

## Elder Culture Techniques

The existing information on American elder production is rather basic. The Société coopérative agricole du sud de Montréal, in collaboration with the Horticulture Research and Development Centre (HRDC), is currently studying elder culture. A dozen producers from across the province have planted experimental elder plots in order to evaluate different variables: population density, type of fertilization, pollination process, water regime, hardiness in culture conditions, in vitro culture, profitability of certain cultivars, effects of root mycorrhization at the time of planting and effects of various mulches on growth and yield.

Through the results of this project, it will be possible to implement culture techniques that will make elder culture profitable. It will also be possible to ensure that cultures meet the environmental requirements related to the use of water, fertilizers and pesticides, in order to establish a sustainable elder production in Quebec. The project's results should become available in the fall of 2005.

## An Interesting Market Potential

The current elder fruit production is mostly intended for the preparation of pies and jellies, and only represents a few tonnes per year. Furthermore, it is gathered in the wild, which involves many disadvantages, particularly the variability and low density of natural elder populations.

## Elder Development in Québec

Elder is an Eastern Canada native shrub whose fruits are little red or black berries that grow in clusters.



However, there is an interesting market potential for the elder: the dye industry, which needs a stable and important supply of elder fruits in order to market a red dye drawn from it. The development of elder orchards would ensure supply to these companies, whose individual needs can exceed 500 metric tonnes on a yearly basis.

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## CHALLENGE & SOLUTION

On November 17th, 2004, CDAQ launched Challenge & Solution, a proactive program serving the agricultural production sector in Quebec. It is based on three pillars.

### 1- Solutions to Emerging Issues

- Test and develop new ideas, approaches or solutions to respond to current and emerging issues;
- Complement the components of the Agricultural Policy Framework.

### 2- Capturing Market Opportunities

- Improve the sector's competitiveness by commercializing research results.

### 3- Sharing information

- Propose solutions based on new information to position the sector to participate in the dialogue on future policies;
- Enable discussion between the agricultural sector and other sectors of activity.

For more information on CDAQ programs or to download submission forms, visit the CDAQ Web site at [www.cdaq.qc.ca](http://www.cdaq.qc.ca).

**We invite you to contact us for any question or comment on this column or the activities of the CDAQ**

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The CDAQ manages the funds allocated for agricultural production in Quebec by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada under the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) Program. The ACAA Program took over the Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD) Fund.



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