

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – October 18, 2017

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www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry

(Rochester) Twenty-eight degrees the other night has probably brought the fall raspberry season to an end. The crop was very late this year, presumably due to the cool summer we think, so a lot of potential fruit was left in the field. But one shouldn't complain about a first frost as late as October 17. We have had a satisfactory season overall and look forward to taking care of other tasks now, and getting a little more rest.

(Northfield) I just wanted to add myself to the list of folks who found squash vine borer in their squash fruits. What a drag!

(Westminster West) The other day, I wore a T-shirt and was sweating, today, it's a winter coat and wool hat and I'm cold all day! Still straight out busy with harvesting and marketing, interviewing for next season's crew already and planning the training sessions. Yields do seem off this year, especially on winter squash. But comparing yields, when different soils and seasons are involved, make it difficult to know why. Off-hand I'd say the late spring and colder temps really did hurt. Finished seeding the last cover crop today and starting garlic planting tomorrow

(S. Burlington) Harvesting herbal leaves and flowers. Herbal root harvest was a little later due to warm and dry weather. Ashwagandha's fruit ripened very late (in the Solana family), and most of the fruit didn't ripen at all before root harvest. Roots seem smaller than last year's harvest, but overall bountiful. Still harvesting third and fourth cuttings of aerial plants with only a frost nip on the tulsi, lemon balm and basil. Oct. 16 was the first major frost. I am looking forward to seeing all the shriveled plants marking the end of the harvest season. On to garlic planting. Concerned that warm weather will cause seed to sprout; not sure how long to wait this year! Noticing a crazy flush of box elder bugs throughout the city...wondering if that's normal. Very tick heavy fall, as well! Counting my blessings and my dried flowers, leaves and roots.

(Plainfield NH) Farm stand is shut down and we are on to just wholesaling and doing our fall CSA, Sales remain strong. Still picking solanaceous crops for wholesale. Last of the Hail Mary corn harvested. On Labor Day I didn't think it would make it because it was just coming into fresh silk. A testimony as to just how screwy this growing season has been. Last of the rye-vetch is in, and starting to do annual service and repair on machines.

Lots of pruning to do. Been trying to make sense of unruly raspberries, and hope to do some detail pruning of the blueberries, as well as initiate a spray program to combat an anthracnose problem that has been building up over the years. Three-quarter of the potatoes are up, graded and binned, but still a lot of root crops staring at us. Cleaning up stock plants for the ornamentals side of the business, finding some mealy bugs on some of the purchased-in specialty plants that we thought we would winter over. They will be overwintering instead out of the greenhouse and over the bank.

(Argyle NY) Pleasant Valley Farm. We have never had a year that we had to set up the irrigation transfer pump in late September,

Still getting calls/samples of mummy berry infections. This seemed to be a perfect year for this disease with all the early wet weather. This link has a lot of good pictures of what infected berries (mummies) look like. <http://www.goodfruit.com/managing-mummy-berry/>

Also, Vern's factsheet describes the disease and management:

<https://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/factsheets/mummyberry.html>

If you saw a lot of the disease, be sure you are ready with a good layer of mulch before the spring to smother any infected overwintering berries that will produce new spores. Also, be sure your bushes are well pruned this winter so the foliage dries quickly and if you apply fungicides, you get good penetration. I remember hearing something about being able to "throw a cat through the bushes" as a rule of thumb.

Brassicas-Black rot bacteria causing leaf edge yellowing in kale. Seed had not been hot-watered treated. <https://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/fact-sheets/brassicas-black-rot>

Carrots-Heavy infections of Alternaria leafspot blighting leaves in late plantings of carrots. In addition to cutting down on photosynthesis, the blighted tops make it hard to harvest carrots. <https://ag.umass.edu/vegetable/fact-sheets/carrot-alternaria-leaf-blight>. We also found powdery mildew on the carrot foliage which I had not seen before.

http://vegetablemndonline.ppath.cornell.edu/NewsArticles/Carrot_Powdery.html

Celeriac- Heart rot suspected on celeriac caused by a calcium deficiency. Celery plants grown in hot weather can frequently develop a calcium deficiency in the center of the crown causing it to not develop. Soft-rotting bacteria frequently enter and cause a wet slimy rot. Control is difficult, but efforts to water the plant more regularly and use of mulch may reduce the incidence of heart rot. <http://www.ct.gov/caes/cwp/view.asp?a=2823&q=377614>

Cucurbits-Oedema (raised crusty bumps caused by wet/humid conditions) found on acorn squash. It was spread throughout the field and may have been more concentrated on the side of the squash that was in contact with the soil.

VVBGA LOSES A FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE

David Marchant, River Berry Farm

Paul Boivin died in a motorcycle accident in late September. I met Paul when we worked with UVM Extension to install a pellet corn boiler for our greenhouse. Paul was a dealer of the Maxim boilers that a number of growers installed to provide heat for greenhouses. Paul was great to work with. He really helped us out in determining how to try and heat greenhouses with biofuel. He was always willing to come help with problems or repairs on the units, or to deliver corn for fuel.

Along with being a boiler dealer he was a very innovative farmer, doing lots with ridge tillage, and conservation practices. He was quite involved with helping the immigrant farm labor groups. He will be certainly missed by me and the VVBGA community Here is Paul's obituary:

www.legacy.com/obituaries/burlingtonfreepress/obituary.aspx?pid=186784808

TECHNICAL TIPS: CROP STORAGE RESOURCES

See Chris Callahan's blog page loaded with links to storage information resources

<http://blog.uvm.edu/cwcallah/crop-storage-resources/>