

Compiled by Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension
(802) 257-7967 x303 vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu
<http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry>

Do we still have to be worried about root maggots in radishes/ turnips or is it safe to remove rowcovers to get some air circulation in there? There is a great research paper that graphed the timing and size of cabbage maggot adult flights over 3 years in upstate NY. It shows that the last (4th) generation emerges during the second half of September or early October, but is relatively small, with only about 5 to 10% of the number of adults that were trapped during emergence of the first 3 generations. So if you expect to lose marketable crops to disease due in part to poor air circulation it would be best to uncover them; if the foliage looks OK then better safe than sorry, leave the cover on. See: <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/pubs/fls/OCRPDF/87a.pdf>

Is it safe to grow vegetables on land where pigs have been raised? Pigs can harbor roundworms, which are intestinal parasites that can also infect humans. In general, roundworm eggs are resistant to about everything and they can last for years in soil. It's debatable whether composting would kill them. For the same reasons that you shouldn't compost dog or cat fecal material and then use that compost on your garden, you should not use pig manure on your crops, or grow edible crops on land where pigs were recently raised or used to root up crop residues. However, if the pigs are properly dewormed (and fecal samples were analyzed to confirm the lack of parasites) then it's much less of a concern. Exactly how many years one should wait until growing vegetables after pigs is not clear; unlike many parasites, the roundworm eggs do not break down easily over time. So the safest strategy is to avoid the situation altogether; otherwise, wait as long as you can, at least 5 years, before growing vegetables on land that held pigs; then be sure to wash hands and vegetables very well to minimize risk of contamination. (Thanks to Dr. Anne Lichtenwalner, UMaine Extension and UMaine Animal Health Laboratory, for this answer.)

What are the leaf spots on my organic raspberry crop and what can be done about them? The spots are likely raspberry leaf spot or anthracnose leaf spot, for help with identification see: <http://www.fruit.cornell.edu/berrytool/raspberry/leavesstems/Raspleafspot.htm>. To suppress the disease be sure to encourage good air circulation in the canopy next year: thin canes to no more than 5 per square foot and of course remove all dead and weak canes; narrow the rows to 18 inches or less in early spring. Do not overfertilize with N, and do not overhead irrigate. You may want to apply a copper fungicide, but how effective this will be for disease suppression is not clear. Both NuCop 50WP and Champ WG are OMRI approved and labeled for raspberry leaf spots as a delayed dormant spray in spring and after harvest in the fall, at 4 lb/acre plus 1 qt crop oil.

What coverings do you recommend for our winter growing greenhouse and where can I get them? Consider a greenhouse covering with infra-red (IR) heat conserving plus anti-drip (anti-condensate) features. There are several brands such as TuffLite, Klerke, etc. that seem similarly priced, in the range of about \$250 for a 24' x 100' 6 mil roll. Less expensive covers without these features don't save you a lot over the 4 year life of the plastic.

New England sources include Griffin Greenhouse Supply and Rimol Greenhouses. Here's a link to an article by John Bartok on the topic of coverings:
<http://www.gmpromagazine.com/gmpro-0510-choose-right-plastic-film-polyethylene.aspx>

Mexican bean beetles were terrible this year, what can I do to suppress them next year? Try the commercially available wasp that attacks bean beetle, called *Pediobius*. For details see: http://www.umassvegetable.org/soil_crop_pest_mgt/insect_mgt/bean_mexican_beetle.html. As with any biological control, plan ahead so you can make releases as soon as the pest is present – not after it has built up to damaging numbers. *Pediobius* is available from the following suppliers: Green Spot Ltd., NH., www.greenmethods.com 603-942-8925; IPM Laboratories, NY 315-497-2063; ARBICO, 800 -827-2847 (AZ), <http://www.arbico.com/>.

Is it OK to leave pumpkins in the field for another couple of weeks? Once the fruit rind is hard (cannot be easily punctured by fingernail) and there is some color starting, pumpkins should be harvested, since nothing good is likely to happen in the field this late in the season, and a partially colored pumpkin will ripen to full color in a week or so if kept warm. Exposure to temps below 50F causes chilling injury - not much at 45 but a lot more below 40F - and repeated cold injury adds up over time, reducing storage life of pumpkins. Even if you don't have 'perfect' storage conditions a barn or shed offers some protection. USDA's Commercial Storage of Fruits, Vegetables, and Florist and Nursery Stocks, at <http://www.ba.ars.usda.gov/hb66/116pumpkin.pdf> says: for storage, all pumpkins and winter squashes should be well matured, carefully handled, and free from injury or decay; recommended conditions are 50 to 55 °F with RH 50 to 70%. Higher RH promotes decay while lower RH causes excess weight loss and texture deterioration.

Sandy Menasha, Cornell Extension, Long Island

Harvesting and Storing Sweet Potatoes: Sweet potatoes should be harvested before soil temperature drops to 50 degrees F in order to prevent injury. It is best to dig sweet potatoes when the soil is dry making it easier to handle the roots. Soon after digging, sweet potatoes should be cured to help heal any wounds. This is necessary for successful storage. Cure for 7-14 days at a temperature of 80 to 90 degrees F with relative humidity at about 85 to 90 percent. Store sweet potatoes in a warm building where the temperature will be uniform. The curing room may also be the storage room if conditions are right. Temperature during storage should be kept as close to 55 degrees F as possible. The roots can deteriorate rather quickly if temperatures drop below 50 degrees F. It is also important to ventilate the storage room, at least one air exchange per day, especially if temperatures rise above 60 degrees

REBATES FOR TRACTOR ROLL BARS

The Vermont Rebates for Roll Bars program will rebate 70% of the entire cost of retrofitting your tractor with a roll over protective structure (Roll bar and seat belt kit, shipping, parts, and installation if you choose to dealer install) up to \$765. First come, first serve as funds are limited and only one