



# Dr. Hardigan- Our Caneberry Breeder & Geneticist!

Michael Hardigan & Jayden Christman



Dr. Hardigan, USDA-ARS HCRU Scientist

My new position is the caneberry breeder and geneticist at the USDA-ARS Horticultural Crops Research Unit in Corvallis, OR. I will continue building on Chad Finn's important legacy of developing new caneberry varieties adapted to the Northwest region. These include genetically diverse selections of blackberry, as well as both red and black raspberry.

Our blackberry germplasm includes a mixture of traditional Northwest trailing varieties, as well as both semi-erect and erect primocane varieties of eastern origin that have been selected for production in the Northwest region.

Along with yield and adaptation, traits of interest for our breeding program include machine harvestable fruit quality, post-harvest quality and flavor for the Northwest processing industry, and resistance to both current and emerging pathogens causing damage to grower fields. I also have an interest in developing genomic resources to assist future molecular breeding of blackberry, a massive challenge given the wide range of polyploidy and multi-species origins underlying Northwest blackberry genomes.

In addition to moving the existing caneberry breeding pipeline forward with the development of new crosses and selections, we are working to release several advanced selections that currently exist within the breeding program, and make these available to growers. I look forward to collaborating with other research programs to address these challenges, and resuming outreach with industry stakeholders.

You can contact Dr. Michael Hardigan via email at [Michael.Hardigan@usda.gov](mailto:Michael.Hardigan@usda.gov) or phone: (541)738-4037.

*Congratulations on the new position, Michael! We are excited to see the work that lies ahead!*



Michael out in the field!

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