

UMass president touts university excellence at Wareham cranberry research station

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WAREHAM — Touting the value of land grant universities, UMass President Robert L. Caret visited the 100-year-old Cranberry Research Station on State Bog Road Tuesday with Senate President Therese Murray, Rep. Susan Williams Gifford and a number of UMass Amherst and Dartmouth officials.

The stop, hosted by UMass Amherst Chancellor Kumble R. Subbaswamy, was Caret's latest on his four-day, 500-mile bus tour across the state that took him through a farm in Hadley and a business development center in Boston.

Caret, who began his tour Monday, is putting in 12-to-15-hour days and riding in a political campaign-style bus with a university logo paint-job wrapped around the exterior and "sponsored by Morgan Stanley" emblazoned on the side. One aide jokingly called it "UMass One."

The tour highlights the 150th birthday of UMass and the anniversary of the signing of the Morrill Land Grant Act, which founded the nation's land-grant universities.

"It's great to visit these outlying stations ... to see the zeal (of dedicated researchers)," Caret told The Standard-Times during the tour.

Cranberry Station Director Carolyn DeMoranville led the president and his entourage through a tour of the bogs followed by a brief stop in the center's laboratories.

The station, which works with more than 400 growers, researches cranberry pollination, health benefits and pest control and more, DeMoranville said.

The bogs are harvested on a volunteer basis by Wareham-based A.D. Makepeace Company and the cranberries are used in Ocean Spray products.

Asked by UMass Trustee Chairman Henry Thomas to provide an "astounding" example of the station's accomplishments, DeMoranville was ready. She pointed out that one of its scientists developed a means of controlling the cranberry weevil insect, which had developed resistance to pesticides, and saved the cranberry industry an estimated \$10 million in lost crops in one year.

"That's astounding," said Thomas, who had peppered DeMoranville with questions during the tour. "That's what the land grant (university) is supposed to be ... a difference-maker in the community."

The research station traces its history back to 1905 when professor H. T. Fernald of the Massachusetts Agricultural College in Amherst, now UMass Amherst, met with an association of local cranberry growers, according to the center's website.

Some local research followed and in 1910 the state Legislature approved \$126,000 to purchase a cranberry

bog and construct a building, which was finished in 1911.