

## **Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – Oct. 28, 2008**

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### **Local Food Buyers & Sellers Matchmaking Event. Oct. 29, Three Stallions Inn, Randolph**

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture is sponsoring an event to link restaurants, schools, food distributors, co-ops, supermarkets, state government and other commercial buyers with anyone who is interested in selling a Vermont-produced food item. Your farm or business must be based in Vermont or within 30 miles of the state border. This event is intended for commercial buyers, not individual consumers, so sellers should be those interested in picking up accounts for larger volumes. Over 3 dozen commercial buyers are registered! The location is 3 Stallions Inn, Randolph, VT, with workshops from 8-10 am and Matchmaking from 10am-3pm. There is no charge but you need to register. Go to [www.vermontagriculture.com](http://www.vermontagriculture.com) under the "Hot Topics" section or contact Helen Labun Jordan (802) 828-3828 [Helen.jordan@state.vt.us](mailto:Helen.jordan@state.vt.us).

### **Burning Wood Pellets in a Biomass Furnace and Waste Heat Recovery from a Walk-in-Cooler Compressor for Hot Water Production. Oct. 30th, 1-3 pm, River Berry Farm, Fairfax**

In the spring of 2008, David Marchant and Jane Sorenson of River Berry Farm installed a LDJ Amazing Heat biomass furnace in a 3,000 sq ft greenhouse. They purchased wood pellets fuel by the ton and compared its operation to an identical greenhouse running on propane. While the biomass furnace requires some tweaking, it cost half that of propane. A heat recovery system that captures waste heat from their walk-in-cooler compressor provides hot water on the farm. This workshop is free to farmers thanks to the generous support of our sponsors: The University of Vermont Extension and the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association. Non-farmers: \$10 for NOFA members, \$15 for non-members.

Directions: From the west: Follow Rte 104 out of Fairfax Center. The Lamoille River parallels Rte. 104 on your left. Just after the dam turn left and cross the bridge. (It is a one lane bridge so, if there is someone coming towards you, wait until the bridge is clear to pass over.) Turn right on Goose Pond Rd. River Berry Farm is on the right about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the bridge. From the east: Follow Rte 104 out of Cambridge. The Lamoille River parallels Rte. 104 on your right. Just after the dam turn right and cross the bridge (see above). Turn right on Goose Pond Rd. River Berry Farm is on the right about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the bridge.

**Biodiesel Production from Waste Vegetable Oil, Converting Tractors to Electric Power, and Domestic Solar Hot Water. Nov. 3rd, 1– 3 pm Cate Farm, Plainfield, VT**

Is biodiesel production for you? How about using solar hot water? Richard Wiswall gives a farm tour and discusses Cate Farm's energy projects, including: biodiesel production from waste fryer oil used to heat greenhouses, run tractors and automobiles; Allis Chalmers G tractor conversion to all electric power; solar hot water heat for domestic hot water productions; and produce cooler modifications. This workshop is free to farmers thanks to the generous support of our sponsors: The University of Vermont Extension and the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association. \$10 for (non-farmer) NOFA members, \$15 for non-members.

Directions: From I-89, Montpelier Exit 8 ramp blends into Rte. 2 east. Go 9 miles on Rte. 2 east towards Plainfield. Just after Plainfield Hardware take a left on Coburn Rd. Go one mile and take a right onto Cate Farm Rd. The Farm is 1/4 a mile at the end of the road.

**New England Greenhouse Conference & Expo, Nov. 5-7, DCU Center, Worcester, MA**

Wednesday Nov. 5th features two 'pre-conference' all-day session on: Advanced Perennial Production and Advanced Plant Propagation for the Greenhouse Grower. There will also be morning sessions on: Opportunities and Challenges in 'Growing Green' and Maximizing the Retail-Grower Advantage. Afternoon session include a continuation of Opportunities and Challenges in 'Marketing Green', as well as an Advanced Biological Control Workshop.

Thursday Nov. 6th the regular conference kicks off with morning sessions on: Perennial Crop Production, Crop Production Tips, Marketing in the New Reality, Pest and Disease Control, and Labor Saving Techniques. Afternoon sessions include: Perennial Crop Production, Energy Efficient Greenhouse Crop Production, Marketing Trends and Opportunities, Pest and Disease Control, Fertility Management and Crop Health.

Friday Nov. 7th the morning sessions are: New Crop Production Opportunities, Greenhouse Energy Options and Improved Efficiency, Water Supply Problems and Solutions, Pest and Disease Control. The afternoon sessions are: Best Plant Materials in Containers and the Landscape, Greenhouse Energy Options and Improved Efficiency, Efficient Labor Management, Pest and Disease Control, and Making Money.

For more, to register on line, or download a registration form to mail in, go to: [www.negreenhouse.org](http://www.negreenhouse.org). You can also call the Registration Coordinator at (802) 865-5202

**Implementing State-of-the-Art Refrigeration Systems and Assessing Wind, Solar and Biodiesel Technologies. Nov. 11th, 2-4 pm. Champlain Orchards, Shoreham, VT**

How do you start to think differently about energy on your farm and assess farm energy use to make appropriate energy efficiency and technology changes that save money? What resources are available?

Bill Suhr of Champlain Orchards will discuss working with Efficiency Vermont to install state-of-the-art refrigeration systems to conserve energy. He has started conducting a farm energy audit to understand energy usage better and is examining options of wind, with a recently installed anemometer to analyze the winds coming off Lake Champlain, solar electricity, and biodiesel fuel for his truck fleet. A farm tour will follow. This workshop is free to farmers thanks to the generous support of our sponsors: The University of Vermont Extension, and the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association. Non-farmers: \$10 for NOFA members, \$15 for non-members.

Directions: From Burlington: Take Rte. 7 South to Vergennes. Take Rte. 22A south to Shoreham. Go 4.5 miles west to the Orchard (follow "Pick Your Own" signs) Champlain Orchards is on left side of road. From Rutland: Take Rte 4 west to Fairhaven. Take Rte. 22A north to Orwell. Take Rte. 73 west for six miles. (Follow "Pick Your Own" signs). When Rte. 73 comes to dead-end, make right onto Rte. 74. Go 1mi, Orchard is on right side of road.

**Using Waste Vegetable Oil in a Clean Burn Furnace for Greenhouse Heat and Electrical Power from Photovoltaics. Nov. 13th, 1-3pm. Cedar Circle Farm, East Thetford, VT**

Will Allen and Kate Duesterberg of Cedar Circle Farm will discuss how they have cut heating and power costs with several strategies. Their tomato greenhouse has a "Clean Burn" multi-oil heating system for waste vegetable oil. Electrical power for net-metering is generated by 24 photovoltaic solar panels. They have grown and are drying shell corn for their new 165,000 Btu LDJ Amazing Heat corn furnace, which burns clean. A farm tour will follow. This workshop is free to farmers thanks to the generous support of our sponsors: The University of Vermont Extension and the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association. Non-farmers: \$10 for NOFA members, \$15 for non-members.

Directions: From I-91 Exit 14 for Thetford. Turn east on Highway 113; go one mile to village of East Thetford and intersection of Rte. 5. Turn right (south) on Rte. 5. Just past the Mobil station, bear left at the Cedar Circle Farm sign onto Pavillion Rd. Cross the railroad tracks, go 1/4 mile; the farm is on the left.

**Zone-Tillage & Soil Health Conference. Dec. 1st, 9-3 pm. Public House, Rt. 131, Sturbridge, MA**

Sponsored by Northeast SARE, the Univ. of CT, Univ. of RI and Cornell Univ. Cooperative Extension Systems. To pre-register by Nov. 21, send the name of attendee(s) and a check for \$35/person, made out to UConn to the University of Connecticut, Cooperative Extension System, 24 Hyde Ave., Vernon, CT 06066. Contact: Jude Boucher (860)875-3331 or [jude.boucher@uconn.edu](mailto:jude.boucher@uconn.edu). Full agenda: see [www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry](http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry) click on Meetings.

**Transitioning to Renewable Energy for Greenhouse Heat. Dec. 4th, 8:30-3:30.  
Sturbridge Host Hotel 366 Main St., Sturbridge, MA**

Transitioning to Alternative Fuels, How We Switched To Corn To Heat Our Greenhouses For Spring Crops, Sources of Funding for Alternative Fuels, Greenhouse Energy Audits and Conservation, Massachusetts Energy Audit Program, Where We Are Going With Biofuels? Concurrent Sessions: Corn Production or Wood for Fuel. Fee is \$40 per person, For more information contact Tina Smith, UMass 413-545-5306, [tsmith@umext.umass.edu](mailto:tsmith@umext.umass.edu).

**NOFA Vermont seeks farmers to write letters to schools.**

Do you want students to be more literate about Vermont<sup>1</sup>'s farming systems? Do you want to link students to land-based careers? Do you want to have students have a personal relationship with you as a local farmer? If yes, then you should participate in our 'Farmer to School Correspondence Course.' It will take about an hour each month this winter and early spring. Here's how it works. You sign up, indicating what topics and ages of students you want to write for. Conventional and organic farmers are welcome! NOFA will match you up with classrooms that are as local as possible and meet your criteria. You write four letters between November and May (every other month) describing what you are doing on your farm each of those months. Your letter may be shared with several classrooms and schools, depending on your topics. Students may want to write you back, but you do not need to write more letters. Students may want to visit the farm. (NOFA school mentors can help facilitate this if you want.) You can receive a \$25 stipend after the 4 letters have been written. We are trying to expand the program to more schools and more farmers. Sign up by Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> with the topic(s) and age groups you want: Abbie Nelson at (802) 434-4122 or [abbienelson@comcast.net](mailto:abbienelson@comcast.net).