



**Vermont Vegetable and Berry News** April 30, 2019  
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## **REPORTS FROM THE FIELD**

(Pownal) Pruning is complete on all raspberries, blackberries and blueberries. Many trailer loads of old canes/branches removed. Huge job but we finally finished. We have also completed all the organic fertilizing of all berries and worked into the mulch. This has been a cold process this year. Blackberries and blueberries look very good with good budding started. The raspberries do not look well. Winter damage must have hit, which surprised us. Last fall we removed 250 Encore raspberries and have a site prepared for replacements with Eden. I wished now that we had removed the remaining 250 Preludes and started all over. Weather reports do not sound promising, too much rain for planting new stock. Gardens have been plowed but not completely tilled.

(East Dorset) We have enjoyed steady help the past few weeks and the blueberry farm is the better for it. We have found a few college students who are hard workers and want regular work. Additionally, they are easier to supervise than my wife. The students like her better though as she

We started pruning 3/21 and got in a full day just before the 10 inches of snow. We pruned off and on the next two weeks. Pruning ended 4/11. We ended the pruning season with our highest number of bushes pruned in the eight years we have owned the farm. The wet spring has us worried about Mummy Berry and with the almost daily rain there is not much we can do about it now.

We are thinking about farm to table dinners at the farm and are curious if others feel it has been beneficial for them. Any thoughts are appreciated. Good luck to all this season.

(Rochester) Winter damage, from desiccation and deer browse, is the most extensive that we have seen in our twelve years of raising blueberries. It can make our pruning decisions simple and we do need to remove a lot of fruiting wood anyway for reasons of insect control. So we cut like crazy but plenty of viable buds remain on most bushes. Another unusual feature of this year's weather (or climate) is how much warm, heavy rain we have had early in the spring, leading to rapid bud development. We have gone from pruning in the snow to running out of time in just a couple of weeks.

(S. Royalton) After 25 years the deer have finally found my all you eat salad bar. Does anyone

The strawberries are uncovered and fertilized. They were encased in ice from November until a week ago; suffice to say I am not expecting to make a fortune on that enterprise this year, but a slow spring may allow them a bit of time to photosynthesize and rebound before blooming and coming under fruit load.

Some tillage is done although the rains and minor flooding have not helped in fields with heavier ground or fields abutting the river. Ray has been experimenting planting out some early paper pot transplants of carrots, spinach and beet. I was able to get some crops direct seeded before the recent rains. Prepping land for planting out onions, potatoes, and strawberries, but much attention still to be paid to the retail greenhouses. Have not had any interest from locals to work on the field crews; we are getting two more H2A laborers at strawberry harvest.

(Little Compton RI) This has been a record year for April rain in RI. I have broken every soil health theology I can think of trying to keep key crops in on schedule. If peas aren't in the ground  
beets in the understory of  
our first greenhouse tomato house. This year we will have a full house of greenhouse peppers  
and a house of split between eggplant and specialty peppers.

Trying to give our alliums a good early shot of nitrogen to get them off on a good footing so will  
with some cherry trees in our new peach planting. Got a plan to handle birds and sudden showers  
during harvest. If it works it will be



