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(Royalton) Eggplants are being hit hard by potato beetles. We're diligently pulling volunteer potatoes from last year's crop out; hopefully everyone else affected by the blight is doing that, too. The field tomatoes are planted and doused with compost tea, as are the winter squash, melons, cukes and summer squash. Onions are loving this weather, and weed suppression is great with the biodegradable mulch. Snap peas are producing lots of sweet pods in the hoop house, and t

(Grand Isle) As asparagus season 2010 draws to a close, we would evaluate this year's crop as "fair". Asparagus is not a fan of hot and dry conditions. In retrospect we remember the ideal asparagus conditions of 2009 with lots of cool and wet weather. We are extra busy setting out seedlings of all kinds and some of the early varieties of strawberries are tasty and red. We expect yields from these first berries to be down as some blossoms were lost in several nights of frost even though they were under row cover. At coffee break on the farm recently everyone started telling their philosophic views of vegetable farming. One person said "it's all timing" another said "it is either too wet or too dry or too hot or too cold". A third person said "it's a case of blind ignorance since every spring you come back for more with great high hopes for the perfect year." But none of this truly explains why we love it so!

(Little Compton RI) It has been dry so w

(Salisbury NH) We got through the very cold period and then the high temps for a while. Cut worms doing well this year; we've already seen a few Colorado potato beetles and the cucumber beetles found the hoop house and made a mess of our transplants. Planted 500 Seascape strawberries and thought I'd put paper/cardboard and then straw between rows to keep the weeds at bay but it was dry and then windy the next day so it was blown all over. Still trying to get volumes up for supplying restaurant and co-op. Bought Johnny's 6 row seeder but there certainly is a trick to using it. Someone suggested that after making a raised bed and smoothing it, we should take a landscape roller tool used for lawns to pack the dirt lightly. We tried just making a raised bed and smoothing it but the seeder the wheels didn't spin consistently. Maybe at a twilight meeting someone can share the secrets of that tool! Had a few sales to customers that know us and come up even though we haven't hung our open sign. We appreciate the notes from the field: learn a lot, laugh a lot and feel relief to know that even the big guys have problems too.

Johnny's Selected Seeds will host a twilight walk on June 30th, 5-7:30pm, that will highlight: onions in quick hoops trial; hoop house plantings; herbs; early lettuce and greens trials; mulch trials; and caterpillar tunnel trials. The research farm is located on Foss Hill Road, Albion, Maine. For directions see <http://www.johnnyseeds.com> or call 877-564-6697.

SWEET CORN TWILIGHT MEETING JUNE 16

Hank Bissell of Lewis Creek Farm will show how he uses the growth and development of corn plants in his fields to determine planting dates for his different blocks of corn. Hank also uses the Pre-Sidedress Nitrate Test to determine if his corn has enough nitrogen and cover crops are an important part of his rotation. This year he is also trialing sweet corn planted in a deep zone tillage system.

Directions: Take VT Route 116 to the village of Starksboro. In the center of the village the farm is on the west side of the road. Park at the farmstand. Sponsored by the VT Vegetable & Berry Growers Association, NOFA-VT and UVM Extension, and Risk Management Agency. Free for VV&BGA members and VOF certified farmers, \$10 for NOFA members or apprentices, \$15 others.

The deadline has been extended until July 23 to share your views with the Food and Drug Administration before they develop safety standards for fresh produce. They seek specific recommendations in categories such as: the role of the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) guidelines, how to coordinate produce food safety practices with sustainable and/or organic production methods, environmental and/or conservation goals or practices, and existing government regulations. Comments can be submitted electronically at <http://www.Regulations.gov>. Click on 'submit a comment' box at top, then enter the docket number FDA-2010-N-0085 in the 'keyword' field. You can then click the link to the background info on left, and click submit a comment link on the right. To submit comments by mail, be sure to include the docket number at the top of the pages you send to: Division of Dockets Management, HFA-305, Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061 Rockville, Maryland 20852.