

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – July 18, 2014
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REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Guilford) This might be our latest strawberry season ever, we picked some Cavendish and Sparkle this week. Still no sign of SWD, but we want to order large amounts of Proteknet for blueberries and raspberries. Great pea crops, but why can't they get quality control up on pea seed? Always shell peas in with sugarsnaps. Weeds are loving the weather and took advantage of all those harvesting days so we're battling our way out. Deer and woodchucks hitting us hard this year. It may go down as Year of the Mammalian Pest for us, after Year of the Snail, Year of the Slug, and Year of the SWD.

(Plainfield NH) Wrapping up PYO this weekend. Had a better season than expected after an initial onslaught of leaf spot disease and plants getting off to a real slow start vegetatively after the long winter. Harvest got off to a slow and late start for us as well, but good picking weather helped. Old workhorse varieties performed the best: Cavendish, Annapolis, Valley Sunset and Lamour. Will miss Noreaster from Nourse which was a dependable for PYO on our soils. Now picking raspberries, black caps and blueberries while harvesting summer vegetables and greenhouse tomatoes for the farmstand and accounts. Plants that should be transplanted out in the field are backing up in the greenhouse and the weeding and cultivations are less than timely. Weeds have exploded the last 10 days, put on tremendous growth making cultivation challenging. Have a potato leaf blight (currently being diagnosed at UNH) and one of the heavy hatches of Jap Beetles in many years. Some thrips injury and purple blotch in one onion plantings. The 7-member field crew is swamped, putting in 12 to 14 hour days now that blueberries are ready. This time of year always puts a hole in our labor strategy and is extremely tiring for all of us as we try to hold it together. Can't say enough good things about the dedication my guys (male and female) have been showing.

(Wolcott) Red and black currants are heavy with fruit. Blueberries are in the green stage so time to get the netting ready, this helps us to allow them

(Westminster West) Greenhouse raspberries starting to come in and are very large so far. We haven't run drip in the houses until now just too busy but it doesn't seem to have made any difference. Thinned and cut back heavily this year might have helped. Winter squash running and setting lots of fruit but as always won't know the yields until harvest time. Very few squash bugs so far. Onions looking good, trying to keep up with copper applications as well as thrips control, also haven't had to run drip yet but will commence as I need to fertigate. Garlic harvest starting today, some varieties really large and no signs of last year's problems. Tunnel tomatoes coming in heavy now and selling all we can pick. Lettuce from tunnels looks great and moving

(Warren) No major disasters, all crops looking good so far. Markets are steady and I have

(Monkton) Great strawberry season, over twice the yield of last year, only a trace of fungal diseases, and hardly any tarnished plant bug damage. PYO demand also seems to be up. Blueberries, currants, and raspberries look good and the traps are out for SWD. Garlic harvest has begun and bulbs look great although a few rogue, mysterious (even to the plant diagnostic lab) virus specimens have appeared. Other crops look good although we over-planted summer squash. Anyone need extra zucchini? Overall, a pleasure to work in good weather!

(Hinesburg) Partway through garlic harvest. There is some minor leek moth damage, but overall the bulbs are significantly larger and of much better quality than last year.

(Williston) Japanese beetles are on the rise. Hand picking daily seems to be keeping them under control. Potato beetle on the eggplant have been doing damage but more hand picking has decreased numbers. I found a hornworm moth 2 weeks ago in my hoop house tomatoes and will spray Dipel. Wholesale market sales are picking up after a slow late May/June. Hoping basil will be okay for a while before mildew shows up. Had trouble with my Mazzie fertilizer system and found the in-line filter was plugged up from fish/seaweed fertilizer. Need to put whole system before sand/gravel filter. Last few quick heavy rains of up to 2" rain mean I need to get fertilizer in fields.

(Grand Isle) We will finally be picking sweet corn tomorrow. We are using Trichograma wasps this year for corn borer in our sweet corn. So far, so good. Also we are trialing Malwina strawberries. We didn't have time to clip the flowers from the new plants, and the fruit is large, good looking and very sweet. Very little bug pressure so far. Good weather to work in; life is good!

(Argyle NY) Our annual bed strawberry season was better than average with Chandler, but heavy rains did cause some loss of production. We think about putting them in tunnels to control the weather! They are scheduled to be turned under tomorrow. We have some experimental ever-bearing varieties that we are keeping data on and will be working at keeping out insects. The first week of August we will get our new Chandler tips in Canada and root them in our greenhouse for the Sept planting. Blueberries have lots of winter-kill and we have zero apples. Over-wintered Bridger and Forum onions have surprisingly been our best crop ever; the Forum we planted in early December from sets now have their tops over and they are ready for drying down or fresh onion sales; we just finished selling the earlier Bridgers. We have never had disease on these onions and they store for many months. Most crops are doing well, except the greens that had a little hail damage last week. Leafhoppers just appeared in a flurry 2 days ago so we had to break out the Pyganic. Markets are a little slower this summer and we will be searching for fall farm workers.

SWD INFORMATION

The first few spotted wing drosophila adults of the year have been captured in CT, NH, RI and Hudson Valley -

Brassicas: The second peak of flea beetle damage may occur on newly planted fall brassicas. Alternaria is showing up in brassicas, and adequately fertilized crops are less susceptible. Black rot diagnosed in kale. 'V'-shaped yellow lesions are the main symptom. Both pathogens can be seed borne and hot water seed treatment is effective for both. Swede midge damage seen in growing points of broccoli with severe tell-tale scarring on petioles/stems in Chittenden County. All stages of imported cabbage worm in brassicas now; adults, pupae and young larvae feeding in crops. Easier to control/manage when larvae are small.

Beans: Lots of Mexican bean beetle spiky yellow larvae seen feeding on beans. Feeding occurs on the underside of leaves, but causes death of leaf tissue in a lace-like pattern. Feeding damage over 10-20% can cause yield loss. High numbers cause circular spots/feeding damage on pods. Potato leafhopper may be causing hopper burn on leaf edges.

Onions: Botrytis and purple blotch seen. Lots of damage from onion leek moth destroying garlic scapes and leaves. Thrips numbers increasing.

Basil: Downy mildew not found in VT so far but it is coming soon. Get as much basil grown, harvested and turned into pesto ASAP since once it shows up, it is hard to keep it disease-free.

Mint: Four-lined plant bug damage seen on mints causing disease-like angular black spots on foliage.

Parsley: Septoria leaf spot on flat leaf parsley diagnosed. Look for brown spots with black dots inside the spots.

Corn: for discussion of European corn borer and earworm trap captures from scouting in MA and VT see: <https://extension.umass.edu/vegetable/publications/vegetable-notes-newsletter/>

UPCOMING EVENTS See: <http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/?Page=meetlist.html>