



Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – Sept. 11, 2012  
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## REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Plainfield) Spotted wing drosophila is everywhere. I have them in my elderberries, raspberries and grapes.

(Rochester) The "sudden softening" of our blueberries was in fact an infestation SWD. Our vinegar traps did not catch any, tricking us into thinking we were free of this pest, but by waving a sticky card above the bushes in the early evening we caught a bunch of males, the spotted wing visible to the naked eye. The last quarter of what had been a bumper crop was lost, and our efforts turned to control, and rescue of the fall raspberries. We picked every ripe and not-quite-ripe raspberry and blackberry and froze them, to later turn into jam. We sprayed the entire orchard with Entrust. With volunteer help we stripped all the remaining blueberries from the bushes and put them into black plastic bags to bake in the sun. Don't compost them, we were advised, as the larvae/pupae may not all be destroyed. Even burying them may leave survivors. The Entrust seemed to cause a dramatic drop in the numbers of flies, which was encouraging. We are now picking every raspberry punctually, even a little early, but are not comfortable selling them to anyone who doesn't plan to use them immediately, so most are going into the freezer. Virtually every raspberry that is allowed to over-ripen reveals tiny larvae when turned inside out. The good news is that fall raspberries emerge slowly and we are able to keep up with harvesting. Hoping for a really cold winter this year to kill these and other insect pests, and for a good plan to deal with SWD next year.

(Guilford) This is not something we want to report but as small fruit growers we are at a crossroads after two years of heavy SWD infestation. We do not want to sell sprayed berries or under-ripe berries. We must find a way to prevent infestation, figure out some alternative ripening environment, or stop being blueberry and raspberry growers. I am also worried they will end up earlier and in the strawberries. What will we do for the future? I am wondering if some structure, plastic, net combination would keep them out?

Does anyone successfully grow blueberries under cover for SWD? Could fruiting be sped up to get more of a crop in ahead of fruitflies? Are researchers looking at release of infertile fruitflies? There is a glimmer of hope in that last year, at some point we didn't accurately record, the SWD stopped and we got some raspberries again. Was it frost? Could we do LATE outside raspberries?

(Craftsbury) Blueberry season ended on August 30 after 40 days of steady picking. This year's yield was comparable to last year's record crop despite August's lack of rainfall which withered late ripening fruit and shortened the season.

(Montpelier) Home gardeners had a great year this year and it showed in reduced sales at farmer's market. Value added product (gazpacho, salsa, pesto, maple BBQ sauce) sales continue to increase. Already tearing out greenhouse items and starting to get set for winter production. Late field plantings of brassicas, leeks, cilantro, parsley all looking good. Finally had a great year with Roma tomatoes. Put them into the new high tunnel. They came in 4 weeks early, yields were great and so was quality. Plenty of tomato sauce for this winter. Tomato hornworm was worst I have had in 10 years. Luckily they showed up about the time we started tearing things out, so I am not too concerned. Heterorhabditis nematodes in the greenhouses appear to have done a great job controlling cucumber beetle as well as Asiatic garden beetle by attacking the soil stage of their life cycle. Anaheim chilis had a great run as well. Plants hit five feet tall and fruit load was impressive. White plastic is the way to go in the greenhouses. We are going to run 4 lines of drip tape per bed for the winter salads and spinach. Had very nice results in the trial beds last year. No overhead irrigation and no hand watering except in the dead of winter. A lot of pressure on 'traditional' markets with all the new growers coming in, so putting a lot of effort into creating new markets. Less than 10% of Vermont's food is local which means a 90% market share opportunity if you can figure it out.

Shelburne/S. Burlington: All winter crops are either growing or seeded to be transplanted. The winter kale is looking great. I am running an easy trial to experiment with transplanting dates as I suspect we can move them back at least a week so I have 3 dates. We'll see if the kale is mature enough by November 1 or if that planting date is actually earlier than it needs to be. I have 4 different spinach varieties to trial this winter: Space, Winter Longstanding, Bloomsdale, Tye. I've overwintered all of them and they have all done well but I am excited to actually take yield data on this year to really know which are best for us here.

(Fairfax) Swede midge, grape leek moth and SWD all in one year; what fun. Gone are the days of benign neglect. I knew it was time to reduce the brassica acreage; Swede midge was just the encouragement I needed. It destroyed our main kale crop, but luckily we were able to go 3 miles down the road to plant our fall broccoli and it is doing very well. Rotations of 1,000 feet or more are recommended so looks like we've got lots of planning to do for the winter. Other than that the sweet corn and peppers have been fantastic.

(Tunbridge) More red peppers this year than in the last 20 combined. Last planting of zucchini wilted and died. Basil turned yellow; the patch right next to it that had bolted was not affected. Still have one more planting under a row cover. Beans are doing great. Kale got hit hard by flea beetles, waiting for it to grow out. Other fall greens like arugula, tatsoi, pak choi had no flea beetle pressure. Outside tomato plants are pretty much done. We had a great run with them. It was nice to have them early and not need to worry about them going into the fall. Onions are all in, best crop ever despite the maggot early on. We put the nematodes to them 3 times 2 weeks apart. Putting the onions on plastic probably saved the crop since we would not have had enough help to weed them. Cukes are done. Broccoli is beautiful. Carrots are tasty; finally got the barrel washer set up, why didn't we get one sooner?

(Benson) We're having a great time performing all of our fall chores about three weeks early. Three days topping beets last week, put 600 lb. of watermelon radishes in the root cellar and it looks like we will have to harvest fall carrots early October. I prefer to wait until Nov. 1 for the sweetest fall carrots. Making fall plantings of kale, spinach, chard, Asian greens etc. We've started construction on a 30 x 144 high tunnel with root zone heat and hope to be able to plant into it in a couple of weeks. Very much looking forward to fall weather, deer hunting, winter markets and the need for wood heat.

(Williston) Days are noticeably shorter and evening temperatures are cooler. We were lucky enough to get some decent rain recently. Plants are still producing but regrowth is slower these days. Starting to harvest shallots to dry. Lemon grass is ready to harvest too. Winter cover crop of pea/oat/vetch is growing nicely especially after the rain. Starting to get hoop house ready for fall planting of herbs and flowers.

(Plainfield NH) Shorter, cooler days and some much needed rain last week have abated the summer drought on our farms, now the task of picking up the irrigation pipe before mowing it with a bush hog. Isaac brought no CEW (surprisingly) to our farm; the Heliiothis trap showed only one moth.

SWD is present on our farm, but not yet in numbers to make the fruit unacceptable to the buying public. This stay of execution is perhaps being generated by weekly applications of synthetic pyrethroids or spinosad and trying to keep the fruit cleaned off; maybe some luck as well. The Valley News did a front page story over Labor Day on SWD for us all, but despite that, the story was defused somewhat by thoughtful responses and quotes by farmers and Extension people on both sides of the River. No damage from it, yet. Otherwise trying to get stuff cleaned up and covers down despite a shortage of people in the field. Have the regular plethora of fall diseases and shortages of coffee and chocolate needed to overcome general exhaustion of the workforce.

(Little Compton RI) What a strange year for rain. A farmer just three miles away can have 3 inches and you will get a tenth. Worse yet if you are part of an FSA insurance for drought relief, your state total rain fall will be the statistic they use. You could be all burned up but it doesn't matter. This has been our story: the state capital got 7 inches of rain in the last two weeks and we got less than 3/4 of an inch. Flea beetles have gone into hibernation but the cucumber beetles just won't quit. Worse year ever for just constant attack from one species or another. Spider mites seem to be everywhere; and not just in the greenhouse this summer. On the deer front, a friend gave me a new little solar blinking red lite that you can order from Sears.com called Nite Guard. My goodness, I think it really works, or at least it is working for now. You will need one every 150' facing toward the direction of deer staging area. Just need my beans to be left alone for another month. Our over-wintering carrots are up and growing thanks to our Kifco 140B. We would have lost a lot of crops if it wasn't for this little water cannon. Its width 150' and the retrieval tube is 280 long. It runs on as little 38 PSI but will need at least a 13 GPM flow of water. We bought ours from Allen Seed of Exeter, RI for \$5,000; Rainflo in PA sells them too. Greenhouse is still keeping us in tomatoes but have to clear them out by October 1 to keep to our schedule for planting winter greens. Late blight was all around us but the greenhouse made it through without one treatment.

(Argyle NY) We have been using Agrid 3 to successfully control rats and mice; it's OMRI labeled, not sure if it will help with the bigger rodents; pellets and chunks are both effective. We have had English sparrows for several years and we have to net our GH benches of all new seeds and seedlings; they love baby lettuce plants also. We will be doing bird netting next spring on the 2 sides of the GH as bench netting is a management nightmare; 22 shot is helpful also. We have confirmed SWD in our blueberries which made the last variety get soft and drop. One more new critter to deal with. We finally have many beds of nice spinach germinating with 17 varieties! Previous trials show many are very productive, but some do better with rain, cold, etc. and the diversity seems to work well for us. I'll give further reports on them next time.

Looking to harvest lots of fall crops, and doing our final sweep through fields for weeds in preparation for cover crops. Will start to transplant into the high tunnels very soon.

(Plainfield) Lots of fall greens, wholesale demand is strong. Great tops on the rutabagas, hoping the roots fill out. Hybrid butternut is mature and ready to cut, looks like a good yield. Carmen and Italia red peppers pouring in. Fall raspberries starting to ripen. Spraying Entrust alternating with Pyganic in hopes of holding off the SWD.

(Hampton NY) The cool nights and lack of moisture have slowed most production to a crawl. I doubt the 4 inches of rain we recently received will matter much at this point. Kale and Swiss Chard are liking the weather and turning on productions again. Agribon over the tomatoes plants that lost leaves to had Septoria definitely reduced the amount of sun scald. A late night visitor picked every Roma tomato that I had off of 72 plants so no bushel sales this year. The pumpkins are going on the stand this weekend and the corn stalks are going up next weekend. Early planted winter rye is already up 6" with more being planted this weekend. New garden area for 2013 has been soil tested and limed.

#### UPDATE FROM THE UVM PLANT DIAGNOSTIC CLINIC

Ann Hazelrigg

Squash: Black rot showing up in butternuts. This is the fruit symptom associated with the leafspot and stem symptoms called gummy stem blight, which causes oozing on the stems near the soil line. [http://vegetablemdonline.ppath.cornell.edu/factsheets/Cucurbit\\_GSBlight.htm](http://vegetablemdonline.ppath.cornell.edu/factsheets/Cucurbit_GSBlight.htm)  
This is one of the diseases you are trying to control on squash/pumpkins when you spray for powdery mildew. This disease originates in the field, although you may not see it on the fruit until they are in storage.

Tomato: More late blight showing up; it's hit or miss around the state but all areas seem to be represented. As we see more morning fogs and dew and fall rains, it will keep spreading. Leaf spot diseases (Septoria and Alternaria) are really making headway now due to recent rains and heavy fruit loads.

Garlic: Have not seen much Fusarium basal rot.

<http://www.nevegetable.org/index.php/crops/garlic?start=3>

Saw some late season (3rd generation?) onion maggots infesting garlic bulbs.

<http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/factsheets/vegetables/onion/om.pdf>

Also, more reports of damage from onion leek moth tunneling in hollow leaves.  
<http://web.entomology.cornell.edu/shelton/leek-moth/index.html>

Basil: More reported downy mildew in basil; it looks like dirt on the leaf undersides and is hard to control. <http://vegetablemdonline.ppath.cornell.edu/NewsArticles/BasilDowny.html>

Impatiens downy mildew is showing up in Vermont, yet another new disease. Symptoms include stunting, dieback, defoliation. Leaf undersides are covered with white downy mildew spores. Destroy all plants or landfill and consider growing other bedding plants next year as this one may be around a while and will wipe out the common garden impatiens very fast.  
<http://extension.umass.edu/landscape/news/impatiens-downy-mildew-confirmed-massachusetts>

Green stink bugs have seemed to die down a bit. Lots of damage seen around gardens in sunflower, tomato, corn, etc.