

# Maine apples lure Jamaicans to Northeast

AUBURN, Maine (AP) — The business is apples and the aim is money, but in the 10 years Jamaicans have picked apples for Eugene and Lois Wallingford, the profits have extended beyond the ledger.

In addition to dedicated work and easy-going friendliness, the Jamaicans have brought the

Wallingfords a new understanding of a culture foreign to Maine.

For the past 10 years, Maine's 24 largest apple producers have hired about 450 Jamaicans for each fall's apple harvest. More than 6,000 work throughout the Northeast apple region, picking for the basic wage of \$3.44 an

hour, but working fast enough to earn up to \$50 a day on the additional piecework pay.

The New England Apple Council arranges work for the Jamaicans through a Kingston-based organization called the British West Indies Central Labor Group.

Americans and Canadians

used to do the job, but Americans got lazy and Canadians have turned to more profitable industrial jobs, says Eugene Wallingford, a slight, wry, 50-year-old Maine farmer who grows apples where his father grew them since the 1920s.

"The Jamaican is the best picker I've ever seen," Walling-

ford says. "They're like American labor was in the '30s and '40s. They've never seen welfare. They like to work. There's pride in what they do."

Wallingford says he was the second grower in Maine to employ Jamaicans. Two men from the 1971 crew come back year after year because of the bond they have with the Wallingfords.

Lois Wallingford is a robust, 47-year-old woman with sparkling blue eyes. The Jamaicans call her "Mum." While her husband talks about the Jamaicans' value as hard workers, she speaks of the cultural impact they have made on her family and her community.

"They'll come into work in the morning so cheerful that they just cheer me right up," Lois Wallingford says. "It's been great for our kids more than anyone else. The Jamaicans saw the kids playing kickball one time and showed them soccer. It's given the kids the opportunity to learn about another culture."

The people in the Auburn area have learned too, with some mixed reactions, she adds. She recalls the first Sunday she took the Jamaican workers to church and they brought along beer, a West Indian custom. No one in the congregation seemed to mind, she says.

After they finish picking apples, most of the Jamaicans head south to cut sugar cane in Florida until the spring, when they finally head home to Jamaica for several months with their families before returning to Maine to start the cycle again.

## Accused killer claims conspiracy

EUGENE (AP) — Lawrence Moore had an intense, piercing look in his eyes as he fired into a crowded Salem tavern, killing four and wounding 20, witnesses testified on Thursday.

The witnesses' comments followed arguments by Moore's lawyer, Michael Callahan of Salem, who said Moore believed the tavern patrons were Jews, millionaires, whores and bank tellers involved in a conspiracy to poison him and take his money.

Moore, 25, an unemployed lumber mill worker from Scio, east of Salem, has pleaded innocent by reason of mental disease or defect.

He already has admitted in a court document that he walked into the Oregon Museum Tavern on May 7, a Thursday ladies' night, and began firing an automatic pistol.

A jury of six men and six women is hearing the case in Lane County Circuit Court where the trial was moved because of extensive publicity in the Salem area.

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