

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News January 12, 2016
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REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Burlington) I have to like the warm weather as much as I hate it. It is so enjoyable to enjoy picking Brussels sprouts, kale and spinach out of the field in a t-shirt in mid-December. Not to mention a comfortable start to the farm construction season. On the other hand, the skiing has been rough and the aphids are going like gangbusters in the tunnels. Trying to keep a lid on them with beneficials but it seems likely too late. Concluding, as others have done before, that baby Pac Choi is an aphid magnet. Incredible butternut crop this year for yield and storage. Other roots, cabbage, and such seem to be holding well. Winter CSA signup a little slower this year; it is harder to interest people in coming out to the farm without our usual complement of warm-season intangibles like PYO crops, green surroundings, and places for their kids to run.

(Hinesburg) 2015 got off to a slow start. The long cold winter reduced March and April hoop house production. June and July rains slowed things down, but the rest of the summer and four months of fall more than made up for it. Ended the season with sales 10% above last year.

reens,
given the relative warmth and lack of snow. We have four houses planted, each 17 x 96, with spinach, kale, salanova, mesclun, bok choy and Asian greens. All have been producing well, with significant regrowth in the warmth of December. Moisture management seems to be the trickiest issue, and we had some downy mildew in the early going. Better management and Actinovate

(Proctorsville) 2015 growing season yields were plentiful. Tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, and chard were the best performers by far. Yields were magnificent! Our biggest crop loss was Brussels sprouts. The sprouts did not form until very late even with lower leaf removal. Once sprouts were beginning to size up they became infested with aphids- a sort of grayish color, unlike the green ones typically seen in the high tunnel- cabbage aphids? It was a tough year for lettuce heads in the field as well, bolting was prevalent in most plants. Considerably low rainfall was a large factor. Spinach, cilantro, claytonia, and kale are currently still producing in the unseated high tunnel. This is our first winter growing trial and the warm weather has been beneficial. We noticed a green moss forming in the beds, but cutting back on watering and scraping off regularly seems to keep it under control. Doesn't seem to bother the crops. With these fresh greens and our stored potatoes, onions and garlic we have been able to have a winter

not seen anything come back on those plants. I changed my pricing structure this year, so 90% of the people helped me to keep the place weed-free-and paid less. It works great. I even have people who like to remove the old raspberry canes. I planted another 400 feet of summer raspberries. I am moving away from fall raspberries. No sign of drosophila this year. In the spring, I give every blueberry Pro-holly, and raspberries got Pro-gro. I encourage taste-testing. Another change is that for the last full week of August, I donate the proceeds to local senior center, food shelf, etc. It was a good year, new systems: happy pickers, full bellies, full freezer. I had people from further away this year because the lower elevations got a late frost when the plants were blooming, and higher elevations got a lot more winter-kill. At 1,400 feet, with a western slope, my place drains the frost well.

(Northfield) We were late to seed and transplant into high tunnel but December sun and relative warmth caught us part-way up. 5/7ths of our winter plantings are spinach and we note that whereas in the past we had a few plants impacted by crown mite which we selectively pulled, we now have widespread presence but the plants do not seem drastically impacted. Not sure if we

Cladosporium has been recovered from dried leaves and seed stocks up to eight years old. Cultural controls rely mainly on sanitation/ -the removal of infected plants, snatch debris and snatch volunteers. Start with certified, disease free seed or treat seed with hot water or bleach to reduce seed born inoculum. There are differences in cultivar susceptibility

Please bring your most recent soil tests so you can begin writing your own nutrient management plan! This workshop will be hands-on with plenty of time for questions and should be helpful to growers of all experience levels. Last minute registration contact Jen Miller, jen@rutlandfarmandfood.org.

VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY GROWERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, Jan. 25 at Lake Morey Inn, Fairlee, VT. Register for the annual meeting by Jan. 22 and/or pay VVBGA membership dues on-line at: <http://2016vvbga.eventbrite.com>. Note that the VVBGA annual dues will increase from \$35 to \$45 per farm after Jan. 31.

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