



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLACKBERRIES EMERGE AS NEW CASH CROP FOR MIDWESTERN GROWERS

Trellis Growing Systems Turns Marginal Ground Into Profits

Fort Wayne, In. (August 16, 2011) - This summer has been hard on crops throughout the country. Excessive rains in some regions and excessive heat and droughts in other regions have been particularly devastating on blackberries crops – that is unless you are a grower who uses the RCA™ (Rotating Cross-Arm) System from Trellis Growing Systems.

These growers have overcome many traditional challenges of growing blackberries and will likely earn an average of \$45,000+ per acre in revenues this year. In fact, the RCA System is so effective, growing blackberries is becoming the new cash crop in the Midwest.

Historically, growing blackberries in this region has been near impossible because blackberry varieties cannot survive the winters.

“With our technology, the RCA System, we can rotate the canes down near the ground in the winter and if necessary we can cover those canes with a floating row cover,” explained Richard Barnes, creator of the technology and founder of Trellis Growing Systems. “That enables the canes to survive the winter with little to no cane damage, and what this does is open up a whole new opportunity and industry for growers in the Midwest.”

Barnes said that blackberries are quickly becoming an emerging Midwestern crop, although most growers are diversifying their business through the addition of blackberries rather than becoming blackberry farmers, per se. Most farms have marginal land that is not suited to row crops but is well suited to growing blackberries.

The revenue opportunities are great, said Barnes, in part because traditionally most blackberries that are grown in the U.S. are harvested in May or June. The growing season in the Midwest runs later so blackberries are harvested in July and August and they earn a higher market price during this time.

“In our experience, average prices in May have been \$12 to \$13 dollars a flat. In the past few years in July and August, we’ve seen an average of \$15 to \$20 per flat. Same product, but we’re supplying it during a peak period for pricing and a low period for production,” said Barnes.

Ready to learn more about growing blackberries? Trellis Growing Systems along with Bedford (their manufacturing partner) will be showcasing their technology during the Farm Progress Show in Decatur,

Illinois August 30-September 1 in booth 575. During the show Barnes and his team will be giving demonstrations of the RCA System as well as counseling growers on how to integrate blackberries into their business.

###

About Trellis Growing Systems

Awarded a USDA-SBIR Phase II grant — Modular Trellis System for Brambles — Trellis Growing Systems focuses on the designs and manufacturing of crop protection and growing system products. Trellis Growing Systems fiber-reinforced profile and hardware components are used over a broad range of crops including berries, fruits, vegetables and flowers. For more information about Trellis Growing Systems LLC, visit www.trellisgrowingsystems.com.

###

Media Contact Information:

Richard Barnes

260-241-3128

rcbarnes@trellisgrowingsystems.com