

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – January 20, 2009

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www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY GROWERS ASSN.

Feb. 9th, Capital Plaza Hotel, Montpelier. Pre-registrations must be received by Feb. 5. Details are on line at: www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry click on ‘meetings and events’ or call 802-257-7967.

TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS FOR GROWERS AT NOFA-VT CONFERENCE ON FEB. 15

More conference info at: www.nofavt.org or call 802-434-4122 or e-mail info@nofavt.org

9:15 - Worker Protection Safety Handler Certification Training.

Anne MacMillan, Vermont Agency of Agriculture. Do you use organic pesticides on your farm? Have you been trained to meet the pesticide Worker Protection Standard? If not, this workshop will certify you and allow you to train your workers so your farm is in compliance with Vermont State Laws.

9:15 - Better Safe than Sorry: Addressing Food Safety Issues on Your Farm.

Cheryl Wixson from Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners, Steve Gilman from NOFA-NY, and David Rogers from NOFA-VT. What practical, credible, and cost-effective steps might growers take to satisfy the food safety concerns of consumers, buyers, and regulators? How can growers evaluate food-safety “risks” in their operations? Regional efforts are examining these issues. MOFGA’s ongoing work in developing new food-safety protocols (HAACP) for organic growers in Maine is a promising new approach for smaller-scale organic growers in the Northeast.

9:15 - Alternative Greenhouse Heating Systems.

Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension. Have you thought about alternative fuel sources to heat your greenhouse? Not sure which system might work best for you? Vern will compare different systems based on experience from growers using alternative fuel sources in their greenhouses.

1:00 - Grower Roundtable: Favorite Efficiency Tricks.

Join this informal discussion focused on growers’ best efficiency tricks. Learn practical ideas from other growers’ experiences that can save you time and money on your farm. Facilitated by Joey Klein, Littlewood Farm, Plainfield, VT.

1:00 - Grower Roundtable: Best Vegetable Varieties.

Tom Stearns, of High Mowing Organic Seeds in Wolcott, VT, will give a 15 minute introduction to new organic varieties and then facilitate a growers’ roundtable. Join this informal discussion on growers’ favorite vegetable varieties. Learn tips for the best varieties for different soil and field conditions.

1:00 - Grower Roundtable: Experiences with EQIP, AMA, and Other NRCS/USDA Programs.

Join this informal discussion about growers’ experience with USDA/NRCS programs that help farmers by paying for practices like cover cropping, rotations, and more. A 15-minute program introduction will be given by NRCS staff. Facilitated by David Marchant of River Berry Farm, Fairfax, VT.

2:15 - New and Emerging Pest and Disease Problems and Organic Management.

Ann Hazelrigg, University Vermont Extension; Jon Turmel, Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets; and Eric Sideman, MOFGA. Ann and Jon will update you on new and emerging plant diseases and insects that can impact growing crops on your farm. Eric will discuss how to best manage pests in organic vegetable production systems.

2:15 - Winter Growing, Planning, and Marketing.

Becky Grube, University of New Hampshire Extension; Andy Jones, Intervale Community Farm, Burlington, VT; and Jack Manix, Walker Farm. Which vegetables grow best in high tunnels during winter? What operations and planning is needed to grow vegetables for winter markets? How do you best market winter vegetables? These questions and more will be answered in this comprehensive session on winter growing, planning, and marketing.

2:15 - Weed the Soil, Not the Crop – A Whole Farm Approach to Weed Management.

Anne and Eric Nordell, from Beach Grove Farm in Pennsylvania, have created virtually weed free conditions on their farm by rotating cover crops, tillage techniques, and bare fallow periods. They will discuss how they have used rotational cover cropping to reduce weed pressure and highlight the minimum till practices they have developed to manage the weed seed bank in the soil. They have been growing organic vegetables, small fruits, and herbs since 1983.

ELLIOT COLEMAN'S WINTER GROWING WORKSHOP FOR ADVANCED GROWERS

On Feb.16, from 9am-2pm, at Vermont Technical College. Eliot Coleman, will cover scheduling, winter crops, growing in the cold and cool greenhouses, succession sowing, harvest techniques, tools for efficiency, soil nutrients and winter hardiness, and greenhouse design, plus marketing and economics. Pre-registration is required; contact NOFA at 802-434-4122 or info@nofavt.org.

RENEWABLE ENERGY ON THE FARM, FEB. 17-18, FAIRLEE, VT

Come for one or both days, see: www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry click 'meetings'

February 17: Vegetable Oil Production and Use.

Energy Analysis of the Farm - Greg Strong, Spring Hill Solutions, LCC.

Canola and Sunflower Crop Production - Derek Crompton, Univ. of Minnesota.

The Cost of Producing Your Own Fuel - Seth Fore, Univ. of Minnesota.

So You Want to Make Biodiesel - Matt Steiman, Dickinson College.

Growing Your Own Fuel - Local Farmers, Roger Rainville, John Williamson, and Dorn Cox.

Running/Adapting equipment on Biodiesel and/or Straight Vegetable Oil - Paul Schmidt.

February 18, 2009: Biomass and the Rest

Biomass Fuel Systems for Heating Greenhouses (or Buildings) - Vern Grubinger, UVM

Producing and Packaging Corn for Corn Stoves

– Bill Llywelyn, Five Point Farm and Paul Boivin, Vermont Golden Harvest Biofuels.

Potential for Energy Production from Cropland in New England

- John Jemison, Peter Sexton (Univ. of Maine) and Sid Bosworth (UVM).

Small Scale Solar Hot Water and PV at Sunrise Farm - Chuck Wooster.

Wind Power on the Farm –Jack Lazor, Butterworks Farm.

20 kW Wind and Solar PV on the Farm - Glenn Cook, Cider Hill Farm

How to Secure Funds for On-Farm Renewable Energy – panel.

BULK ORDER FOR PROPTEK PLUG TRAYS

Pete Johnson, Pete's Greens at Craftsbury Village Farm. 802-586-2882, #7 or pete@petesgreens.com (Editor's note: this is a recent message from the Vermont vegetable and berry growers association listserve, a new benefit of membership. I am including it here because the e-mails of 2009 members have not yet been added to the list. Please respond directly to Pete.)

Hi everybody, after much searching I have tracked down a source for long-lasting plug trays. I've talked to a large nursery in California who used these Proptek trays for over ten years of year-round production. I'm getting some sample trays sent and when I am done with them I'm willing to send them along to anyone else interested or bring them to the Veg and Berry conference on Feb 9. The best part is that they offer the larger, Speedling size trays. If I like the samples I expect to be placing an order in 2-3 weeks. We can save a little money if people want to join me on the order. They have a good website, <http://www.proptek.com/pages/vegetables/trays/>. Call the Santa Cruz number for more info but you are actually calling England so call during business hours there. Also, I'm looking for a 1 or 2 row potato planter; potato hilling equipment; a two row potato digger in excellent shape; a vacuum seeder for plug tray seeding, and a flat-filler. Leads appreciated. Best, Pete.

FARM MANAGERS WANTED

New Sustainability Farm at World Learning/ SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, VT is looking for a Farm Manager for the 2009 growing season. We are currently conducting interviews. Starting date to be determined by grant funding. Potential multi-year opportunity. \$12,000 plus income generated from sales. Duties: planning and organizing the new two acre plot of which only 1/3 will be used this year, overseeing the tilling, developing the water system, start cover crop rotation, other typical farm management duties including harvest and sales of produce to the cafeteria on campus, and provide educational opportunities by working alongside SIT Graduate Students who will be organizing youth visits, and more. Requirements: 3 years experience on organic vegetable farm and interest in youth farm education. Please send a resume to: fsp@postsoilsolutions.org

Elysian Hills in Dummerston, VT seeks stewardship-minded farmer/farm family to transition into eventual ownership of a conserved farm. Approximately 40 acres are open and 100 acres wooded. The primary crop for the past 30 years has been Christmas trees on 20 acres with well-established customers. There is also an acre of organic heirloom rhubarb, a leased sugarbush, and managed forest with timber for wildlife and harvest. Marked trails network the property; there are two houses, a barn (with 10 box stalls) and a farm office/shop. See the farm website at: www.elysianhillsfarm.com For more information and an application form contact Bill and Mary Lou Schmidt, (802) 257-0233 or elysian@sover.net