



Extension
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

VVBGA Winter Webinar Series 2026 February 11 - April 29

February 11. Go with the flow: improving high tunnel ventilation.

This webinar provides practical principles, tips, guidance, and tools to help improve ventilation and air circulation in high tunnels, both from an expert and farmer perspective. This webinar is supported by the USDA Transition to Organic Partnership Program.

Speakers: Jonathan Ebba, Field Specialist with University of New Hampshire Extension. Eric Skovsted, Joe's Brook Farm, St. Johnsbury VT.

[Ebba slides](#) [Skovsted slides](#)

[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)

February 18. High tunnel innovations: farmer lightning round.

This webinar features tips to support efficient, ergonomic, affordable high tunnel growing.

Speakers: Danielle Allen, Root 5 Farm in Fairlee VT describes their "Tunnel Tomato Pruning Technique"; Georgia McDougall, Intervale Community Farm in Burlington VT describes their custom harvest trolley; Andy Chamberlin, UVM Extension and Chamberlin's Farm in Underhill VT describes a suite of helpful practices documented on farms across the region, including full end wall openings, exterior base board tips, and a custom door latch.

[Allen slides](#) [McDougall slides](#) [Chamberlin slides](#)

[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)

February 25. What's the buzz about? Promoting pollinator health on vegetable farms.

Farmers share their experience using organic management practices that promote pollinator habitat, improve soil health, and provide other farm benefits. This webinar is supported by the USDA Transition to Organic Partnership Program and Vermont Agricultural Clean Water Initiative Program (AgCWIP). *Speakers: Chuck Wooster, Sunrise Farm, White River Junction VT; Ryan Fitzbeauchamp, Evening Song Farm, Shrewsbury VT.*

[Fitzbeauchamp slides](#) [Wooster slides](#)

[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)



Extension
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

March 4. Understanding wholesale distribution options and costs.

Discerning the pros and cons of wholesale opportunities and costs can be difficult. Farm advisors Rose Wilson and Annie Harlow share tools to assess wholesale distribution costs. This webinar is supported by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture’s Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RSFI). *Speakers: Rose Wilson, Rose Wilson Consulting and Annie Harlow, Annie Harlow Consulting.*

[Wilson slides](#) [YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify podcast](#) [Apple podcast](#)

March 11. What's that spot? Organic tunnel management of powdery mildew and other foliar diseases.

Dr. Ann Hazzelrigg provides an overview of high tunnel diseases often encountered on tomatoes, cucumbers and spinach; Andy Jones of Intervale Community Farm in Burlington and Christa Alexander of Jerico Settlers Farm in Jericho describe their organic disease prevention and management strategies and tools, and spray options. This webinar is supported by the USDA Transition to Organic Partnership Program.

[Hazelrigg slides](#) [Jones slides](#)
[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)

March 18. CAPS-Plus produce safety audits and traceability for wholesale markets.

Designed by farmers for farmers, Community Accreditation for Produce Safety (CAPS) is a voluntary program of the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association (VVBGA), coordinated by [University of Vermont \(UVM\) Extension](#). The on-line CAPS platform helps growers establish meaningful, implementation-ready produce safety plans. “CAPS-Plus” adds an optional on-farm audit to meet the food safety expectations of many wholesale buyers and distributors. Hans Estrin of UVM Extension and Emily Reiss of the VVBGA will provide an overview of CAPS content, procedures, and policies, and how the CAPS-Plus program supports grower access to wholesale markets. This webinar is supported by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture’s Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RSFI).

[Estrin slides](#) [Wilson slides](#)
[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)



United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program





Extension
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

March 25. Crimp, rip, or strip: innovative cover cropping for soil health.

Farmers share methods for reduced tillage and cover cropping in diversified vegetable systems. *Speakers: Mike Snow, Executive Director, Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance, Post Mills, VT; Kaity Mazza, Paul Mazza's Fruits and Vegetables, Essex VT; Noah and Sophie Courser-Kellerman, Alprilla Farm, Warner, NH. This webinar is supported by the USDA Transition to Organic Partnership Program and Vermont Agricultural Clean Water Initiative Program (AgCWIP).*

[Snow slides](#) [Courser-Kellerman slides](#)

[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)

April 1. Diversifying Herb Enterprises for Economic Return beyond the “Bunch”

Culinary and medicinal herbs can be sold in many ways - not just bunches. Experienced herb growers Julia Etter of Nomad Farm in Bellow Falls, Vermont and Sarah Shaw of Hillside Botanicals in Randolph, Vermont to learn about opportunities for adding value - through potting up starts to drying and creating value-added products. Bill Cavanaugh, business advisor with NOFA-Vermont's Farmer Services shares some budgets that can be used to assess whether herbs could be profitable on your farm mix. Julia and Sarah recently launched the [Vermont Herb Grower's Initiative](#), and they will explain resources that are available, and in the works, to support herb production and marketing. This webinar is funded in part by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant program.

[Shaw slides](#) [Cavanaugh slides](#) [Herb enterprise budget spreadsheet](#)

[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)

April 8. Learning from high tunnel enterprise budgets. Enterprise budgets are a tool to help understand all the costs and returns associated with an individual crop. That data can inform decisions aimed at improving profitability. Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension vegetable and berry specialist shares examples of "fillable" tunnel enterprise budget spreadsheets, and describes a new on-line budgeting and benchmarking tool for high tunnel crops on the VVBGA web site, funded by the Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Initiative. Georgia McDougall, Greenhouse Manager at Intervale Community Farm in Burlington describes how she has used enterprise budgets to compare the profitability of various tunnel crops, what was learned, and how that affected management practices.

[Grubinger slides](#) [McDougall slides](#)

[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)



United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program





April 15. Grower Conversation: navigating economic uncertainties.

This informal discussion was not recorded. The purpose was to share perspectives on economic concerns and related management decisions during this period economic uncertainty. How are rising fuel, fertilizer and other costs affecting your thinking about the coming season? Are you considering raising prices, or changing your production plans? How do you think customers will react to higher prices? Will local food gain some advantage due to higher commodity food prices and shipping costs? This webinar supported growers with what can be difficult decisions.

April 22. Soil health bang for your buck.

Improving soil health doesn't need to be expensive or laborious. This webinar focuses on organic, soil building practices that make economic and efficient sense for soil health improvements and reduced impacts on water quality. This webinar is supported by the Transition to Organic Program (TOPP) and the Vermont Agricultural Clean Water Initiative Program (AgCWIP). Speaker: David Weisberger, University of Rhode Island Extension.

[Weisberger slides](#)

[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)

April 29. Plastic mulches in vegetable production: sources, alternatives, pros and cons. This webinar includes an overview of petroleum-based plastic mulch, bioplastics terminology, the differences between bio-based, compostable, and soil-biodegradable materials, label interpretation, performance comparisons, and non-plastic alternatives. Speakers: *Shuresh Ghimire, Associate Extension Educator, UConn and Byron Garcia, Biomimicry Consultant, Natural Designs LLC.*

[Ghimire slides](#) [Garcia slides](#)

[YouTube webinar recording](#) [Spotify](#) [Apple podcast](#)

Updated 5-1-26