

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – January 7, 2009

Compiled by Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension

(802) 257-7967 ext.13, vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu

www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry

JOIN THE VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY GROWERS ASSOCIATION!

By Doug Johnstone, VV&BGA Secretary/Treasurer

The Vermont Vegetable & Berry Growers Association (VVBGA) is constantly looking for ways to support and assist its membership. In past years VVBGA has enhanced membership benefits in many different ways, such as hosting on-line farm marketing pages on the Association web site, and offering reduced memberships to new members.

Recently, in order to broaden the selection of knowledge-boosting publications available to members, the management guide publication list was expanded to include all of the vegetable and berry publications available through UVM. In an effort to better represent the interests of all vegetable and berry growers, VVBGA has become more involved with the Legislature and has even testified before several committees in support of the industry. Last year returning members received a free soil test kit (a \$15.00 value) while new members paid no membership dues, though they still received all membership benefits.

This year VVBGA will continue to offer a one-time free membership to people that have never been members before, and there will be an expanded the list of free test kits available to returning members.

In addition, the Board of Directors has authorized the creation of a listserv. The purpose of this 'group e-mail list' is to encourage growers to work together on things like: buying supplies and equipment in bulk, selling their products to one another to fill production gaps, or other practical issues that could be addressed by an e-mail communication to many local growers at once. When you fill out your membership form, please provide your e-mail and it will automatically be added to the list. You can be removed at any time upon request. Any questions or concerns should be directed to Dr. Vern Grubinger at: vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu

The Annual Meeting will be held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Montpelier on Monday, February 9, 2009. Please see the agenda below for details and register early in ensure a good parking spot. See you there!

It is the mission of VVBGA to promote the economic, environmental and social sustainability of vegetable and berry farming in Vermont through education, promotion and communication among growers. It is for these reasons that we strive to increase membership, and continue to offer added benefits to members, in the hopes of providing them the advantages they need to become more successful in their business endeavors. Join us in supporting the Vermont vegetable and berry industry!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE VV&BGA

The Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association was started by growers for growers. Our aim is to fulfill the needs of small fruit and vegetable growers in Vermont. VVBGA currently has over 180 members. We are ruled by a Board of Directors who are members themselves, elected to 2 year terms. We hold one annual meeting a year. We focus on topics that are important to us as growers. At these meetings, vendors are available whose expertise and equipment are invaluable for our Industry. Also, we often have growers giving talks concerning what has and hasn't worked for them. I personally love to hear a fellow grower talk about their operation. At this year's meeting we have several.

The members are folks like you and me, enjoying what they do and taking pride in producing healthy food from the land. I personally have been a member for over 25 years (time flies) and have benefitted greatly from it. UVM extension plays a large part in our organization and their people with specialized training contribute countless hours of expertise to help farmers.

Membership entitles you to a pick a free book from a wide selection of 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. In these days of shrinking allocations for agriculture, it seems wise to join with other growers to have our voice heard.

I encourage you to become a member of the VV&BGA, even if you are not farming in Vermont. And don't forget to check out our great website for details on meetings, publications and more:

www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry

VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY GROWERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2009

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

Sponsored by USDA Risk Management Agency and UVM Extension



- 8:30 **Registration, Trade Show, Refreshments**
- 9:30 **President's Remarks** – Bob Pomykala, Pomykala Farm, Grand Isle
- 9:35 **Slide Tour of Farm Innovations** – Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension
- 10:00 **EQIP Projects on Vermont Vegetable and Berry Farms**
Lance Gorham, Windham County NRCS
- 10:30 **Insect Habitat on Vermont Vegetable and Berry Farms**
Yolanda Chen, UVM Plant and Soil Science Dept.
- 11:00 **Nematodes on Vermont Vegetable and Berry Farms**
Yong Bao, UVM Plant and Soil Science Dept.
- 11:30 **Update from Industry on New Products**
Trade Show Exhibitors
- 11:50 **Business Meeting: Election of Officers, etc.**
- 12:00 **Luncheon and Trade Show**

- 1:15 **Strawberry Varieties and Cultural Practices for Success**
David Handley, University of Maine Cooperative Extension
- 2:00 **How We Grow Greenhouse Raspberries**
Howard Prussack, High Meadows Farm, Westminster West
- 2:30 **Buying Cool Equipment from Far Away Places – Grower Panel**
Jon Satz, David Marchant, Pete Johnson
- 3:00 **Growing Our Own Sudax for Strawberry Mulch**
Bob Pomykala
- 3:30 **Adjourn - Trade Show**

PRE-REGISTRATIONS - **Must be received by Feb. 5th** (Add \$5 for at-the-door registrations.)
\$30 Members, \$40 Non-Members, *this fee includes lunch and coffee break.*

Membership dues for 2009 are \$35. Benefits include: a 2008-09 Vegetable or Small Fruit Management Guide, or one book or video of equal value (see list on VV&BGA web site); a subscription to Agriview (with the Vegetable and Berry News), and new this year: inclusion on the association's grower listserv.

Mail check made out to VV&BGA to: Doug Johnstone, P.O, Box 701, Springfield, VT 05156.
Questions? Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension, 802-257-7967 ext. 13, vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu.

Attendance at this meeting will be worth 2 pesticide recertification credits for private applicators and commercial applicators certified in categories 1a and 10.