

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – January 11, 2008

Compiled by Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension
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www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Bob Pomykala, Pomykala Farm, Grand Isle

The Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association was started by growers for growers. Our mission is to promote the economic, environmental and social sustainability of vegetable and berry farming in Vermont through education, promotion and communication among growers. It sounds pretty dry but actually it's a lot of fun. We have growers who have a few plants to a few hundred acres. The process of growing plants doesn't change, and some people (like my wife and myself) like to stay small.

UVM Extension and the VT Agency of Agriculture play a large part in our organization. People like Ann Hazelrigg and Doug Johnstone contribute countless hours of enormous expertise. Membership entitles you to many publications. My favorite by far is the New England Vegetable Management Guide. It contains current recommendations for all the crops I grow, and some that I would like to try. This year (2008-2009) it contains 50 glossy pages chock full of color photos to aid in identifying diseases, weeds, bugs, etc.

We hold one annual meeting a year. We try to focus on topics that are important to us as growers, and there is a nice little trade show, too. Please check out the program below. I encourage you to attend, and to become a member of our association.

Sincerely,
Bob Pomykala
President, VV&BGA



**VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY GROWERS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2008**

Capital Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, 100 State Street, Montpelier
(802) 223-5252 www.capitolplaza.com

Sponsored in part by USDA Risk Management Agency

- 8:30 **Registration, Trade Show, Refreshments**
- 9:30 **President's Remarks** – Bob Pomykala, Pomykala Farm, Grand Isle
- 9:35 **Slide Tour of Vermont Vegetable and Berry Farms**
Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension
- 10:00 **IPM that Works on Diversified Vegetable and Berry Farms**
Jude Boucher, University of Connecticut Extension
- 10:30 **How Effective are Various Organic and Biorational Pesticides?**
Abby Seaman, Cornell Cooperative Extension
- 11:00 **Review of Pest Problems in 2007 and what to do about them in 2008**
Ann Hazelrigg, UVM Extension
- 11:30 **Update from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets**
Roger Albee, Secretary of Agriculture
- 11:45 **Business Meeting: Election of Officers, etc.**
- 12:00 **Luncheon and Trade Show**
- 1:30 **Winter Squash Production, Peeling, and Marketing**
Eric Rozendaal, Rockville Market Farm, Starksboro
- 2:00 **How We Grow and Process Currants and Raspberries**
Peter Hingston, Cherry Hill Farm, Springfield
- 2:30 **Pros and Cons of Strawberry Varieties – Grower Panel**
Sue Evans, Middlebury; Bob Gray, S. Newbury; Jon Satz, Bradford
- 3:00 **Vermont Farmers Visit Nepal**
Lisa and Howard Prussack, High Meadows Farm, Westminster
- 3:30 **Adjourn - Trade Show**

PRE-REGISTRATIONS - Must be received by Feb. 22^d (Add \$5 for at-the-door registrations.) \$25 Members, \$35 Non-Members, *includes lunch and coffee break.*

Membership dues for 2008 are \$35. Benefits include: a 2008-09 Vegetable or Small Fruit Management Guide, or \$15 credit toward a book or video (see list to choose from at: www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/Pubs/Bratpubs.html); and a subscription to Agriview, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture newsletter (includes the VT Veg and Berry News).

Mail check to: VV&BGA, c/o Doug Johnstone, P.O, Box 701, Springfield, VT 05156.

Questions? Vern Grubinger, (802) 257-7967 x13 or vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu.
This meeting earns 3 PAT credits for private applicators or commercial category 1A.

AMA PROGRAM COULD PAY FOR IRRIGATION, ETC.

Vicky Drew, Vermont NRCS

NRCS expects to receive an allocation of approximately \$135,000 for its Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program in July, 2008. These funds may be used to help farmers off-set the cost of installing conservation practices on their farm. AMA is a risk reduction program, and as such, priorities for funding will be for conservation practices that help farmers reduce their risk to droughts, floods, crop failures, etc. While final decisions on the type of conservation practices that will be covered by the program in 2008 have not been made, it is likely that new irrigation systems and development of water sources for fruit, vegetables and other high value crops will be eligible for cost share. Other practices likely to be included are those that enhance soil quality, and improve nutrient and pest management. Farmers must apply for the program by July 1, 2008 to be eligible for funding this year. Visit your local NRCS field office to apply, and/or go to www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov/programs for more information.

CARROT PROJECT SEEKS TO HELP SMALL FARMS WITH FINANCING

The Carrot Project creates small farm financing solutions. We address financing gaps by making loans and guarantees available and by exploring equity solutions. In order to make more and better financing solutions available we need to determine the farm-financing needs of small and mid-sized farm businesses. Please help us do that by taking a short on-line survey at: www.thecarrotproject.org/farmer_survey. I can also arrange for hard copies of the survey to be sent out as well. Thank you. Susan McMahon, Windham Regional Commission, Brattleboro, VT 05301. (802) 257-4547 x114

'NAP' CROP LOSS COVERAGE

Julie Jacque, Windham County Farm Service Agency

Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) crop coverage for annual crops not insurable through typical avenues like RMA, Federal Crop Insurance, is available at all USDA Farm Service Agency offices for the 2008 crop year. ***Deadline to sign up is March 15.***

All types of beets, lettuce, squash, pumpkins, radishes, greens, beans, tomatoes, turnip, cabbage, peppers, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, herbs, onions, peas, potatoes, eggplant, cucumbers, bok choy, etc. can be covered under this policy. The fee is \$100 per crop; with a \$300 per county maximum fee. The policy coverage is a catastrophic level loss of 50% of your crop. The NAP \$100 policy covers all acreage on the crop. No maximum, no minimum acreage requirements. Limited Resource Producer waiver of fee is also available to qualifying producers. This policy also entitles you to apply for additional disaster legislation funds if they are appropriated. The current disaster legislation is approved to pay at a 42% loss level for producers with insurance or participating in NAP. Contact your county FSA office for more information.