

VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY GROWER NEWS March 1, 2022

Compiled by Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension

<https://www.uvm.edu/extension/horticulture/commercial>

(802) 257-7967 ext. 303, vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Grand Isle) We have our tomato grafting process underway. It is as time of year when we feel more like intricate surgeons than farmers. If we get a success rate of 85 to 90 percent of successful grafts, we feel great. Dr. Cary Rivard of Kansas State University is our go-to grafting guru. His videos are most helpful. We follow a prescribed time line schedule of key grafting components such as amount of light, temperatures, humidity and the like.

We are thinking more like gamblers than farmers with our peach trees. Lower than 15 degrees below zero is the danger zone for the fruit buds. We are betting that the buds survived the winter cold. But then again, we may just see leaves and no fruit this summer. We are enjoying the increasing hours of daylight.

(Starksboro) We got some irrigation on high tunnel spinach and kale during the recent warm spell, and the spinach especially started to take off this week. Just in time because we're starting to flip tunnels tomorrow. This winter has been a good test of our unheated tunnels, as we've had the longest cold spells of any of the past six winters. Spinach has been totally fine with two layers of Ag-30. Kale (Winterbor and Siberian) under three layers of hooped Ag-30 hasn't done as well. S

You can always get a highly vegetative rootstock to catch up to the scions but you can never get it to slow down without causing problems! Though imperfect, it's better to have the scion be the bigger/fatter of the two!

Healing chamber: 90% dark for the first two days and slowly increase from there. Temperature: shoot for 75 degrees. Tolerate 70 but avoid 80 or higher! Moisture: we don't have a meter but we use the Vicks Vapor Rub cool steam units we buy at Target for \$48. It has a dial to adjust output. We have two units in the healing chamber for to assure uninterrupted moisture during healing, which is the most critical step in grafting. We give them 12 hours of high moisture then back off as they indicate their happy connections.

Thermostat

-

CUCURBIT GROWER SURVEY

This confidential survey seeks to learn about your experiences using row covers and your willingness to adopt a new row cover approach known as mesotunnels. It will support a study is evaluating the use of mesotunnels in the eastern half of the US for control of the full range of pests and diseases on organic production of cucurbit crops. Participation in the survey is voluntary, and your opinion is still valued even if you have not used mesotunnels or row covers. To participate the survey use this link: <https://go.iastate.edu/EHWJCH> Questions? Dr. Sarah Pethybridge, Cornell University, sjp277@cornell.edu, 315-787-2417

UPCOMING EVENTS

Invasive Pests to Keep an Eye On: Spotted Lanternfly and Jumping Worms.VVBGA Webinar. Thursday March 3, noon-1:00

This session will open with information from Judy Rosovsky, Vermont State Entomologist, about the spotted lanternfly, an invasive planthopper that is spreading throughout the Northeast. It is both a public nuisance and an agricultural pest. She'll give an update on its movement northward, and an overview of its biology and host plants. We will then learn about jumping worms, another emergent agricultural pest. Dr. Josef Gorres is a national expert on this pest, and he will discuss their ecology, show you how to ID them and then review some management and slow-the-spread techniques. Bring your questions! These webinars are free and open to all but you must [register](#). They are recorded and posted to [VVBGA YouTube channel](#)

Contact sarah.kingsley@uvm.edu for details about getting credits. Agenda topics: Legislative Update, Field & Forage Update, EPA Paraquat Training, Selection & Use of PPE for Pesticides: Reading Between the Lines of the Label, Ag Container Recycling Program Summary, Re-q0.00000912 0 612 79