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WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
ACT MEMO

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<p><b>2003 Wisconsin Act 174</b> [2003 Assembly Bill 679]</p>	<p><b>Cranberry as Wisconsin State Fruit</b></p>
<p>2003 Acts: <a href="http://www.legis.state.wi.us/2003/data/acts/">www.legis.state.wi.us/2003/data/acts/</a></p>	<p>Act Memos: <a href="http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/act_memo/act_memo.htm">www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/act_memo/act_memo.htm</a></p>

2003 Wisconsin Act 174 designates the cranberry as the Wisconsin state fruit. The Act also requires the *Wisconsin Blue Book* to include that information among its information on state symbols.

**Effective Date:** The Act takes effect on April 20, 2004.

**Prepared by:** Mary Offerdahl, Staff Attorney

April 8, 2004

MO:ksm

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents.

**Vote Record**  
**Committee on Homeland Security, Veterans and Military**  
**Affairs and Government Reform**

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Date: 3/18/04

Moved by: Breske

Seconded by: Zien

AB 679

SB \_\_\_\_\_

Clearinghouse Rule \_\_\_\_\_

AJR \_\_\_\_\_

SJR \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment \_\_\_\_\_

AR \_\_\_\_\_

SR \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

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A/S Amdt \_\_\_\_\_ to A/S Amdt \_\_\_\_\_

A/S Sub Amdt \_\_\_\_\_

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Be recommended for:

- Passage     Adoption     Confirmation     Concurrence     Indefinite Postponement  
 Introduction     Rejection     Tabling     Nonconcurrence

Committee Member

**Senator Ronald Brown, Chair**

Aye    No    Absent    Not Voting

**Senator David Zien**

**Senator Scott Fitzgerald**

**Senator Robert Wirch**

**Senator Roger Breske**

**Totals:**    5    0    0    0

Motion Carried

Motion Failed



State Representative

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## **Samantha J. Kerkman**

*Testimony of Representative Samantha Kerkman  
Assembly Bill 679*

*Relating to: designating the cranberry as the Wisconsin State Fruit*

Thank you Chairman Brown and members of the Committee on Homeland Security, Veterans and Military Affairs and Government Reform Committee for taking the time to consider Assembly Bill 679.

Assembly Bill 679 was drafted based on a petition my office received in 2003 from a fourth grade class at Trevor Grade School in Trevor, Wisconsin. During the Assembly Hearing four students from that class were able to testify, Miranda, Lauren, Eric and Kyle, as well as Social Studies teacher Janice Sielski and school board member Tom Steiner. The decision to select the cranberry as the state fruit was not taken lightly by the students. In fact, when they first contacted me they were considering the cherry for this symbol. After I asked them why, I received another petition with 5 bullet points as to their reasoning behind changing to the cranberry. I have attached a copy of the petition to my testimony for you to review. As you can see, the students carefully researched the cranberry and found valuable information to back up their beliefs.

Since receiving the petition, I also researched the issue. This fall I visited a cranberry bog, Ocean Spray, and met with the Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association. After examining the idea, I agree that the cranberry is the obvious choice for a state fruit. According to the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's Agricultural Statistics Service, we are number one among all states in production, producing 56.4% of the nation's cranberries. This is a staggering number that represents a general trend of our state producing more than half of the nation's cranberries.

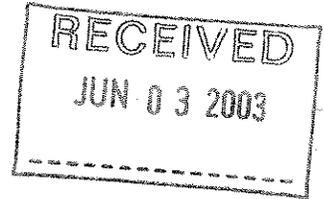
When Wisconsin is a leader it is only appropriate that we acknowledge our achievements. As the leader in the nation in cranberries, it is time we recognize it as our state fruit.

I would like to thank you for your time and consideration.

05/29/03

Dear Samantha Kerkman,

Fourth Grade  
Trevor Grade School  
26325 Wilmet Rd  
Trevor WI 53179  
262-842-2394



We would like to thank you for writing to our class about the state fruit. After studying more on Wisconsin History we have decided that we should make the Cranberry our State Fruit. Here are the reasons for our new decision.

1. The Cranberry is native to Wisconsin.
2. Some of the cranberry marshes are over 100 years old.
3. Cranberries contain vitamin C, which is a vitamin to help fight disease.
4. Cranberries have long been Wisconsin's #1 fruit crop. Wisconsin families have passed down the cranberry growing tradition since the mid 1800s.
5. The early settlers gave the cranberry its modern name. To them, the pink cranberry blossoms resembled the heads of cranes; therefore the word "craneberry," later contracted to "cranberry."

Giving the above information the following students are in support of naming the Cranberry our State Fruit.

Sincerely, The Fourth Grade Classes,  
Trevor Grade School, Trevor WI 53179

- 1 Kyle Bastian
- 2
- 3 Schyles Braakman
- 4
- 5 Bern Chileski
- 6 Kyle C. Cristen
- 7
- 8 Miranda Elkins
- 9
- 10 Eric Dole
- 11 Hannah Benson
- 12 Kevin Keli Meyer
- 13 Kurt Lilloom
- 14 James Mohr
- 15 Anthony Muloostan
- 16 Jeremy R. O'ison
- 17 Heaven Moore
- 18 Lauren Skajacki
- 19 Robert Smolka
- 20 Zach Ticha
- 21 Gretchen Watson
- 22 Bryanna Wunbur

Mrs. Donaldson

- 23 Mrs. Rebecca Kenney
- 24 Jenna Pigney
- 25 Tara Perkins
- 26 Curtis Bull
- 27 James Cox
- 28 Miligano Dazaga
- 29 Jody DeBartolo
- 30 Cassandra Pearson
- 31 Jessica S. Cihlar
- 32 Hannah R. Green
- 33 Samuel R. Phillippr
- 34 John Krass
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ADAMANTHA WRIGHT



Wisconsin  
State  
Cranberry  
Growers  
Association

FOUNDED 1887

# Wisconsin Cranberry Production

Year	Wisconsin	U.S.	Percent of U.S.
2000	2,597,000	5,585,000	46.5
2001	2,465,000	4,793,000	51.4
2002	3,210,000	5,688,000	56.4
2003	3,150,000	5,759,000	54.7

## **Cranberry Growing In Wisconsin**

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- ❑ One of Three Native Fruits
  - ❑ Early Cultivation of Wild Stands
  - ❑ State's Largest Fruit Crop
  - ❑ Wisconsin Leads Nation in Production
  - ❑ \$330 Million in Income for State's Residents
  - ❑ 7,200 Jobs
-



# Acreage By County

<input type="checkbox"/> Adams	641	<input type="checkbox"/> Oneida	742
<input type="checkbox"/> Burnett	139	<input type="checkbox"/> Portage	863
<input type="checkbox"/> Clark	104	<input type="checkbox"/> Price	507
<input type="checkbox"/> Douglas	149	<input type="checkbox"/> Rusk	103
<input type="checkbox"/> Eau Claire	21	<input type="checkbox"/> Sawyer	485
<input type="checkbox"/> Iron	121	<input type="checkbox"/> Vilas	729
<input type="checkbox"/> Jackson	3,031	<input type="checkbox"/> Washburn	389
<input type="checkbox"/> Juneau	1,829	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood	4,941
<input type="checkbox"/> Lincoln	156	<input type="checkbox"/> Total	17,960
<input type="checkbox"/> Monroe	3,010		

Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify on **Assembly Bill 679**, establishing the cranberry as Wisconsin's state fruit. This piece of legislation is important because of the large role cranberries play in lives of many Wisconsin residents and our agricultural industry.

Two-thirds of all Wisconsin cranberries are grown in acreage located in the triangle between Tomah, Black River Falls and Wisconsin Rapids. As you may know, many of the best cranberry bogs are located in the 31st Senate District, the area I represent. I've met many cranberry growers and have seen first hand the important role this industry plays in our economy, our environment, and our health.

Wisconsin leads the nation in cranberry farming and produces more than half of all cranberries consumed in the United States each year. Cranberries are Wisconsin's number one fruit crop. Many are sold fresh, but most are sold for processing into cranberry products. While many of our cranberries are sold to large corporations like Ocean Spray, the majority of cranberry farms are family operations, much like our family dairy farms. Additionally, the University of Wisconsin-Madison's College of Agriculture and Life

Sciences estimated that in 1995, the cranberry industry was responsible for over 3,300 production jobs and another 1,000

handling and processing jobs. This employment contributed over \$50 million in personal income to the state's economy and added another \$60 million in secondary effects. According to the UW, the total value cranberry production and processing added to Wisconsin's economy was estimated at \$173 million, and total industry output estimated at \$334 million.

Beyond economic benefits, land used in cranberry production also provides valuable habitat area for certain plant and animal species. Cranberry production occupies over 180,000 acres in Wisconsin, including 18,000 acres of marshes and the rest 'support' land including wetlands, woodlands and uplands. Support land provides refuge for plants and wildlife and can be home to rare and endangered species including eagles, cranes, swans, loons, wolf and other animals.

As the Senate gears up to eat healthier and slim down, it's a good time to remind you that cranberries are a low-calorie, fiber-rich fruit that offer several important health benefits. Cranberries are known for preventing urinary tract infections and possibly heart disease, as well as some cancers and infections. The National Kidney Foundation recommends drinking a glass of cranberry juice each day to maintain good kidney health.

The Wisconsin cranberry is more than just a fruit. It's a way of life for many Wisconsin residents that provides good paying jobs, a beautiful environment, and a healthy snack food alternative. I hope that you will honor this Wisconsin industry by voting in favor of AB 679 to recognize the cranberry as Wisconsin's official state fruit. Thank you for your consideration.

Original URL: <http://www.jsonline.com/news/state/mar04/213261.asp>

## Tom Lochner 'Takes Five'

### The cranberry, a fruit most exalted

From the Journal Sentinel

Posted: March 8, 2004

The cranberry is vying to add its name to the list of Wisconsin state symbols along with the wood violet, sugar maple, polka and Antigo silt loam. On Monday, a Senate committee unanimously passed a bill, at the request of Trevor Elementary School in Kenosha County, that would make the crimson berry the state fruit. The bill goes next to the full Senate for approval if sponsors can schedule it this week, the final week of the legislative session. Wisconsin is the No. 1 cranberry producer, growing more than half of the tart berries consumed by Americans each year, with more than 3 tons harvested each fall by 240 growers located mostly in the central part of the state. The cranberry is one of only three major fruits native to North America, along with the blueberry and Concord grape. Tom Lochner, executive director of the Wisconsin Cranberry Growers Association, talked with Journal Sentinel reporter Meg Jones about the fruit that graces countless Thanksgiving tables.

**Q. Did the cranberry have to duke it out with the apricot or apple to be designated the Wisconsin state fruit, or was it a slam dunk?**

A. We have respect for the other commodities in the state, but the cranberry, in our mind, is the obvious choice, being it's one of the state's native fruits and being we're by far the largest fruit crop in the state both in terms of volume and dollar value. Plus Wisconsin is the national leader in production. We think it's obvious for Wisconsin's state fruit to be the cranberry.

**Q. Are you expecting a big fight between the Republicans and the Democrats in the Legislature over this bill? Are there any anti-cranberry legislators, maybe some who prefer orange juice over cranapple?**

A. We're happy to report this is a non-partisan issue. Members of both parties have sponsored the bill and worked for passage. The vote in the Assembly was something like 94-4. It's an issue all of the legislators happily, regardless of party affiliation, have rallied to support.

**Q. Isn't the state muffin the cranberry? Are you worried there might be a backlash because the cranberry is getting so much ink?**

A. I don't think the state muffin is the cranberry. That bill did not pass. So that's really not an issue.

**Q. How come Wisconsin is king of the cranberry heap? What makes the state such a good place to grow cranberries?**

A. They grew here naturally, so the environment for Wisconsin is perfect for cranberry growing. Cranberries need a lot of high-quality water, good land and good resources, and we have those here in Wisconsin. We also have a tradition of families that grow fruit and have been involved in cranberry growing for many generations here. We have the knowledge base and research base at the University of Wisconsin. Our growers recognize the natural resources we have here are perfect for cranberry growing, and if we use them wisely, we can sustainably grow cranberries at a high level.

**Q. What's something unusual about cranberries that most people who eat them for Thanksgiving probably don't know?**

### 'Takes Five'



Photo/File

Tom Lochner

A. (The word) *cranberry* comes from the early European settlers, who when they saw the flower of the cranberry they called it the "crane berry." There were a lot of cranes in the marshes where cranberries grew, but also the flower resembles the head and neck of the crane. Over time, it was shortened to *cranberry*. Also, they only grow in North America. They don't grow anywhere else in the world.

**Takes Five Archive:**

Select a Person... 

From the March 9, 2004 editions of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel