

2024 On-Farm Workshops for Vegetable and Berry Growers

These events are open to all--and they are geared for commercial growers. If severe weather is predicted, an event may be cancelled, and a notice will be sent to the VVBGA listserv.

Tuesday May 22, 4-6 pm

BLUEBERRY PLANT HEALTH AND POLLINATORS

Covered Bridge Blueberry Farm, 128 River Road, Underhill, VT

Cost: Free, just show up.

This hands-on event focuses on blueberry plant health and supporting blueberry pollinators. Host Lisa Hoare will provide an overview of the farm's management practices and goals. Vern Grubinger will discuss cultural practices including nutrient management, pruning, and mulching. Dr. Taylor Ricketts and Leslie Spencer of the UVM Gund Institute will describe how to optimize habitat to support pollinators, and we will go into the field to capture and ID pollinators. Ann Hazelrigg will answer questions on insect pests and diseases, and Larry Parker will describe the Farm Service Agency's Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and waiver for free coverage for qualifying individuals.

Tuesday July 9, 4-6 pm

ORGANIC BLUEBERRY AND STRAWBERRY PRODUCTION

Clear Brook Farm, 47 Hidden Valley Rd., Shaftsbury VT

Cost: Free, just show up.

Andrew Knafel started the farm 30 years ago and today he and his crew farm 45 acres of certified organic crops and cover crops, including over an acre of strawberries and 1.5 acres of blueberries. Andrew will describe his production practices to manage soil fertility, weeds, insects and diseases in small fruit. Equipment used for cultivation, spraying and mulching will be viewed and discussed. UVM Extension folks will be on hand to provide additional production information, and NOFA-Vermont folks will explain the Transition to Organic Partnership Program.

Thursday July 18, 9 am-

Wednesday August 14, 4-6:30 pm

PROTECTED GROWING WITH HIGH TUNNELS IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Cedar Circle Farm, Pavilion Rd., E. Thetford VT

Cost: \$40 for NOFA members; \$50 for non-members; free for BIPOC.

If possible [register in advance](#).

In our changing climate, many farms are utilizing protected growing spaces to have more control over aspects like temperature and water. Commercial growers, learn about siting a new high tunnel and managing water, heat, and wind for new and existing struct

Join owner Hank Bissel, and UVM Extension produce safety specialist, Hans Estrin to discuss strategies and lessons learned from over four decades of renovations and tweaks made to the farm's "Old Red Barn" in which 25 acres of wholesale and retail crops are graded, washed, packed and stored. Many changes have been made over the years to improve efficiency, product quality, and produce safety in this old, less-than-perfect structure. Topics discussed will include farm-hack construction and workarounds, equipment and product flow, bang-for-buck equipment, managing birds and rats, cleaning SOPs, employee training and empowerment.

Wednesday September 4, 4:00-6:00 pm

