

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News –August 13, 2013
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DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE TO MEET WITH FDA ABOUT THE NEW FOOD SAFETY LAW
August 20, 9:30-12:30, Alumni Hall Auditorium, Hopkins Center, Dartmouth College.
At this session farmers can ask questions of FDA officials about the draft rules for implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). Two rules that will directly affect farmers are the Produce Safety rule and the Preventive Control rule. Although the law and the rules are complicated, a lot of work has been done to help interpret them and identify areas of concern. I strongly urge you to: 1) take an hour or two to get up to speed on the issues, 2) show up to this session on Aug 20 and, 3) submit comments to FDA by the Nov. 15 deadline. FSMA is too important to 'leave up to others' to deal with; speak now before the rules are finalized.

Here are some resources to help you learn about FSMA and its potential impacts:
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (extensive background and talking points):
<http://sustainableagriculture.net/fsma/overview-and-background/>

New England Farmers Union:

<http://www.newenglandfarmersunion.org/food-safety-modernization-act/>

The NHVBGA website for growers to discuss FSMA:

<http://www.farmtalkfsma.org/>

The FDA website on FSMA: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/default.htm>

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Warren) Shaping up to be a pretty good year for us. With the exception of the odd spinach gap it looks like we will get through this year filling every greens order we have. Early onions are out of the ground. Really nice quality and yield. Finally I have a crop that justifies owning an onion topper. Might even put the vacuum on the skin scrubber. Later plantings looking equally good. Winter squash is shaping up really well. So are potatoes. I'm pretty surprised at how early things are finishing up. So far the major disappointment is our early carrot crop.

(Plainfield NH) The odd weather patterns continue, although we have not irrigated once other than for frost. Stuff slowed down significantly in maturing, with corn and tomatoes slowing the most. SWD showing up in in last fruit of summer raspberry crop and blueberries, but no counts in the traps. Hmm, traps are with yeast and sugar water. Squash vine borer is in summer squashes, DM is here attacking the cukes and melons, Alternaria starting to show on the earlier carrot crops and I suspect that DM of basil is starting to wind up, but this week will tell the full story. Corn is pretty clean with a bit of borer injury, but looking out for the CEW to show up in traps; then it gets interesting. Strawberry plants responding well in this cooler damp weather and runner set seems high. Have been spending too much time away from farm activities working on understanding FSMA and have been pretty disappointed in the level of farmer engagement at the meetings and discussions Extension recently hosted in NH. FSMA affects not only our group, but all facets of ag, right down to the folks who sell us compost, fertilizer, tractors, as well as consumers, CSA memberships and food hubs. The written comment period has just been extended to November 15 so there is more wiggle room on that, but I hope that many of you will fill the room on August 20th in Hanover NH when the FDA opens the floor for farmer comment. I know I have railed about FSMA before and I still urge you all to take a hard look at the proposals; I think it's a pretty safe bet that your operation is going to be negatively impacted if the proposed rules become the law.

(S. Cambridge NY) After 8.7 inches in June, rain has been scarce and we have been irrigating daily. Cucurbits doing well until a watermelon vine collapse in early August, when the weather got cool after extreme heat. Not sure if it is the same as the watermelon vine decline in the south that has been attributed to a virus. Cantaloupes next to watermelons completely unaffected. Potato leafhoppers not as bad as previous years but taking a toll on Adirondack Red and Blue spuds. Spraying with Surround may have helped. We've tried it before with less success, but this time didn't have heavy rains wash it off. CPB very scarce. Snails seem to have displaced slugs in the last few years; we never used to see many snails. Now they are all over the cucumbers and leave ugly brown scars. Another reason to get the cukes up on trellis(g)-JETBT7.89 2ht The

Really amazing results from using green manure legume crops on fields where minerals were high but N was needed. After losing all our favorite varieties of melons have gone back to ancient standby, Goldstar, and it's doing great! Farm stand has been busy, helped by good corn quality. It's not organic, but still getting \$.70/ear and not coming down. Most of the bad rain has missed us and we could actually use some; only got 2/3 inch in last cycle. Being audited by US DOL, Wage and Hour Division, and we are going to get killed!

(Little Compton RI) Demand for GH tomatoes is just amazing! It beats all returns on investment and odds for getting a successful crop. We have GH colored peppers and grafted eggplant, too; that is a close second. Still, we have lost stupid money by not having a dedicated employee whose job it is to visit all greenhouse producing houses to check for clogged water filters, sudden mite and other infestations and plant nutrition/leaf tests etc. Next year this will be a designated job for one of our crew. In a year like this, with too many emergencies pulling at you daily, one has to maintain focus on what brings in your best dollar return. Watermelon radish, Black Spanish radish and rutabagas go in tomorrow. This year we are opening up the seed spacing between seeds to get bigger storage radishes. Jang planter cogs will be 11/13 and not the usual 14/9. We want "tennis ball size" crop this year not golf balls. We are also going to

(Hampton NY) Early tomatoes are just starting to turn color. Leaf spot is starting to show up as well. Powdery mildew is in summer squash. Cucumbers are starting to produce again after shutting down with the heat a couple of weeks ago. Acorn squash is producing well and Butternut is coming along; starting to see squash bug eggs. A couple of plants have fallen victim to stem borer. Stand is holding steady and will pick up as soon as I start selling sweet corn. Gladiolas are starting to bloom and I will be picking more sunflowers and zinnias.

UPDATE FROM THE UVM PLANT DIAGNOSTIC CLINIC – Ann Hazelrigg

Garlic is starting to come in. I suspect we will see a lot of basal rot caused by Fusarium due to the wet conditions this summer. You will see some of the basal plate/roots missing or rotted. There may be a pinkish cast to the area or the cloves. The best thing to do is get the bulbs drying as quickly as possible to slow any further rot. You may want to even consider making 2 sections/areas where you are drying the bulbs-one totally healthy and clean (can be used for seed stock next year) and one where there is some rot (can be sold/eaten right away.) For pictures go to: http://www.science.oregonstate.edu/bpp/Plant_Clinic/Garlic/Fusarium.pdf We always seem to see mites along with the Fusarium basal rots. Not sure who comes in first! These small arthropods feed on the tissue opening up wounds and move around spores. Again, I would not store/use infested bulbs for seed. You should be able to see the pearly white mites with a hand lens. For more info, <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/r584400111.html>.

Lots of leafhopper and early blight on potato leaves. This is typically just tip dieback and edge dieback, not big leafspots in the middle of the leaves like in late blight. Grower reports that stylet oil sprays can be effective in suppressing leafhopper.

On one farm saw scarring injury on lots of Brassicas most likely due to swede midge. Did not see any larvae but lots of damage and lack of good heads. For pictures and info go to: <http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/factsheets/vegetables/cruc/sm.pdf>. Watch for the injury in fall Brassicas and let us know if you are seeing it on your farm.

Plectosporium is a relatively new disease of pumpkins and winter squash and is showing up on some farms in central Vermont and also in Massachusetts; it may not be a disease you are familiar with, see: http://extension.cropsci.illinois.edu/fruitveg/pdfs/946_cmplt.pdf.