

## Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – August 25, 2009

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<http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry>

### AUGUST BERRY CHECKLIST

(adapted from NY Berry News, by Cathy Heidenreich, Department of Horticulture, Cornell Univ.)

#### All Berry Crops:

1. Leaf Analysis– Still time to get this done if you move on it now! (\$25 per sample at UMaine lab, see: <http://anlab.umesci.maine.edu/>. For sampling instructions and optimal nutrient levels in different crops see: <http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/factsheets/tissuetest.htm>.
2. Fertilization –Nothing further except late season N applications for strawberries.
3. Weeds – Hand-weeding or spot applications to control weeds in new plantings.
4. Diseases and Insects –Make applications promptly when environmental conditions are conducive to disease development or economic thresholds are exceeded for insects. For control options see: NY small fruit guidelines: <http://ipmguidelines.org/BerryCrops/> and New England small fruit guidelines: <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/2008/2008SFGGuide.pdf>

#### Strawberries, established plantings:

1. Diseases – Look out for powdery mildew; humid weather has been great for PM development. Frequent rains may also promote development of leaf diseases (leaf spot, leaf scorch, and leaf blight) in new and renovated plantings. Protectant fungicide applications made to newly expanding leaves may be of some benefit in plantings with a history of disease. Angular leaf spot, a bacterial disease of strawberry leaves, showed up early this season. Cool, wet weather has caused it to persist well into summer. Bacterial ooze on lower leaf surfaces is rain-splashed onto new leaves where infections occur. Copper applications are the only alternative for this problem. Follow label instructions carefully to avoid phytotoxicity.
2. Insects – Some fields are showing potato leaf hopper damage. Young plants are most seriously affected by injury resulting in short petioles and small distorted leaves. Look for very active adults and nymphs by brushing foliage. Watch for leaf yellowing starting at the leaf margin and progressing toward the midvein (right). Lots of picnic (sap beetles) around this season. They may be a problem in late season berry crops.
3. Weeds - Spot treatments, cultivation, hand-weeding now may be followed by herbicide applications next month. See the guides for info.

4. Straw Mulch – Less straw may be available for this season due to growing conditions. Be sure to secure sufficient straw to cover your planting early. A general rule of thumb is 2-3 tons/acre, more if you are in a colder area with little snow cover or have plants on raised beds (4-5 tons/A). Be sure straw is free of glyphosate residues and weed-seeds!

Strawberries, new plantings:

1. Plant establishment –Continue to direct runner plants from aisles back into planting row area. Remove blossoms as they open to encourage good plant establishment and growth. Cultivate for weed control.

Blueberries, established plantings:

1. Soil pH – If your pH is still above 5.0 remember to schedule a late fall sulfur application (200 lb/A). The prilled form of sulfur takes a little longer to break down in the soil than the powdered formulation but tends to be more user-friendly to work with.

2. Weeds – Hand –weeding and spot treatments.

3. Insects –Japanese beetle continues to be a concern. Continue blueberry maggot monitoring program for late season blueberries; wet weather has made soils highly conducive for maggot flies to emerge. If you are trapping maggot flies continue to protect fruit.

Blueberries, new plantings:

1. Soil pH – If your pH is still above 5.0 remember to schedule a late fall sulfur application (200 lb/A). The prilled form of sulfur takes a little longer to break down in the soil than the powdered formulation but tends to be more user-friendly to work with.

2. Weeds – Hand weeding and spot treatments.

3. Wildlife – Watch for deer browse on new plants. Take immediate steps to deter feeding.

Raspberries and blackberries, established plantings:

1. Diseases – The weather continues to be wet - keep ripening fruit protected from gray mold.

2. Insects – Scout for Sap beetles and Japanese beetle. Potato leaf hopper may also be a problem on raspberries, causing leaf yellowing from margin to midvein.

Raspberries and blackberries, new plantings:

1. Plant establishment – Keep weeds at bay with spot treatments and hand weeding.

### Currants and gooseberries:

1. Diseases – Continue to watch for leaf diseases such as white pine blister rust (yellow-orange powdery spots), powdery mildew (white powdery spots), or leaf spots (black necrotic spots) on leaves. Be sure to check both upper and lower leaf surfaces.
2. Insects – Scout for Japanese beetles, and two-spotted spider mites.

### **SOIL HEALTH FARM MEETING, SEPT. 2nd, WELLSRING CSA, MARSHFIELD VT, 5-7 PM**

At this farm meeting we'll look at soil structure, explore the profile of a soil pit to identify compaction or root limiting layers, examine soil health tests, and discuss fertilization options for vegetable farmers.

Directions: From the west: take Rte 2 east. Turn right onto Patty's Crossing after signs for Meadowcrest Campground (~4mi beyond Plainfield). Turn right to LaFirira Place. The farm is at the dead end. From the east: Take Rte 2 west past Marshfield. Turn left onto Patty's Crossing (approx. 3 miles from Marshfield village). Follow directions above. This meeting is co-sponsored by NOFA-VT, the VT Vegetable & Berry Growers Association, UVM Extension, and USDA Risk Management Agency. It is free for VV&BGA members and VOF certified farmers, \$10 for NOFA members, \$15 for non-members. For more info call 802-434-4122.

### **LOCAL FOOD BUYERS AND SELLERS 'MATCHMAKER' MEETING OCT. 28**

This event (located at Juniper Hill Inn, Windsor VT this year) brings restaurants, schools, food distributors, co-ops, supermarkets, and other commercial buyers together in one place to connect with Vermont's food producers. It is your chance to explore options for selling to larger scale buyers through one-on-one conversations that you schedule based on who you want to connect with. Registration is \$20 per person for sellers (farmers, specialty food producers) and \$50 per table for buyers. Distributors can register as sellers, buyers, or both. Registration fee includes breakfast, coffee and lunch.

Buyers must register by September 14th. Sellers, by October 5th. For more info and a registration form contact [kim@vermontfresh.net](mailto:kim@vermontfresh.net) or call 802-434-2000, or look under "Hot Topics" at <http://www.vermontagriculture.com>.

## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS: NEW ENGLAND VEGETABLE & FRUIT CONFERENCE DEC. 15-17**

The 16th New England Vegetable & Fruit Conference (NEVFC) and Trade Show takes place every other year, and includes 30 educational sessions over 3 days. Located in Manchester NH this is a must-go event for commercial growers of every persuasion. Topics include major vegetable, berry and tree fruit crops, and much more, from irrigation to greenhouse and tunnel systems. Farmer-to-Farmer meetings throughout the conference allow you to discuss specific issues in more detail. There is also an extensive Trade Show with over 100 exhibitors. For program and registration details visit: <http://www.newenglandvfc.org/>.

## **LATE BLIGHT FAQs**

What would a newsletter be this season without some late blight information? Here's a great set of frequently asked questions and answers, regularly updated, from Dr. Meg McGrath at Cornell: <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/departments/Facilities/lihrec/vegpath/lbfaq.pdf>.