



## **Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – August 1, 2017**

compiled by Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension

(802) 257-7967 ext. 303, [vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu](mailto:vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu)

[www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry](http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry)

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

August 7th, 3-6 pm. Produce Safety: Best Practices from Field to Consumer. Foggy Meadows Farm, 2494 Lake Road, Benson, VT. NOFA/UVM Extension sponsored. Free.

<http://nofavt.org/events/produce-safety-best-practices-field-consumer>

August 9th, 3-6 pm. Farm Smarter Not Harder: Harvest Efficiency for Carrot and Beet Crops. Jericho Settlers Farm, 22 Barber Farm Rd., Jericho VT. \$20 NOFA-VT members, \$25 others.

<http://nofavt.org/events/farm-smarter-not-harder-harvest-efficiency-carrot-beet-crops>

### **REPORTS FROM THE FIELD**

(Starksboro) We are seeing powdery mildew in the high tunnel tomatoes. Also lost a round of flowers/fruit on both tomatoes and peppers, wondering if it was poor pollination on that overcast week. Bumblebees next year! We've had a tough time with leafhopper, they've taken down the first round of green beans, and a few varieties of cut flowers.

I'm thankful we added a few more more successions of everything this year because our spring plantings are already petering out. There's Alternaria on the spring brassicas. Cucumber beetles destroyed a succession of squash and cukes, and a few direct-seeded beds got washed away in the rain. Luckily our summer successions are coming on right now and I'm loving the new kales, the broccoli looks great, and summer lettuces are rocking. Great year for carrots so far.

(Charlotte) We've had a bumper crop off raspberries this year. The blueberries came on slowly, but are coming along nicely, and we will probably go an extra few weeks with them compared to past years. Japanese beetles were quite heavy, and the traps weren't enough this year.

(Tunbridge) The sun!! I think it put everyone in a good mood, as many more folks showed up to market. Things are finally kicking into gear where we actually have to stay on top of picking. Greens look great for this time of year. Basil is out of control; I kept the row cover on since it was so cool, and the bonus was no Japanese beetle damage. I may continue to cover it.

Field tomatoes have not started to turn. The cherries have. Onions and leeks are looking nice and big. Walla Wallas are ready. Peppers are behind, but plants look good.

Potatoes are behind, but we planted some corollas really close to dig up as baby potatoes (I saw a this in a Martha Stewart magazine photo of potato salad) they flew out at \$5/lb. I guess they were too cheap. Carrots are great and tasty this year. We will probably have to water in this week when we transplant. With all that rain it was easy every week to just throw in trays of plants without watering. Cucumber beetles are the pest that bothered us most. We never cover the second plantings, but this year they got hammered. Some plants were able to grow out of it.

(Underhill) We are having a very productive blueberry season. No sign of SWD. We were hit with mummy berry, in the range of a few percent of the berries. We were away several days late May-early June, thought we had a mild frost when we came back. Now we know! Thanks to Vern and Ann for helpful information on the listserv.

(Westfield) It feels good to have some dry weather, and the crops did a big spurt of grown. Sweet corn is starting this week we are picking a few day-neutral strawberries. Swede midge not too active hopefully it will stay like that. Sales and orders are keeping at a good pace. Our big trouble is the return of the symphylans in two of our greenhouses. We had to plow down a bed of pepper and re-seed with mustard, we will see if we can kill them like that.

(S. Royalton) Garlic harvest in full swing size running about average, onions seem a little slow to size up, but no sign of leek moth in our traps. Hornworms starting to show up in greenhouse tomatoes; will have to check field tomatoes for them. One good thing with all the rain we had in June the rye and barley we seeded between our winter squash beds was up in four days and out competed most of the weeds. Potatoes also have filled well with all the rain, although starting to struggle with leafhopper. Field peppers and eggplant coming on strong with the warm weather.

(Shaftsbury) Leafhoppers are our worst enemy (except galinsoga) this year. Beans, spuds, strawberries, eggplant are all taking it hard. We have been spraying stylet oil mixed with Pyganic. We were adding Azaguard, but apparently that has been contaminated by non-organic something or other. Growing a bunch of made-up cover crop mixes on the advice of some sage VT farmers who say mixes are better than single crops. So we made up some Sudex, Japanese millet, red clover, and whatever else was lying around mixes and they seem good. Almost no corn borer seen this year. Strange not to be spraying for those guys. Caterpillars of various types infested our storage cabbage almost overnight.

(Dummerston) It's turning out to be a good growing season after all with loads of squash and cukes, great garlic, basil and cherry tomatoes. We had nice crops of early greens, peas and cabbage. But we're still seeing the effects of the cool wet weather early this growing season.

Some root rot in the carrots, some pepper plants lost to Fusarium (thanks to Ann for identifying, I was worried it was Phytophthora) and a big flush of crabgrass. Fall crops are coming along well though some of the potatoes rotted due to the early cold/wet.

(Orwell) It seems to be a season of delayed plantings of field crops, then disbelief in realizing that the window for planting came and went. Clay soil allows us a limited window, between goop and concrete, to get the soil prepared and planted. There is a noticeable difference, however, in moisture management between areas that had spring cover crops planted and those that didn't. Adding lots of organic matter annually and improving drainage where we can seems to be our best management option.

Hoophouse crops are producing well. We inadvertently over-applied soybean meal in the spring, but the sweet peppers are surprisingly massive and producing gorgeous early fruit. Tomatoes in the same house are also doing well but we are seeing some funky leaf morphology on one variety that is probably due to the excess fertilizer.

(Newburyport MA) The cold, wet spring has turned into a cool wet summer, and mid-summer is just around the corner. All crops now look nice. Direct seeded winter squash for the third time on 21 July. It's up and growing, but no clue if it will mature. Great year to have crops in tunnels and greenhouses, with big harvests of tomatoes, celery, beets, chard and strawberries. All nine of our Farmers' Markets having exceptionally strong sales. Hoping for a profitable month of August as all crops start to mature. Time for planting fall crops is upon us.

(Little Compton RI) We are in stress mode with a drought. Green-sprouted potatoes finished off incredibly well, but the main crop sucked a well dry and will have to finish on its own. Hope they got enough water at tuber initiation bulk up. Powdery mildew in GH tomatoes has backed off somewhat. It may be better for the young plants to look a little needy prior to fruiting stage as I fear I exacerbated PM by giving them too much N and K; especially with all the cloudy weather.

An explosion of green peach aphids killed our melons, cukes and darn near took the winter squash. Lesson learned: keep better track of water needs in black plastic raised beds. I think that water stress attracted the aphids (editor: or made plants less resilient?) Potato leafhoppers are a major issue with no effective organic sprays that will keep them at bay for more than three days. When they get out of control you have problems that surface later, especially with potatoes.

Every year we grow more GH cherry tomatoes. They don't compare with the profit from a cluster of nice Geronimos but their popularity is growing and \$6.25/lb. retail is nothing to sneeze at when farmers' market reds only bring \$3.99.

Once again, late July summer heat extremes in our greenhouses has taken a toll on our lettuce germination. Next two weeks we will start them in the barn for 36 hours to assure even germination.

## **UPDATE FROM THE UVM PLANT DIAGNOSTIC CLINIC**

(Ann Hazelrigg)

Onions: thrips are common - peel away the lower leaves and you will see the tiny yellow insects. Their rasping damage can cause the little flecking you see on the leaves. Onion leek moth still showing up in samples and now in bulbs. Bulb rot may occur due to the feeding injury.

Alternaria purple blotch is out there too causing large purplish leaf spots.

<https://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/fact-sheets/alliums-purple-blotch>

White rot sclerotia (little black overwintering structures) seen on garlic.

<http://plantclinic.cornell.edu/factsheets/garlicdiseases.pdf>

No downy mildew seen yet but it is probably out there. Look for whitish fungal growth on the leaves. General consensus of the weird crinkling growth in garlic is something due to some combination of weather events.

Cucurbits: have seen a few samples of bacterial wilt in high tunnels and field. If you see wilted cucumbers/squash also look for squash vine borer damage at the crowns. SVB numbers have been very high in NH. <https://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/fact-sheets/squash-vine-borer>

Cucurbit downy mildew is making its way north and east and was just found on Long Island. Look for yellow spots on the leaf surface and grayish spores on the leaf undersides. If you don't have resistant cultivars, be ready to spray to protect susceptible crops.

[http://vegetablemndonline.ppath.cornell.edu/NewsArticles/Cuc\\_Downy.htm](http://vegetablemndonline.ppath.cornell.edu/NewsArticles/Cuc_Downy.htm)

White mold seen on high tunnel cukes. Look for fluffy white stem rot with big black sclerotia. Get it out of the greenhouse! This pathogen has a wide host range and likes it where it is soggy. I have not seen any Phytophthora fruit rot yet in the Clinic, but I am sure it must be out there. Anytime you have several hours of saturated soils with fruit in the field watch for this destructive disease.

Tomato: Heads up: Late blight diagnosed in Massachusetts on cherry tomatoes. Lots of good info on this disease at: <http://blogs.cornell.edu/livegpath/extension/tomato-late-blight/>

We have seen some bacterial canker causing wilts in high tunnels. If you suspect this disease, send it to the Clinic, we have rapid assay kits to test for the pathogen. This is one you do not want to spread. Powdery mildew still causing issues in high tunnels. Have received a few calls/samples/ about yellow shoulder or blotchy ripening in fruit. This is not caused by a pathogen but a combination of environmental issues and perhaps nutrition.

<https://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/fact-sheets/tomato-blotchy-ripening>

Gold flecking seen on Geronimo fruit in a tunnel. Another physiological problem (although rule out thrips/spider mites first) related to environmental conditions.

<https://extension.umd.edu/learn/gold-flecking-tomato-caused-many-things>

“Tomato gold spot is caused by calcium oxalate deposition under the skin and becomes worse in high humidity environments. This disorder induces a dull aspect to the fruit and weakens the peel, shortening tomato shelf life. Providing a balanced nutritional program, especially between potassium and calcium will minimize the occurrence of this disorder.”

Peppers: Fusarium crown rot found in field peppers, and in high tunnel tomatoes, where soil conditions were wet. Problem was hit or miss unlike Phytophthora rot which can take out entire fields following saturated soils. Broad mites found in pepper in NH high tunnel. Look for curled/twisted leaves and scarring on the upper part of the fruit.

Potato: Black leg causing collapse of potatoes following wet weather.

[https://ag.umass.edu/sites/ag.umass.edu/files/fact-sheets/pdf/potato\\_black\\_leg\\_factsheet.pdf](https://ag.umass.edu/sites/ag.umass.edu/files/fact-sheets/pdf/potato_black_leg_factsheet.pdf)

Potato leaf hopper causing leaf edge scorch on potatoes, beans, raspberries and maples.

Crucifers: Swede midge damage common on fall crops causing rotting growing points and multiple heads. Wirestem (Rhizoctonia) found causing wilt/poor growth. Be on the lookout for cabbage aphids. <https://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/fact-sheets/aphid-cabbage>  
Treat if 10% of the plants are infested with aphids any time after heads or sprouts begin to form.

Check out UMass Veg Notes for more pictures and descriptions of issues.

<https://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/newsletters>

As always, send us pictures or samples, we are happy to help. Ann.hazelrigg@uvm.edu or mail to Plant Diagnostic Clinic, 63 Carrigan Drive, UVM, Burlington, VT 05405

## **SPOTTED WING DROSOPHILA UPDATE**

(Rachel Schattman, UVM Extension)

2017 is a particularly challenging year for managing SWD. Mild winter conditions, warm rainy weather, and a prolonged ripening window have led to high populations of this pest.

There have been reports of damage in crops that are not normally hit hard by SWD (e.g. cherries and early blueberries). As of the end of July, SWD are being trapped in significant numbers in raspberries in Geneva, NY and in cherries in Ontario.

Vermont growers of berries and tree fruit should be prepared to control populations through good field sanitation (e.g. picking crops clean frequently and removing drops), managing plant canopies to increase airflow, using exclusion netting, and/or spraying. Be sure to cool fruit as soon as possible after harvest. If you have PYO it is advisable to educate your customers: tell them to either use their berries quickly or freeze them. If spraying, you can find the Cornell IPM 2017 guide for sprays labeled for control of SWD in berries at <http://tiny.cc/smallfruitSWDsprays> and in tree fruit/grapes at <http://tiny.cc/treefruitSWDsprays>.