has to be hard-boiled to destroy thousands upon thousands of plants which have been the object of the most solicitous care for years. But it is the only way to achieve a high ideal in blueberries."

When Miss White died in 1954, cultivated blueberries brought \$4 million annually to New Jersey growers. In 1978, that figure had soared to almost \$15.5 million. Production hit 22.3 million pounds.

We're told 1979 looks like a bumper-crop year. Of course, that's with full cooperation from the weather and the bees that do the pollinating. Here's hoping.