Vermont Vegetable and Berry News January 26, 2009 Compiled by Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension (802) 257-7967 ext.13, vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry

This is a special e-mail only newsletter (i.e. no more 'Agriview' issue

many nights below zero (minus 16 was the low) with triple P19 rowcover. Even the Five Star Johnny's lettuce mix is surviving fine, but not growing very much. Cornell University lent us over 40 Spectrum Watchdog data loggers that monitor temperature, so we are conducting our own experiment for 3 months on our farm and to a small degree, 2 other farms. Our main goal is to determine how different applications of hoops and rowcovers affect the soil and air temperatures in the tunnels. The Watchdogs we have are programmed to record the temperature every hour for the next three months, then the data will the downloaded at Cornell, and we'll hopefully have some great data to share with everyone that is growing in tunnels over the winter. The 2 other farms involved with the data loggers have heat in the soil. We used some Biotello (corn starch based) black plastic on a few rows of the greens, and our own observations (and temperature gun) show that soil to be the warmest by about 5 degrees on those cold mornings.

The farmers' markets continue to be very strong and there is a demand for more and more greens. We are selling our spinach in ¼ lb. vented bags for \$3 (\$12 per lb) and mesclun (lettuce mix and four Asian greens) is also sold in ¼ lb bags, but is \$4 each or \$16 per pound. Swiss chard, kale and Asian Green bunches are weighed out at .45 lb and sold for \$3 (almost \$7 per pound). With the greens and about 10 root cellar crops, markets are still very lucrative, pay the bills, and keep a full-time intern busy! The winter leeks are still out there under rowcover and a foot of snow! Where is the January thaw, or at least a day above 32 degrees to melt some ice?

(Benson VT) We have been growing inside 2500 sq.ft. all winter so far. Glad to have some strong sunshine. We are harvesting a couple hundred lbs of microgreens and sprouts a week. Quality is good. We are opening up a second building to have a total of 5000 sq. ft. of heated space. It will fill up fast with herbs and more greens. We've been experimenting with supplemental lighting and also an