

BUSINESS

Makepeace has plans for Edaville bogs

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A.D. Makepeace Co. plans to expand and rehabilitate the cranberry bog portion of the Edaville Railroad property in Carver after acquiring nearly 1,000 acres there for \$8 million.

The railroad-themed amusement park will remain open and the amusement park's owners will retain 120 acres of land, A.D. Makepeace CEO Michael Hogan said.

The cranberry bogs had been leased from Edaville to a local cranberry grower. A.D. Makepeace of Wareham, the largest property owner in Eastern Massachusetts, will take over management of the bogs, Hogan said.

The company will seek permits from local authorities this year to renovate and expand the bogs, Hogan said.

The renovations are designed to grow hybrid cranberry varieties that produce higher crop yields, Hogan said.

A.D. Makepeace plans to add 20 acres of bogs to the 200 acres that are already in use. The balance of the land is occupied by support uses and a 400-acre reservoir.

Hogan said the company hopes to begin the project next year.

The renovation of this region's older cranberry bogs is considered crucial to the state's long-term competitiveness with other states and Canadian provinces that have younger bogs with hybrid cranberries.

It's a challenge to renovate bogs because the costs can total as much as \$35,000 an acre, and the bogs may need to be taken out of a production cycle for as long as three years. The Cape Cod Cranberry Growers' Association is wrapping up a \$1.5 million, two-year study of the most efficient ways that growers can renovate their bogs.

“We’re taking those bogs that have native varieties that tend to produce half of what the hybrids produce (and) stripping the older vines and planting new, higher-yielding vines,” said Jeff LaFleur, executive director of the trade group. “If we can produce that fruit here, that means retaining the manufacturing jobs here, and retaining our growers here.”

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