

Hazelnut Production and Economics in the Upper Midwest USA

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Hazelnut germplasm being grown in the Upper Midwest USA are short-statured shrub-type hybrids between American hazelnut and European hazelnut. Researchers and early-adopter growers have been developing a hedgerow production system with a high initial establishment density (450 plants/ac) and harvested with straddle-type harvesters to remove the clusters directly from the shrubs. The system offers cost-savings compared to traditional tree-based systems where nuts are harvested from the ground as there is very little orchard floor management required. In addition, the straddle-harvesting allows hazelnuts to be grown in regions where rain and wet ground are common during the harvest season. However, agronomic questions for the hedgerow system remain including: plant size management, pruning, woody weed control, and fertility management. Information on the hedgerow system, economics, and enterprise budgeting tools will be presented.

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