

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News November 10 2015
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REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Hinesburg) Hoop house spinach, lettuce, and claytonia establishing nicely. Some leaf miner damage on young spinach leaves. A bad year for the miner. I covered all chard, spinach, and beet from mid summer on but didn't think I would need to cover hoop house planting. Fall successions came on too quickly with warm weather, last CSA shares might be lean.

(Fairfax) Lots of mistakes this year. Maybe 15 inches of rain in June had something to do with it. Swede midge is becoming a major issue. Had a broccoli field thoaMTJd1 Oi.

(Westminster West) Loving this awesome Indian summer! Just a few field crops remain: Napa, leeks, turnips, some beets. With Thanksgiving soon, hoping to make one last sales spurt and finish up the year; already doing next year's business planning, ugh. Farmers' market done for the year, just a very modest increase over last year's sales, which gets us back to pre-recession levels finally. Storage crops selling steady and not much shrinkage except for the spaghetti squash, need to work on that as it -sold except for red onions. Carrots and turnips sitting pretty in storage. Working on re-skinning most of our 9 greenhouses, never my favorite job but this weather has been great for doing just that. Upgrading some single layer houses to inflated ones, much better that way after living with single layer for several years. The single layer houses develop more rips over time and we were never able to secure plastic so that the wind wouldn't cause it to flap around making noise and annoying people. Also, we are using the houses now for early bedding plants beside the raspberry production. So we installed heaters and need the tighter more insulated house. Cover crops still growing, which is good as some fields were done late. Looking forward to my trip to Cuba with a bunch of Vermont's top growers in 2 weeks!

(Plainfield NH) Gorgeous and forgiving weather. Rare in November are the days that start wholesale now and doing the 6 week CSA that wraps up Thanksgiving. Lots of projects out there. Predominant when the weather does really cool off is strawberry mulching. Clean up in fields is pretty far along. The oats that I sowed have put on enough growth to look as dense as the winter rye and vetch, and the mustard continues to chug along although it has fallen over and lodged. Hopefully we will get some time to prune blueberries before winter really sets in.

(Argyle NY) Amazing nice, warm weeks and the high tunnel winter greens are looking great, much better than last year, though we planted on time this fall which is critical. We have about 12 varieties of spinach and most looking good, with some a little sparse germ, possibly due to them being hot water treated many months ago, which we always do now on several crops. Parsley looks amazing and we hope it holds all winter. Trials last winter gave us hope it will. Onion plants (Bridger, Desert Sunrise, and 6 trials) plus the Forum sets are all planted, some in 100x14 tunnel and others on bare ground with 2 layers row cover and tunnel being built over them now. Cover crops of mostly rye/clover/vetch up nicely with the fields planted in early Sept. looking best. Field greens still going strong: head lettuce, Salanovas, spinach, arugula and of course kale. A small tunnel of Salanovas is ready to have plastic thrown over it when weather turns to normal Nov. weather! Our nearly completed washing station has heat, lights, and all plumbing done, including our favorite solenoid gadget which turns the water on/off on a wall switch for the barrel washer at both ends for the operators. Good farm crew still and winter indoor markets just started. Looking forward to New England Fruit and Veg conference.

(Little Compton RI) Unusually warm weather and some opportune rains have changed the whole picture at our farm. Though the drought stress from summer is being felt as winter crops come in. The biggest worry is our Brussels sprouts delaying their sprout formation. They are kicking in now but three weeks ago I thought it was a lost crop. Sweet potatoes are small and take much longer to cook and are just not that sweet. Romanesco cauliflower, which always acts weird when stressed, is coming in deformed or not at all. So a weird fall finish but thank goodness not a K.O.! I have heard countless talks about Alternaria on Brassicas being seed related, but after hot water . I think it is more environmental factors like water stress, temperature and dew point in the August/September. We heat treated two different plantings of Brussels sprouts and neither had Alternaria but it was also the driest summer ever in this region! The jury is still

NEW ENGLAND VEGETABLE AND FRUIT CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW

December 15-17, Manchester, NH. Pre-registration ends Nov. 30 after which rates go up. <http://www.newenglandvfc.org/>. The registration fee to attend any part or all of conference is \$115 for the first member of the farm or business and \$85 for each additional member (family or employee) when pre-registered with first member.

There are two concurrent sessions with 5 presentations each, every day. Plus there are 7 farmer-to-farmer sessions and a trade show with 100+ vendors.

Tuesday am Dec 15: Tree Fruit I, Food Safety, Specialty and Ethnic Crops, Blueberry I, Innovative Ideas for Small Acreage Growing, Beautiful Cut Flowers. Tuesday pm:

Tree Fruit II, Brambles Winter Growing, Harvest and Handling Efficiencies, Blueberry II.

Wednesday am Dec. 16: Stone Fruit, Brassicas, Leafy Greens, Mechanical Weed Control, Strawberry I, On Farm Trials. Wednesday pm: