



2026 Commercial Horticulture On-Farm Workshops

*These events are open to all--and they are geared for commercial growers.
No registration required, just show up!*

*If severe weather is predicted, an event may be cancelled, and a notice will be sent to the VVBGA listserv.
To join the VVBGA go to vvbga.org.*

PLANNING FOR ORCHARD SUCCESS: PEST, POLLINATOR, AND CROP MANAGEMENT DECISION MAKING

Star Grazer Farm (Liberty Orchard)
2481 West St, Brookfield, VT 05036
Thursday May 7, 4:00 -6:30

and

Mad Tom Orchard
2615 Mad Tom Road, East Dorset VT 05253
Friday May 8, 4:00-6:30

Join the Vermont Tree Fruit Growers Association and the University of Vermont Extension at two hands-on field meetings at two of Vermont's many beautiful apple orchards. We will learn about each farm, farm funding opportunities, see and discuss sprayer equipment, farm approaches to PYO, and discuss pest and pollinator management at each farm.

Star Grazer Farm (Liberty Orchard): This orchard transitioned to new ownership about 5 years ago. We'll learn about the farm's participation in recent on-farm bee pollinator research and see and talk about two types of orchard sprayers.

Mad Tom Orchard: This farmer led meeting will spotlight how orchard crops, management, weather station and spray equipment, markets, and customer relations have evolved in 85+ years of business.

Pesticide applicator credits are available at each meeting location: 1 credit for categories 1A, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Certified Crop Adviser Credits pending.

This event is supported by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.

FOUR DECADES OF ORGANIC BLUEBERRY PRODUCTION AND PYO

Wild Hill Organics

1181 Wild Hill Road, Fairlee, VT 05045

Tuesday May 19, 4:00-6:30

Join our hosts Peggy Willey and John Benjamin, owners of Wild Hill Organics, a certified organic farm and VVBGA members, to learn about blueberry production and customer relations in 42 years of the blueberry business. Specialists from UVM will join us for a discussion of insect pest and disease management, and hands-on observations of wild bee pollinators in blueberries plus an update on recent pollinator research in Vermont. Pesticide applicator credits available: 1 credit for categories 1A, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Certified Crop Adviser Credits pending.

This event is supported by the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program](#) and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.

STRAWBERRIES, TUNNEL TOMATOES, AND MARKETING

Full Belly Farm

686 Davis Rd, Monkton VT 05461

Tuesday June 23, 4:00-6:30

[Full Belly Farm](#) is a retail and wholesale vegetable, berry, and ornamentals farm operated by Sarah and Stephen Park. They purchased the well-known Norris Berry Farm in 2018 with support from the Vermont Land Trust, the Vermont Agricultural Credit Corporation, and the Farm Service Agency. The farm has 3 acres of June-bearing and 1/2 acre of everbearing strawberries, an acre of blueberries, and about a dozen acres of mixed vegetables. It also has 28,000 sq. ft. of high tunnels primarily for flowers, bedding plants, and tomatoes. Sales are through a 75 member CSA, a farm stand on premises, and wholesaling to local stores and restaurants. Join us for a farm tour focused on berries and tunnel production, and a discussion about marketing.

SOIL HEALTH AND POLLINATOR SUPPORT ON A DIVERSIFIED ORGANIC FARM

The Farm Upstream

150 Lee River Road, Jericho, VT 05465

Thursday July 23, 4:00-6:30

The Farm Upstream is a collectively owned, certified organic farm and native plant nursery established in 2021. Located on 20 acres along the Lee River, the farm focuses on sustainable practices, riparian protection, and community-centered agriculture, offering a popular veggie CSA, farm stand, and locally sourced native shrub nursery.

We will take a tour to observe and discuss the farm's management approaches to soil health and pollinator support. We'll explore cover cropping, mulching, compost additions, and pollinator support in annual, biannual, and perennial production systems.

This event is supported by the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program](#) and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.

MEDICINAL HERB PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING

Zack Woods Herb Farm
216 Mead Rd Hyde Park, VT 05655
Tuesday August 5, 1:00-3:00

Don't miss this rare chance to walk the fields of the renowned Zack Woods Herb Farm, a certified organic medicinal herb farm and botanical sanctuary. Jeff and Melanie Carpenter, owners and operators, established the farm in 1999. They authored the book *The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer* in 2015. Jeff will guide attendees through every stage of their operation: propagation, soil health, field production, harvesting, post-harvest processing, drying, and the infrastructure that makes it all work. With 25+ years of experience in medicinal herb cultivation, Jeff brings deep, practical knowledge you won't find in a textbook.

Stipends are available for farmers to cover travel and time costs associated with attending the workshop. For more information or to request a stipend, please contact Sarah Shaw: sarah@hillsidebotanicals.com or Julia Etter: nomadfarmvt@gmail.com

This event is supported by the [Vermont Herb Growers Initiative](#) through a grant from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grant program, and with support from the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program](#).

REDUCED TILLAGE, INSECT SCOUTING, AND NRCS PRACTICES ON A SMALL-SCALE DIVERSIFIED VEGETABLE AND CUT FLOWER FARM

Stone's Throw Farmstead
120 Wilmouth Hill Rd, Shrewsbury, VT 05738
Tuesday August 25. 4:00-6:30

Jess Purks and Connor Self grow a 1/2 acre of certified organic vegetables and flowers at a human-powered scale, with minimal tillage. They sell their products through two farmers' markets, a farmstand and wholesale accounts. Since starting their farm in 2022, they utilized resources such as the NOFA Journey Farmer program and NRCS funding to help build their business. Please join us as we tour the farm to learn about their flower and vegetable production practices.

During the tour, we will explore NRCS practices implemented on the farm such as high tunnels, low tunnels, reduced tillage, and pest management. We will end the tour with a hands-on activity guided by UVM Extension to scout for insects on the farm.

This event is supported by the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program](#) and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets

INTERSEEDING, LIVING MULCHES, AND COVER CROPPING EQUIPMENT

Hurricane Flats

975 S. Windsor St., South Royalton, VT 05068

Wednesday September 23. 4:00 - 6:00

Hurricane Flats grows organic vegetables, culinary herbs, dry beans, and popcorn. Sales are at their farm stand, the Norwich Farmers Market, and at a handful of nearby stores and restaurants. Farmer and co-owner Ash Loehr is committed to soil stewardship and she implements a range of practices to build soil health, grow on-farm nutrients, minimize soil loss, and improve crop productivity. Ash will talk about the many techniques for growing and managing cover crops that she has tried over the years, from roller-crimping, to interseeding, to living mulches. She will also demonstrate equipment including a roller crimper and a specially fabricated no-till toolbar to plant into high residue. We'll discuss funding opportunities that Hurricane Flats has utilized to help obtain equipment, and how they've adapted to growing in a flood plain.

This event is supported by the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program](#) and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets.

STORAGE CROPS, SOIL HEALTH, MARKETING, AND AN ELECTRIC TRACTOR

High Meadows Farm

742 Westminster West Road, Putney, VT 05346

Wednesday October 21, 3:00-5:30

Howard Prussack has been farming at this location since 1979. He grows a dozen acres of certified organic vegetables in the field and has 30,000 sq. ft. of high tunnels. Sales are at Brattleboro farmers' market and wholesale to coops and garden centers throughout New England, delivered by the farm's trucks and through one distributor. The focus is on a few major crops: potted herbs, garlic, onions, potatoes, tomatoes, and winter squash. Howard also grows some celery, ginger, and tumeric in tunnels. Cover crops, rotations, and various ground covers are used intensively.

We'll discuss marketing, tour the fields and tunnels, talk cover crops, and see the wash/pack/storage located in a refurbished barn. Howard will demonstrate his Tilmor Super-E electric cultivating tractor and describe its performance this past season.

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