

the water diversion laws, but the industry will need to remain vigilant to protect these rights crucial to the success of cranberry farms in the state. WSCGA protected your rights as the ratification of the Great Lakes Compact proceeded through the Legislature. The State's groundwater regulatory program is under review and presents a clear threat to growers. Without an effective organization to represent them, growers are at risk of losing their access to water.

*Reduction in Cranberry Assessments* – WSCGA worked with the Wisconsin Department of Revenue on the formula for assessing cranberry beds under the use value assessment law. The previous formula would result in bed values over \$12,000 per acre with annual increases. Under the new formula these values start at less than \$8,000 per bed acre and will decline over time. This adjustment is estimated to save growers over \$1.0 million per year. The association was also successful in passing legislation to provide a 50% reduction in real estate assessments on undeveloped land (swamp and waste) and a 50% reduction on agricultural forest land.

*Harvest Weight Exemption* – The association worked to pass legislation to allow vehicles transporting harvested fruit to exceed road weight limits by 15%.

*Economic Assistance* – WSCGA led a national coalition of grower groups and handlers that delivered Market Loss Assistance Payments of \$4.93 per barrel on the 1999 crop. This payment would allow the average Wisconsin grower to pay their dues for 62 years!

*Farm Bill* – WSCGA has joined with other groups to pursue language in the Farm Bill to enhance the ability of specialty crops to market their products and improve research programs.

### **Public Relations and Awareness**

The WSCGA serves as the spokesperson for the industry in the state. WSCGA works with growers to prepare them for media interviews through workshops on how to work with the media. The association, working with a public relations firm, contacts media to generate positive stories about the industry. These efforts have led to a host of harvest and other stories, which portray growers and the industry in a positive light.

The program is closely coordinated with national efforts to communicate the health benefits of cranberry consumption.

Building on the results of research previously funded, consistent messages about cranberry health were provided throughout the holiday season. National and regional coverage was excellent.

*State Fair Promotion* – WSCGA has an educational and product promotion booth at the State Fair in the Wisconsin Products Pavilion. The Association also conducted daily product promotions with media at the Fair and utilized a mascot to participate in daily parades and conducted daily cooking demonstrations. These efforts helped to generate a large amount of publicity promoting the consumption of Wisconsin cranberries and cranberry products.

*Paid Advertising* – The association administers paid advertising and promotion programs with the Milwaukee Brewer Radio broadcasts for the Wisconsin Cranberry Board, Inc.

### **Networking**

The WSCGA conducts a number of events during the year that brings growers together to exchange information. These networking opportunities allow growers to share information with each other that may not be readily available elsewhere.

*WSCGA Summer Meeting, Field Day and Trade Show* – The largest event of its kind, the summer meeting brings growers together to tour the host marsh, visit the trade show to see the newest and latest in specialty equipment and services and to visit with other growers and participate in mini sessions.

*WSCGA Winter Meeting and Trade Show* – These events are held in conjunction with the Wisconsin Cranberry School and give growers another opportunity to share information and network with vendors and fellow growers.

*Scholarships* - Through fundraising efforts the WSCGA has established endowed scholarship funds at the UW Madison, UW Stevens Point, UW LaCrosse, UW River Falls and Wisconsin Technical Colleges for students studying in a field related to cranberries.

### **Grower Membership**

Any cranberry grower who has planted acreage in Wisconsin is eligible for grower membership. Contact the WSCGA office for a membership form or check it out at [www.wiscran.org](http://www.wiscran.org).



**Wisconsin  
State  
Cranberry  
Growers  
Association**

F O U N D E D 1 8 8 7

## **2010 Membership Information**

### **WSCGA Mission**

**To enable the cranberry industry in Wisconsin to prosper through the provision of grower information, responsible environmental stewardship, sound governmental policies and effective public communication.**

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# WSCGA

The WSCGA was formed in 1887 by Wisconsin cranberry growers to provide education and advocacy programs for the state's cranberry industry. Today the association continues these and other programs for Wisconsin's number 1 fruit crop. Program areas include: Management Practices, Research and Education; Public Policy Advocacy; Public Relations and Awareness; Networking and Stewardship.

## Management Practices, Research and Education

*Wisconsin Cranberry School* – The school is the premier event of the education program of the Association. Conducted in partnership with UW Extension, Wisconsin Cranberry Research and Education Foundation and Wisconsin Cranberry Board, Inc., the school agenda covers a host of topics relevant to the needs of all growers. The school is designed to be a one-stop training program for the industry and covers topics related to production, business management, pesticide certification and training, and much more.

*Research Enhancement Initiative* – \$1.25 million was secured to support cranberry research through the USDA Agricultural Research Service. These funds will create two new programs at the UW Madison devoted solely to cranberry research. This program will bring about \$800,000 each year to support research programs in entomology and variety improvement.

*Cranberry Research Coordination* – The WSCGA is under contract with the Wisconsin Cranberry Board, Inc. to provide administrative services to the WCB. This includes working with the Cranberry Institute to coordinate cranberry research on a national basis to avoid duplication and to make sure the best projects are funded. These efforts resulted in the partnership between CI and WCB to fund projects on the health benefits of cranberries.

*Conservation Planning and Regulatory Compliance* – WSCGA has secured a number of Federal grants to support the development of Whole Farm Conservation Plans for Wisconsin cranberry farms. This project is being implemented by the association to provide growers with plans that allow them to meet or exceed environmental standards, comply with new state non point source pollution

regulations and to be eligible for Federal Conservation cost sharing programs. The grants total over \$1,750,000. These funds have been used for demonstration projects, research on cranberry plant nutrition, water quality and water use.

WSCGA also worked with the State NRCS Office to establish an EQIP sign up for cranberry growers. As a result, almost \$2,000,000 in cost sharing has been made available to Wisconsin growers to implement conservation practices.

*WSCGA NEWS* – All members receive a copy of the monthly newsletter which contains the latest information on research management and WSCGA activities.

*Website* – [www.wiscran.org](http://www.wiscran.org) provides information for growers and the general public on the state's cranberry industry. A new site debuted in 2008 with a special members' only section. The site is maintained and updated to provide growers with the latest information in a timely manner.

## Advocacy Programs

The WSCGA retains Legislative Counsel in Madison to lobby the Wisconsin Legislature and regulatory agencies on behalf of the membership. The WSCGA Board sets policies on issues based on recommendations from advisory committees. Annual grower visits to Madison are part of the ongoing program. Accomplishments in the past include:

*Non Point Source Pollution and Nutrient Management Plans* - The WSCGA has been working for the past five years with state and federal agencies to develop a set of guidelines to allow growers to meet requirements for nutrient management for both NRCS voluntary programs as well as the state's non point regulations found in ATCP 50. Success has come in basing application decisions on tissue analysis rather than soil test data. If growers had been forced to use soil tests most growers would have been prohibited from applying phosphorous to their crops. Guidelines were field tested with growers to determine their applicability to cranberry growing. After successful field testing the guidelines were used to develop plans which comply with state and federal requirements. Training session for growers to write their own plans resulted in over 325 people being trained and approved plans written on 10,000 acres of the state's cranberries.

*Wetland Permitting* – Cranberry farmers have long faced a difficult and onerous permitting process for work in

wetlands. WSCGA launched an effort in 2009 to reform the permitting process to make it more efficient for growers. While the results are preliminary the effort did lead to issuance of a new General Permit for existing operations and a new joint permit application for growers. WSCGA continues to evaluate the process to make it workable for growers while conserving resources.

*Public Representation* – The association has provided representation for growers as they deal with individual issues with agencies or outside groups.

The association mobilized support from Wisconsin Ag groups for a grower in a nuisance suit in Sawyer County Circuit Court brought by the Wisconsin Attorney General and out of state landowners. The grower prevailed in a decision that dismissed the case. WSCGA continued to work with the grower to secure victories in the Court of Appeals and State Supreme Court. The grower was then awarded over \$400,000 by the court to pay his costs for defending himself.

In another case the association provided funds to support testing to prove that cranberry marshes on a lake in Northern Wisconsin were not the source of alleged pollutants. WSCGA assisted a grower to obtain a satisfactory resolution with DNR concerns about public access on their property.

WSCGA joined other Ag groups in support of the State of Wisconsin on litigation that upheld the use value assessment law. We have provided support for growers facing water regulation by a Wisconsin Indian tribe.

When an individual grower has a problem they know that they can turn to the association to support them.

*Sandpits* – When the state passed legislation to allow counties to regulate non metallic mining WSCGA was able to exempt sandpits used for farming from the law. This action saved growers fees that range from a minimum of \$450 to \$1,250 per year for existing sandpits and one time charges of \$900 to \$1,500 to start a new one. In addition the ordinances would require closure plans that would entail engineering costs and additional expenses at the end of the use of the sandpit.

*Access to Water* – Water use by agriculture is and will be a major environmental issue for the next decade. Your rights to access water for your cranberry farm will be under close scrutiny. The WSCGA has built a strong base of support for