



Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – September 29, 2014  
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## REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(S. Burlington) All my winter greens are planted and looking good. I had to deal with an unusually high number of imported cabbage moth this year. Otherwise there were no other pests to contend with. Last year I had a high level of flea beetles and Swede midge. This year I've had none of those. After such an extremely cold winter last year, I'm hopeful for a really good winter growing season given how all my crops still performed pretty well despite the cold.

(Rochester) We escaped a frost last week and are enjoying an Indian summer. The fall raspberries are responding well to warmer temperatures. As we anticipated, SWD slows down as we move into autumn (cool nights) allowing us to pick ahead of its damage. But it is dry--we are irrigating every day--and the fruit is not as sweet or juicy as it is when it rains.

(Burlington) Fall harvest is cruising along, with our big storage crops of potatoes, winter squash, and sweet potatoes coming, largely trouble-free save for some pink-eye problems on potatoes. Butternut is delightfully short of gummy stem blight. Onion crop is a near-total loss to leek moth, so be warned! We had a pretty good looking onion crop, pulled it in the third week in August, field cured for a week or so, then picked up into bulk bins. I'd noticed that we had summer leaf damage from leek moth, but never paid much attention after that, wagering (incorrectly) that they weren't affecting the bulbs. Fast-forward to post-harvest and after 3 weeks of bin curing, we began to top our yellows and noticed fluttering moths around the bins and exit holes in the necks and sides of 80-90% of the bulbs. They must have laid the eggs right as we were harvesting, and then the larvae developed in the field or in the bins. We lost 6,000-8,000 lbs of onions; ouch. Guess we'll be spraying or changing it up somehow next year. The early maturing cultivars we grow, 'Siskyou' for fresh use and 'Bridger' as an early yellow, seem to be out of the field in time to miss the next generation. Starting to sign people up for our winter CSA share which we've now extended through April and May. I sure will be glad to have something else to do in the spring. Interested to see how (or if) our storage crops behave with another month added onto their lives.

(Waterbury Center) High tunnel raspberries in full swing, little presence of SWD. Had one night down to 30 degrees but no frost since. Fall strawberries also in full swing, but TPB taking its toll.

(Hampton NY) Other than the tomatoes and peppers that were covered, the frost on the September 18 stopped production. Of course that does make harvesting gourds, pumpkins and winter squash that much easier. Work has now moved to getting the garden ready for winter by digging bulbs, removing plant material, soil testing, adding lime and planting a winter cover crop of oats and rye . Squash bugs are on the move looking for a place to overwinter. Sales at the self-serve stand have been consistent with some theft of pumpkins and tomatoes.

(Wolcott) We have still not had a frost at the top of the hill or in our orchard, but at the bottom of the hill all was cooked by a 29 degree frost. Plums and pears continue to ripen. Funny thing: all our planted apple trees have little or no crop this year, but all our wild apples are loaded with high quality fruit. I think this shows that we don't know everything yet. We are hoping our baby ginger puts on some nice growth before it gets too cold. Grapes are sweet and full of flavor and our northern kiwis have never been better! Never seen so much red squirrel activity.

(Dummerston) It's strange to be setting up irrigation on my main field for the first time all year in late September. But I'd rather have a hot, dry fall than a cold, wet one. I was just looking at photos from 2 years ago when we got a foot of snow on Halloween. Finished planting the winter greens in the high tunnel 12 days later than last year. Hopefully this heat will speed them along. I had to keep the tomatoes going in there as long as possible to because the field tomatoes did so poorly this year; where was this hot, dry weather in July and August? We've been shoveling soil on top of all the carrots in the field because the upper part of their roots stick out of the ground in dry weather. I'm not sure why this is. Pumpkins and winter squash could have yielded better; they sustained some losses due to fungi and woodchucks. Right now all we're missing is the cold-sweetened leafy greens. But if I can irrigate enough to keep the spinach from bolting, cool weather will come soon enough and we'll finish up the growing season nicely.

(Plainfield NH) Very dry here. Pretty hot also. The fall carrots are going to grow past type if it doesn't cool off pretty soon; it was 87 degrees three days after everybody around us got a frost. Potato crop is 3/4 in; a light yield, but a good grade out of marketable spuds. We are happy because we battled blights and Erwinia in some of the whites and yukons. Bumper onion crop of all types; cured, topped and binned. Still out there are carrots, sweet potatoes, field tomatoes, cherries and some pretty tired cukes and summer squash. I don't believe they will be with us next week. Nor will the last of the sweet corn if the heat persists. Concerned about the leaf spot diseases on strawberries; trying a fall application of Oxidate and a protectant to knock back the inoculum in hopes of reducing pressure next spring. Projects are on hold as we limp into the last inning. Target date for closing our stand is Columbus Day weekend. Sales have been good this fall, no doubt the weather cooperated.

(Westminster West) Great weekend weather, too nice for customers to shop at the Farmers' Market? Slowest day of the season for some weird reason. Harvest done here in all major categories; squash was huge crop, ripe and sweet! In 40 years I had only seen about 3 squash vine borers here, but this season I found about a dozen during harvest. Hopefully this doesn't mean a trend. Onions all in and cured, using a borrowed onion topper to clean the crop, that should save weeks of hand clipping! Doing field clean up and seeding cover crops and getting ready for garlic planting time. Fall carrots and beets look nice, a bit of rain will help. Sales are fine on the wholesale side although I can't give away peppers of any color, didn't people used to buy and eat peppers? Daikons are a new crop here after a 38 year hiatus, more people know what they are now and they do well. Fall tunnel raspberries are chugging along, only had one small outbreak of SWD and after a spray of Entrust they're gone. Huge sweet berries keep people coming back to our farm stand. As soon as we slow down processing orders we need to do maintenance on greenhouses before winter, ugh. Managing to keep crew working thru Oct. and then slow down. See you all at winter meetings; a happy and a bountiful harvest to all!

(Hinesburg) Other than a hard frost on the night of the 18th, the fall has been beautiful, albeit a little dry. Cabbages are actually getting too big. Lots of other fall crops coming in well. One strange change this year is our fall brassica roots (watermelon radish, turnips etc.) have extensive worm damage we have not had in the past. Almost 80% damaged compared with 10-15% in the past. But on the whole a great season; even the corn that got hit hard by the frost has some ears that have good flavor, so one more week of sweet corn for our CSA members.

(Brookfield) Howden pumpkins much larger than normal, it is hard to sell pumpkins over 20# so we have just set a price for bigger pumpkins. Much damage on pumpkins when young by turkeys; lots of holes, but found a place to sell them. Potatoes still hardening off not quite ready to dig. Blue Hubbard's not very big but many. Carrots and beets selling well in the stand.

(Craftsbury) Very successful blueberry season concluded on Labor Day followed by two weeks of gleaning. A dozen non-profit groups, including 5 area schools and a college were able to pick an additional 750 pounds for their programs. Fruit was plump and healthy throughout summer. We are now planning for next year, getting ready to prune and laying in mulch for spring.

(Argyle NY) Working hard planting the 3 high tunnels with winter crops. Kale and chard seeded Aug 1 are mostly transplanted in, though some went to 4" pots due to delays of getting summer crops out. Our kale and chard are grown for bunching, not baby leaves. Direct seeding spinach, salad mix, and Asian greens over next 10 days in successions. Spinach top varieties for us are: Space, Pigeon, Raccoon (Gazelle also looks good and upright like Raccoon), Giant Winter, and Reflect. Trialing Ashley, Caledonia, Butterflay and Emperor. Red Kitten is superior over Red Deer. Salanova was seeded every week Aug. 30-Sept. 20 to transplant into tunnels, like last year. It does well but takes a while to mature so is good for late winter harvests but maybe a warmer

winter will help! Fall crops are being harvested but the weather hasn't pushed us too hard. Onions and shallots are among best ever with Cortland, Talon and Pontiac almost perfect but Patterson not great. Spring planted Forums not as good as the Nov. planted Forum sets which performed great and are being ordered now from Johnny's. The onions were on trial mulches of black, white and paper and we thought those on white were as good or better and in a hotter summer it would be superior. Leeks huge. Cauliflower earliest ever with white and Cheddar large and nice. Sweet potatoes still in the ground, now with row cover to push them on a little though we learned last year to not row cover in summer as it reduces yields. Garlic will be planted soon and cover-cropping is on the list. Still looking for fall/winter helpers.

(Grand Isle) All the successive plantings of fall broccoli are maturing at the same time. Winter squash crop is the best yield and size that we have seen in years. We are in love with dahlia bulbs for cut flowers, but lost all the miniature gladiolas to thrips this year. Hope springs eternal as we are already planning what we will do differently next year. We look forward to seeing farm folks at the winter conferences.

(Westfield) We picked our winter squash before the frost a good crop in all except for the butternut who will have need an extra 2 weeks to finish to ripen. We enjoy the warm weather event but if we are on the dry side, the kohlrabi and daikon have a hard time to size up. The strawberries under plastic are looking very good; we have to do one last passage to cut the runners and remove some crowns on Cabot as some plants have 7 to 8 of them.

## DON'T MISS CROP STORAGE WORKSHOPS IN OCTOBER

If you went to one of these last year you know that they are packed with useful information. This year the workshops will focus on long-term storage of crops for sale through the winter and into early spring, but will be relevant to many agricultural and food storage needs. Topics include: the biological processes of crops in storage, storage characteristics of various crops, principles of energy and heat transfer basic heating and refrigeration, construction for utility and efficiency, maintaining temperature, airflow and humidity, sizing and design of storage systems. One workshop will be held from 9 to noon at the Middlebury Extension Office on Oct. 14 and it will be repeated at the Berlin Extension Office on Oct. 21. A condensed webinar will also be held on Oct. 15 from noon to 1:30 pm. For more info: <http://blog.uvm.edu/cwcallah/storageworkshop/> or contact Chris Callahan at 802-773-3349x277 or [chris.callahan@uvm.edu](mailto:chris.callahan@uvm.edu)

## FSMA PRODUCE SAFETY RULE REVISIONS

FDA has revised several parts of the draft rule to address concerns voiced by farmers and others. Here is a summary of the revisions. Comments on these are due to FDA by Dec. 15, 2014. [http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/factsheets/FSMA\\_Revisions\\_Produce\\_Safety\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/factsheets/FSMA_Revisions_Produce_Safety_Summary.pdf)