Vermont Vegetable and Berry News April 10, 2012

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REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Montpelier) This early season weather has its upside as well as downside. Fields are dry and prepped ready to go. Getting some drainage done in the next few weeks that would normally have to wait until later in the summer. On a certain level we are about 5 weeks ahead of schedule due to the warmth and lack of snow. The down side is the heat caused all overwintered crops to bolt and become bitter. So we have replanted or just torn out all 3 houses. At least they will be really ready for the summer crops. Aphids in the spinach were another big problem but with things bolting so fast there was no point in trying to control them. We just tore things out and fed them to the chickens. Market sales remain strong for produce and value added product. CSA sales are way ahead of last year and hoping to double membership; on track for that so far. The push to develop the value added product has been hard and a lot of work but seems to be paying off.

(Wolcott) Had to take fruit cuttings 3 weeks early as currants and gooseberries already opening leaves on our hill. Pear buds nearly open; they look frozen, so I do not expect much of a crop. Never seen it so dry in a Vermont spring. Saw first moose; planted some early vegetables outdoo productducar. . P

(Burlington) What a difference a year can make. Last year we were one with Lake Champlain in April. This year we are one with the Sahara. I'm happy about it, though a little concerned about our summer irrigation, given that I've never seen the river this low in the spring. Looking forward to jumping forward a half century from our 1910s Planet Jr. technology to a 1970s Stanhay planter.

(Dummerston) I'm happy about this dry early spring weather. I've never before been able to plow my whole field before late June. Carrots, beets, mesclun mix and spinach are seeded in the field. Showers this week may be enough to germinate some seeds. If not, I've found that driving tubs of water around the field in the tractor