

**Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – November 5, 2024**  
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<https://www.uvm.edu/extension/horticulture/commercial>

## **REPORTS FROM THE FIELD**

(Westminster) A really nice fall has led to an excellent harvest season, although we still have five or six acres of carrots and beets to harvest and more radishes and turnips than we can

Fall CSA is underway until Thanksgiving, and wholesale remains strong. Lots of a carrots in the cooler, a short crop of onions and adequate crop of potatoes except for russets which seemed to languish this year. Their emergence seemed to be retarded with lots of skips and weeds resulting, not sure why as we see this in the golds, reds or whites.

Going over soil testing results...looks like overall we are low in Mg, K and Ca in the majority of our soils, and OM levels on some fields came back disappointingly low, despite amendments of cover crops, compost. Farming on sandy loams is a double-edged sword.

(Little Compton RI) This is our seventh year using a high-clearance no-till interseeder on four acres of mixed fall brassica crops. The planter puts two lines of cover crops in the tire tracks and three lines of cover crops in-between the cash crop rows that are apart. This year the plantings got two good rains to lock in the 3-week old broccoli, etc. and though we have not had a drop of rain in 38 days the crop is looking incredible. The winter rye is substantial, and the crop/heads are healthy and show no signs of lacking water. Like a dense planting of sweet corn, the rye plus cole crops create their own microclimate that preserves moisture and captures fall morning dews remarkably well.

We grew about 1000 heads of JSS Fioretto 70 and are very impressed! The heads are so spectacular looking that we are getting \$7 to \$8 a head at farmers markets and at our store we are cutting them up and packing them in strawberry quarts and getting \$5 each.

The battles we lost mid-summer to Alternaria in brassicas now seemed to be under control with Kocide 3000 and OSO. We followed some advice from an Italian breeder of Radicchio and s after transplanting, and they seem to be doing well but for a touch of powdery mildew.

This weekend is the first covered indoor market. With Brussel Sprouts and Fioretto 70 cauliflower it should be a good one for us.

(Argyle NY)

produce, with a few nights of protection. We have cherry tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants producing in the tunnels with only limited night heat when below 30 F. Also have dahlias and zinnias doing well in low Farmer Friend tunnel and we are trialing to leave the dahlias in the ground all winter in the tunnel and will monitor the soil temperature with alarm settings. We are even eating cantaloupe from inside a tunnel that tastes good. Outside leeks are without damage from allium leaf miner due to the netting that has been on since August.

Been the driest on record for us, so irrigating a lot. Still using the pond system but drained the lines a few cold nights.

Winter greens look good in the tunnels. Kale is ready to harvest and been harvesting spinach for 3 weeks. Arugula trial is underway with first harvest of 5 varieties last week. All 5 have bacterial speck on the cotyledons but true leaves are fine.

Steamed greens beds with our new steamer that is SO fast. It takes 20 minutes to get soil to 160 degrees, so can do a whole tunnel with eight 34-inch beds in 3 hours. We look forward to no weeding this winter and maybe healthier soil.

We planted transplanted a mix of salinova and regular salad mix varieties for the winter (Albabionda, Sulu, and a lot of trials) and mini heads (Cherokee and trials) that we hope to have into January. Forum onion sets and transplanted yellow onions (Hi-Keeper) are being planted now in succession as we get beds cleared out in unheated tunnels.

Was a busy year with farm projects like painting all the buildings, which are mostly done, and organizing/cleanup always on the docket. Still trying to find another winter worker if any are leaving other farms (farm.pvf@gmail.com). On final details of the organizing of the New England Vegetable and Fruit Conference. Registration is open! Excited to see farmers at winter conferences!

## **NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

NRCDs are non-regulatory entities that work at the local level with private landowners, farms, state and federal agencies, and other partner organizations to promote and implement conservation programs. Vermont has 14 NRCDs that act as local facilitators linking landowners and producers with the appropriate federal, state, local, and private programs. Some districts are holding their meetings this month: Caledonia County, Nov. 7 from 5:30-7:00 and Windham County Nov. 14 from 5:00-7:00. The annual statewide meeting is on Nov. 19-20 at Lake Morey Resort. For more info go to <https://www.vacd.org/conservation-districts/>

## **INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN NRCS COMMITTEES**

Every state has a Natural Resources Conservation Service technical committee, and subcommittees. These serve in an advisory capacity to NRCS, providing input on policies and funding priorities.

From a mentee: *mentorship program was absolutely vital to our success with our*