

NOFA-VT Winter Conference 2015

Case Study: Elderberry @ Three Springs Farm of Vermont

- Establishment
- Cultivars
- Products
- Riparian Buffer Zones

Stan Ward
stan@threespringsfarmvt.com
802-595-3232

Three Springs Farm – Elderberry Plantings



Establishment

- Converted hay field

2011

- Plot 1 - Experimentation Zone (2011)
 - Elderberry, Aronia, Black Currant, Red Currant, Gooseberry, Juneberry (many from Elmore Roots)

2012

- Plots 2 & 3
 - Black plastic for season (fall of 2011)
 - Till (spring 2012)
 - Compost + Fertilizer mix
 - Plastic mulch + irrigation
 - Plants:
 - Bare-root from St. Lawrence Nursery
 - Hardwood cuttings from Missouri
 - Different variety each row
- Plot 4
 - No black plastic prep
 - Some tilling
 - Burlap & Wood chips mulch
 - Lots more maintenance required
 - Plants:
 - All bare-root York & Adams

Three Springs Farm – Elderberry Plantings



Plastic mulch



Plastic mulch layer



Mineral & fertilizer mix



Pro-Grow (75%), Green Sand (10%), Bat Guano or Bone Char (8%), Azomite (4%), Sulfur (4%)

Spacing:

2011-2012

- 4 ft on center between plants
- 10 ft between rows (on center)
- Planted oats for “milky oats” medicinal crop between rows

Now:

- 1 foot on center between plants
- Using cuttings to fill-in existing plantings

Cultivars (Cultivated Varieties)

- All *Sambucus Canadensis*
- Primary: **York & Adams** – Chosen for medicinal value

- Others as trials:

- New York varieties

- Adams II
 - Johns
 - Nova
 - Scotia
 - Vermont Native

- Missouri varieties

- Bob Gordon
 - Eridu
 - Ranch
 - Wyldewood 1
 - Wyldewood 2

Our Elderberry Products

Elderberry
Syrup
(4 oz)



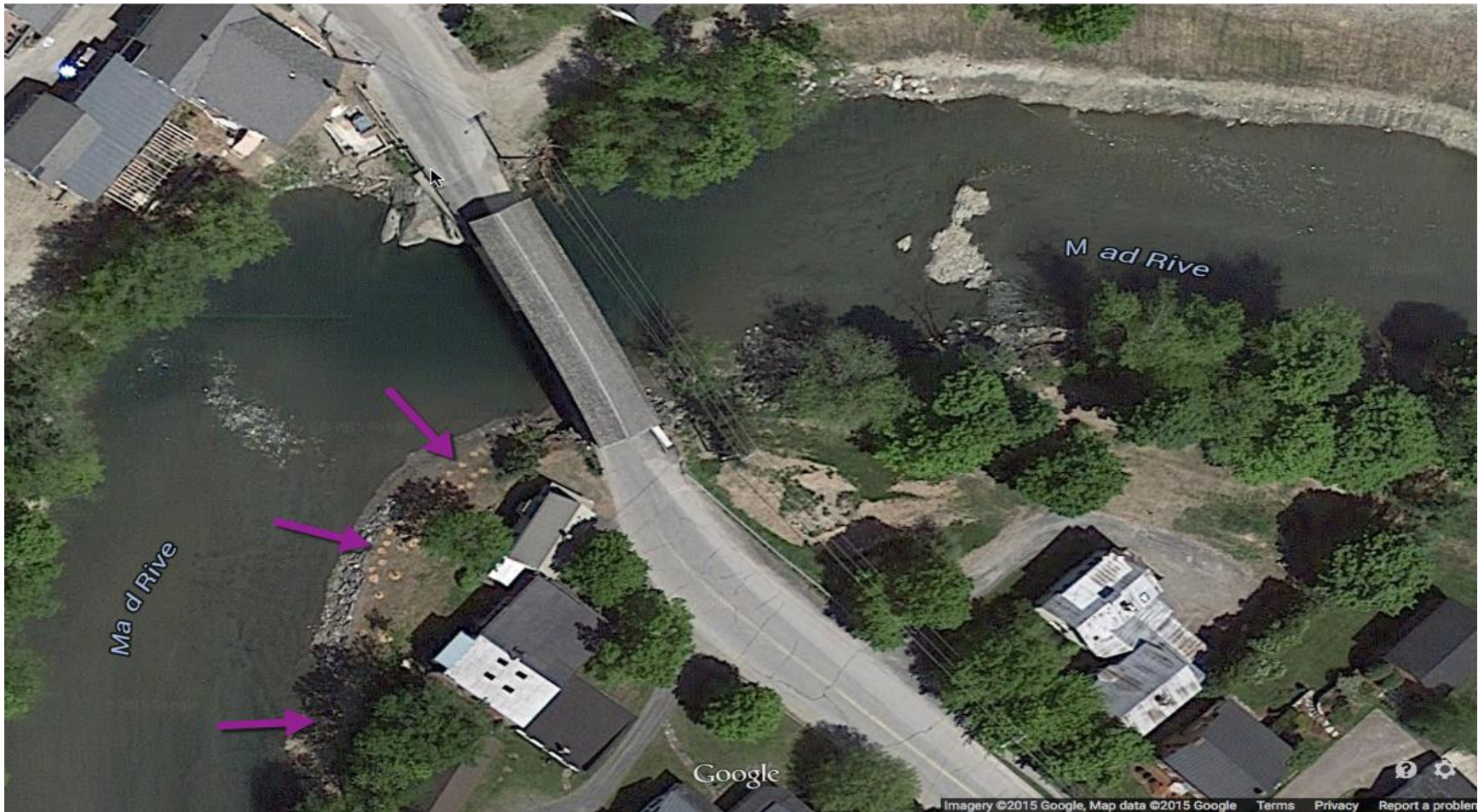
Elderberry
Tincture
1 oz, 2 oz



Post-Irene Riparian Zone



Riparian Buffer Zone Restoration



Riparian buffer zone
“Mad River Watershed Elderberry Program”
Homestead, 150 ft of river front, 37 plants



Riparian buffer zones – Farm – 2 miles



Riparian buffer zone
“Mad River Watershed Elderberry Program”
Hayfield, 2 miles of river front, 100 plants



Mad River Watershed Elderberry Program

Lessons Learned and Questions Raised

- **Must** do 2-3 years of cultivation (aka TLC) for plants to establish.
 - Especially mulching. Do not like competition during establishment.
 - Water also very important.
- Q: Is fruit harvestable as food after a flood?
A: Not if it touched the water
- Q: Do you want to use fruit from land that has been subjected to flooding (hazardous materials/chemicals) concentrated as food or medicine?