

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News July 23, 2012
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REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Jericho) Thankful for the rain, not so thankful for the leaf hoppers. Lots of huge beautiful crops and not enough time to harvest it all. Loving the rye straw mulch that we produced this spring that is now keeping *some* of the weeds at bay. Great crew, great weather.

(Warren) We seem to have weathered the drought OK. Recent rain was appreciated. We have been overhead irrigating direct seeded crops fairly regularly but that seems to be a poor substitute for real rain. The crops on drip are another story. All of the light and warmth that comes with a drought coupled with 1-2 inches of water per week does some pretty great things to potatoes and onions. Harvesting Walla Wallas right now and trying to sell a bumper crop of fennel. Bulk harvest of carrots and beets starts next week. Weekly sprays of Seacrop have made mildew on mesclun lettuce and alternaria on carrots nonexistent, two problems that have plagued us from the start. Oucumber beetles totally ruining GH cucumbers, always something.

(Westminster West) We had THE best strawberry year ever. Our small farm is in one of those cold spots so our berries come in 2-3 weeks later than others right around us. Our first pick was

(Cambridge) Battling cucumber beetles, potato leafhoppers on both potatoes and beans and awful, awful cabbage worms. I had tried direct seeding the winter squash under row covers which worked really well last year to beat the little stripey buggers but this year the warm conditions under the covers got the weeds off to a better start than the squash and they were swallowed up. Next year I may delay planting after knocking back weeds a few times. Am pulling garlic this week - looks pretty good. Onions are also very happy with the sunshine.

(Shrewsbury) Our SWD traps hung toward the tops of the Blueberries seem to be attracting racoons, deer, or something that tears down the trap and large bunches of green berries. We lost a pint off bushes last night. This is the second trap attack in 10 days. The first pulled a different trap down and put large tooth holes in the side of the trap container and yellow sticky strip inside. Blueberry plants are loaded but heavy pressure from more robins and cedar waxwings than usual. And a new phenomenon - numerous chipmunks dimbing into bushes.

(Keene NH) Our potatoes had the triple threat this year: Colorado potato beetles, three-line potato beetles, and now we got hit hard by the potato leafhopper. New potatoes look great but are small. Harvested a third of the garlic so far; huge heads look fantastic. Peas got mowed down earlier this season by woodchuck but came back and are quite productive now - good because all of the strawberries came in so early that they went to spring CSA and so the u-pick options for summer CSA have been more limited. We're hoping for rain; have one field with irrigation and watering seedings in by hand on the other two. Been trying to work Murphy's law by leaving all the windows of my car and farm truck open but so far no luck.

(Salisbury NH) Very dry. Thunderstorms left only 1/4" of rain. Pest pressure building. Trying to keep up with the weeds; lots were imported with both chicken manure and compost over the past few years.

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Aug, 9, 9am - 6 pm. Organic Seed & Breeding Field School. Training for seed growers, plant breeders, researchers and students at High Mowing Organic Seeds, Wolcott, VT. Cost: \$100 includes lunch and evening social hour. This training will include talks by leading plant breeders from around the country as well as hands-on participatory activities that focus on: plant breeding and selection, research trials and seed production. Limited registration, for application form: kathy@highmowingseeds.com.