



We had a large number of our tunnel cucumbers give it up to Pythium etc. probably as a result of cold wet soil, this was an early May planting that usually isn't all that cold and wet in our unheated tunnels. Maybe prophylactic Rootshield next year, or planting a week later will help.

Really appreciating our full-bed flamer as a hedge for stale seedbed prep in wet conditions; we may end up using it to flame our entire potato crop pre-emergence if the soil doesn't dry up enough for the flex-tine weeder very shortly.

(Westminster West) Seems like every year we say what a terrible spring it's been, but really, it's been a terrible spring! Now that it's drying out, I'm working double-time to plow and get fields ready for planting. Onions all in, better late than never! All the winter squash is up as plugs in

(Ange-Gardien, Quebec) Lack of sun for optimal growth in the greenhouses. Soil working windows are short but everything is in the ground as planned waiting for heat to grow. Organic field crop soybean planted, always a challenge to get proper seeding rate. Hopefully will get windows to weed! Market not as strong, hard time to sell lettuce mix, they want whole heads but I make way more money with multiple cuts. Busy operating while I should be planning 3 big projects: new greenhouse, new artesian well and renovation in packing shed. I need 30 hours a day!

(Plainfield NH) The cool damp spring has suppressed greenhouse ornamental and veg plant sales, although this past weekend was very strong. Nice to see some open space in the greenhouse, and the cooler temps have made watering a little easier during the busy sales rushes for a staff that is already a little thin.

In the field the strawberries look lousy for this time of year. Pretty sure we are looking at winter injury. Blues and black raspberries look good, but winter injury on the summer raspberries is significant. We are pretty current on our field planting, although no row covers on anything as a result of not enough bodies available. This would be a good year to have rowcovers on to push growth. Transplanting on the sandy ground has been a breeze with the incessant showers-no irrigation pipe set anywhere. Feels like we are farming precariously again.

(Argyle NY) It's been a challenging two months with the weather but use of silage tarps has helped with weed control and helped keep some areas dry so that we can keep some field seedings and transplants on schedule. We are learning how long it actually takes to get the weeds under control; we also doing some flaming if the tarp is only down for a few weeks.

Tunnels are transitioned to summer crops, with some crops like tomatoes planted into the middle of the kale beds so we can still harvest kale a while. One high tunnel will go out of production and be cover-cropped for the summer.

Markets have been up and down, with our weekday one being very poor, but with strawberries starting soon that will bring in customers for sure! Head lettuce has been ready for a week. Spinach is transitioning to Banjo and Seaside as our standard summer varieties. Pea stands are mostly great and flowering, will be ready early this year.

Potatoes are all planted, with trials of several red and yellow varieties, and the sweet potatoes came in yesterday so we just need a drier day to plant in the plastic/straw mulch which is ready for them. Cultivation with the Lely tine-weeder is critical weekly to assist with weed control, as well as our quick hand cultivation/fertilizer incorporation with the wire weeder/push hoes. We enjoy and value all our monitoring equipment to keep tabs on our storage areas for temp, and for monitoring farm activity through the cameras.

## **UPDATE FROM THE UVM PLANT DIAGNOSTIC CLINIC**

Ann Hazelrigg

Seeing a lot of pictures/samples of Botrytis gray mold in tomato, spinach and bedding plants. This is a weak fungal pathogen associated with high humidity and usually attacks dying tissues, but with humidity over 85%, it can become aggressive and even cause cankers in tomatoes. It is typically found low in the plant where air circulation was poorest. It is easy to diagnose: you can see the gray fuzzy spores on the tissue. Sometimes gray mold can be confused with downy mildew in spinach so it never hurts to send in a sample to make sure. Increasing air circulation and reducing humidity is the best management.

Curling/tw607al

## **UVM AG ENGINEERING BLOG POST: BACKFLOW PREVENTION**

The intentional, directional, and reliable flow of water is important to ensure agricultural water is “safe and of adequate sanitary quality.” This post provides information on the importance of backflow prevention and some common practices that help mitigate the risk of backflow: [go.uvm.edu/backflow](http://go.uvm.edu/backflow)