



## PRESS RELEASE

### **DR. SHAWN MEHLENBACHER TO SPEAK AT 6<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL HAZELNUT SYMPOSIUM: Renowned Oregon State University Professor Key Hazelnut Breeder to deliver Keynote Presentation.**

Simcoe, ON, March 9, 2015 – The Ontario Hazelnut Association is pleased to welcome Dr. Shawn Mehlenbacher to the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Ontario Hazelnut Symposium on March 24, 2015 with the theme “The Hazelnuts Are Coming, The Hazelnuts Are Coming!”. Dr. Mehlenbacher has been involved with the development of new varieties in hazelnuts for the past 20 years and has led the creation of new varieties which are currently being licensed by Ontario nurseries.

“Dr. Mehlenbacher is certainly the leading hazelnut breeder in North America, having been involved with many important varieties over the course of his career” say Adam Dale, professor emeritus of the University of Guelph. “His record of supporting growers in the Willamette Valley in Oregon is first rate, and growers in Ontario can certainly learn and take advantage of his expertise when he is here in Ontario”.

Dr. Mehlenbacher will be speaking on the business of hazelnuts in Oregon, with particular emphasis on the varietal development program at his institution. Because the Eastern Filbert Blight is now present in Oregon, all varieties being developed must have tolerance to the disease. These are of particular interest to Ontario growers as they seek varieties that are EFB tolerant, cold tolerant and with an adequate flavour profile for the market.

“More varieties with these characteristics is really good for the Ontario marketplace” says Robert Haynes, general manager at Mori Essex Nurseries and Vice Chair of the Ontario Hazelnut Association”. We have been working hard at diversifying the choices available to our growers as we begin this industry in Ontario. These can only enhance selections and add variety to the domestic industry our industry and we are keen to hear Dr. Mehlenbacher’s messages.”

Interested people are encouraged to visit the Ontario Hazelnut Association website to find out more information on the symposium. Registration information for the symposium can be found at <https://eventbrite.ca/event/14781849911>

#### **About The Ontario Hazelnut Association**

The Ontario Hazelnut Association, established in 2013, is encouraging planting of hazelnuts in Ontario to serve new markets. This new crop for Ontario has enormous potential, with interested growers, strong suppliers and engaged buyers. The Ontario Hazelnut Association will continue to develop new markets for Ontario hazelnuts and their products through agronomic knowledge, cultivar development, economic analysis and public advocacy. For more information about the Ontario Hazelnut Association, see [www.ontariohazelnuts.com](http://www.ontariohazelnuts.com).

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