The Future of Farming: Building Tools for Tech Savvy Farmers

Monday, October 5 at 3pm

This talk is available virtually via Zoom. Registration is required. Go to umaine.edu/mitchellcenter to register and receive Zoom connection information.

Lily Calderwood, Extension Wild Blueberry Specialist; Assistant Prof. of Horticulture, UMaine

This talk will focus on a project led by UMaine Cooperative Extension members and the State Climatologist in collaboration with Maine farmers. Their goal: to listen to farmer needs around weather information and farm management decision support tools, and discuss future capabilities in light of Maine’s changing climate.

Lily will discuss their progress towards providing site-specific temperature, precipitation, frost and heat-stress warnings, cloud-cover/sunshine, evapotranspiration, and soil moisture forecast and observation values for locations in Maine. The apple, wild blueberry, and potato industries already have crop-specific weather stations. Through the project, the team has gained a better understanding of how these crop-specific weather stations can be combined with NOAA gridded weather data to serve more farms in Maine.

Lily Calderwood’s research and education program aims to develop whole system approaches to wild blueberry production in Maine. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is at the forefront of her work, which can improve the economic and ecological resilience of farms by incorporating subjects such as fertility, soil health, and plant physiology into pest management. Current research includes a weed survey of wild blueberry fields, tine weeding and cover cropping studies for organic weed management, mulching studies, crop and pest forecasting tools, and foliar fertilizer assessments.