Harvesting Hedgerows: Planting Elderberry for Biodiversity and Income

Field demonstration results summary

Katie Fyhrie – The Cloverleaf Farm k.fyhrie@gmail.com - thecloverleaffarm@gmail.com

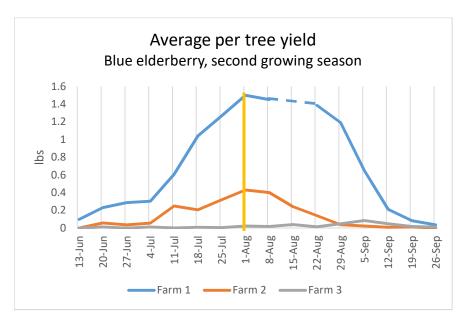


Figure 1. Average weekly yield per tree (lbs, destemmed) of blue elderberry in second growing season (2019) on demonstration farms 1, 2, and 3. Berries were harvested weekly, with peak per tree yield on August 1.



Average per tree yield (total) Second growing season

Farm	Subspecies	Yield (lb)		
1	Blue	11.21		
	American	1.19		
2	Blue	2.21		
	American	0.04		
3	Blue	0.34		
	American	0.20		

Table 1. Average total yield per tree (lbs, destemmed) of Blue and American elderberry subspecies in second growing season (2019) on demonstration farms 1, 2, and 3.

Farm 2 Farm 1 Farm 3

Spacing: 10'

Soil prep: 3' rip, disc, rototill Mulch: cardboard + organic

Irrigation (2018): weekly May-Sep

Total: 216 gal/plant Irrigation (2019): weekly Jun-Aug Total: 83.5 gal/plant

Other: removed tree tubes early

Spacing: 6'

Soil prep: disc, rototill, raised bed Mulch: plastic landscape fabric

Irrigation (2018): biweekly May-Aug

Total: 155 gal/plant Irrigation (2019): monthly May-Aug

Total: 24 gal/plant

Other: left tree tubes on

Spacing: 10-12' Soil prep: mow weeds

Mulch: cardboard + organic (circles)

Irrigation (2018): biweekly May-Oct

Total: 450 gal/plant Irrigation (2019): monthly Jul-Sep

Total: 100 gal/plant Other: high winter weed pressure

Percent growth by subspecies Average diameter, height

	Н	D	
Blue	1455%	822%	
American	265%	38%	

Table 2. Average percent increase in diameter (D) and height (H) by subspecies over two growing seasons (May 2018 - October 2019). These represent average height and diameter across all three demonstration farms.

Cost of labor	min/lb	\$/lb	
Harvest	2.77	\$	0.69
Destemming	2.80	\$	0.70
Total	5.57	\$	1.39

Table 3. Average amount and cost of harvest and destemming labor per pound of destemmed berries (\$15/hour). Destemming of frozen berries was done by hand. Harvest labor includes orchard ladder use. Berries were harvested by hand-plucking whole berry cymes.