



Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – May 8, 2012
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DIRECT MARKET PRODUCE PRICE REPORTING FOR 2012

With help from growers, UVM Extension will offer direct market produce price reports again this season. Reports will be collated every two weeks, starting May 21, and will be available on-line as a pdf file showing the maximum, minimum, average and median prices charged for produce sold directly to consumers around the state. To make this information most useful, we need many farmers to report prices! It's easy to do, but you need to register once on the site. Please do so now at www.uvm.edu/farmpricing/user/register and become part of this effort to help growers set sustainable prices for Vermont farm products. Any farmer who sells produce directly to customers in Vermont can participate. An email reminder will be sent along with the Reports from the Field requests when price reports are due. You can even report from your mobile device. The prices you enter will auto-fill the next time you report, so you only need to edit prices that have changed. For more info about the price reports, and how simple it is to be a reporter, visit www.uvm.edu/farmpricing/.

SPOTTED WING DROSOPHILA MONITORING

Are you interested in the arrival and distribution of SWD across the state/region? A lot of us are! To keep everyone informed, I am looking for growers that will volunteer to monitor their fruit crop(s) for SWD and report their findings to me on a weekly basis for as much of the season as possible. This involves setting up simple plastic cup traps filled with apple cider vinegar and a yellow sticky card, hanging them in the shade of crop canopies (or placing on the ground in strawberries) just before any fruit ripens, and checking them regularly using a small hand lens to assist with SWD identification. You may have an employee that can be assigned to this. Here is a 4-minute video from N. Carolina Extension that shows exactly how to make the traps: <http://ncsmallfruitsipm.blogspot.com/2011/12/swd-monitoring-videos-from-nc.html>. In addition, this 9-minute video from Michigan State Univ. that shows where to place traps, how to identify the pest, and how to change the cards; towards the end it shows a trap design for strawberries to place on the ground: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpAvHGIQK68.

Please let me know if you are willing to be a SWD reporter. There are many places to buy sticky cards and hand lens, including: www.bugladyconsulting.com/shopping%20home.htm and <http://greenmethods.com/site/shop/buy-goods/#PYST3X5>.

SEEDCORN MAGGOT

Seedlings are more susceptible to seedcorn maggots during wet, cold spring weather that slows seed germination. The insect spends the winter as a larva in the soil, and adults emerge in April and May, mate, and lay eggs on moist soil high in organic matter or decaying vegetation. They resemble a small house fly, gray to brown, about 1/5 inch long. Eggs hatch in a few days and small, white, tapered maggots burrow into seeds and feed for 2 to 3 weeks before changing into brown pupae which do no damage. Adults emerge 1-2 weeks and begin a new cycle, resulting in 3 or more generations each year, but the first one does the most damage. You can monitor fly populations before planting by putting out yellow pails filled with soapy water along the field edges every 100 feet. Many insects are attracted to yellow and are trapped when they fall into the water. Empty pails every 4-6 days and refill with soapy water. Plow winter cover crops as early as possible in spring and thoroughly cover with floating row covers to keep out flies which are attracted to live, green organic matter incorporated into the soil. Note that maggot populations are generally higher after a legume is incorporated into the soil than a grass. Wait until the soil warms before planting and place seed shallow s in well-prepared beds to enhance quick germination. Planting during fly-free periods using the scouting method noted above can also decrease the likelihood of an infestation.

NRCS HIGH TUNNEL DEADLINE JUNE 1

The NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) includes a Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative. The sign up cutoff for funding for high tunnels is June 1, 2012. This is also the cutoff date for signing up for financial assistance opportunities for Energy Audits/Practices and implementation of conservation practices for Organic Growers (or transitioning). See these links for details; contact your local NRCS office to sign up, see: www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/ or call 802-951-6796. High Tunnel Initiative: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/?&cid=stelprdb1046250. Energy Initiative: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/?&cid=stelprdb1046252. Organic Initiative: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/?&cid=nrcs143_008224. For EQIP info: www.vt.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/EQIP/Index.html.

MAY 16: DIVERSIFIED PRODUCTION AND MARKETING AT JERICHO SETTLERS FARM, 3-6 PM

Jericho Settlers' Farm was founded in 2002, and has grown rapidly to 15 acres of vegetable crops, 8 high tunnels, and a year-round CSA with 150 members. They also produce livestock from 150 acres of pasture, annually providing 20,000 dozen eggs, 20,000 pounds of pasture-raised poultry and pork, and 13,000 pounds of grassfed beef and lamb. In addition to the CSA and a farmstand, they sell at farmers' markets and natural food stores, schools, restaurants and a hospital in the greater Burlington area. Mark Fasching and Christa Alexander have focused not only on sustainable organic production, by implementing good rotation and soil fertility practices, but also packaging and storage for their year round markets and brand development. They will lead us through a tour of the farm and describe their production and marketing practices.

Directions. From I-89, take Exit 11 (Richmond), travel west on Rt. 2 briefly to traffic light. Bear right at light onto Rt. 117 (River Road). Follow Rt. .117 for 2.5 miles to Barber Farm Rd. on the right; follow for 2.3 miles to farm on the left. From Rt. 15 points east: Travel to Jericho and bear left at Clark's Truck Center onto Browns Trace; follow for 4 miles through Jericho Center (around the Town Green, past country store) to Barber Farm Rd. on right; follow for .2 miles to farm on the right. From Rt. 15 points west: Travel to Jericho, bear right at Joe's Snack Bar onto Lee River Road. Go straight through stop sign and continue several miles on Lee River Road, bearing right up steep hill (Lee River Rd. merges into Browns Trace) and continue into Jericho Center. Follow road around the Town Green and past country store and continue 1/4 mile then turn right onto Barber Farm Rd., follow .2 miles to farm on the right. From Richmond village: Travel up the Jericho Road into Jericho where the road name changes to Browns Trace; follow to Barber Farm Rd., on the left (1 mile after Nashville Rd). Follow .2 miles to farm on the right. Questions? Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension 802-257-7967x303.

MAY 21: A NEW FARMER MEET UP, 7-9 PM

5 Olde Tavern, South Royalton, VT. Are you a new or aspiring farmer? Join Valley Food & Farm and BALE on Monday, May 21st in South Royalton for a social get together and some inspiration! Chris Piana will give an informal talk on how he accessed land to start Fable Farm in Barnard. Meet and mingle with fellow farmers in the area and enjoy good food and drink. Valley Food & Farm and BALE will be there to share land access resources and hear your needs and interests for the next New Farmer Meet-up. This is the first in a series of Farmer Meet-ups this year. Questions? becka@vitalcommunities.org or balevt@gmail.com.