



Vermont Vegetable and Berry News –October 28, 2019
compiled by Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension
(802) 257-7967 ext. 303, vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu
www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry

REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Grand Isle) This has been the best fall ever for vegetable crops. All the cole crops have been very good. Other than losing all of our onions to bacterial bulb rot, it has also been a very good growing season for everything else.

About a week ago we went out at 7 am as we always do to harvest broccoli, every other day. The night before was cool but no frost. It was around 35 degrees when we started

I went to open up the truck which had warmed up due to the sun. To my utter surprise, the alternating dark shades of green mottling were GONE! The broccoli heads looked perfectly normal! So we went back to the field and lo and behold all the broccoli that had mottling now looked normal! So we harvested those heads also, and kept a close eye on them in the cooler (38 degrees F) and they never had any problems. We have been growing broccoli since 1980 and I don't remember ever having this phenomenon before. On the otheraspb

erry fields cleaned up for next year. During last week's storm a few trees fell in the blueberries. We are cutting them and will mulch what we can. Mulched about 50 percent of the blueberries so far, but now it is too wet to get the tractor and mulcher into the field. Blackberries didn't produce very well this year. We are thinking what we are going to replace them with.

(Westminster West) Last outdoor farmers' market was Oct. 26, next week we start at the indoor market which is new for us. F

optimum
weather conditions. Still picking good amount of tomatoes from the tunnel. Grafted Big Denas just won't quit! Sales in general have been strong. Shipped last of onions yesterday, garlic gone, some types of winter squash gone. Already analyzing financial results per crop, which crops break even, which crops actually make money, interesting data!

Ordering hemp seeds for next year already. This fascinating crop was well worth the effort we put in. Our genetics proved their worth this year for us and our customers, happy growers!

Last of the garlic goes in today, always good to get that done before it snows here. I received a letter from a friend that helped me plant garlic here back in the early 70s. Made me wonder how many more years I will continue. Have a great fall, time to get the firewood in!

(Brookfield) Many frosts, lettuce, Napa, kale, carrots spinach, bushels all still good. Lowest temp 24 degrees.

(Rochester) A killing frost of 28° F. or maybe lower on October 4 brought the fall raspberry picking to a close. Too bad, because there was a lot fruit still to ripen and we did not get another night below freezing for the following two weeks. We shouldn't be surprised because really it could happen even in September but we have been getting through to Indigenous People's Day in recent years and sometimes well beyond. We got winter rye sown by mid-October which we think is in time enough to germinate and give us good growth to till under come May or June. Outdoor markets have finished now so we have a little extra time to attend to fall tasks. Love the way fall is stretching out into November with fresh, damp mornings and a relatively unhurried pace.

(Dummerston) It

(Elmore) Persimmons ripening in the high tunnels. Planting very hardy peaches and pine nuts inside for better control of irrigation and warmth for germinating and less weed pressure. Large black walnut and hazelnut crops this year. Largest harvest of northern kiwiberry to date. Grapes galore and pears and apples covering the ground so you can't walk.

Stores not responding to calls or emails even for things they advertise they need. Working with Farmers To You, it is a good solid place to work with! Planting out more fruit trees we have wanted to grow this fall such as medlar, apricots and more plums. Planning on growing more of what is easiest for us and less of what is not so fruitful. Some things are not economical, these we do for love.

(Ange-Gardien, Quebec) Ending up a good season so far. July and August drought did not affect yield of field vegetable and I was able to get good "primeur" on these. Sweet potato yield are ok but I still have to work on some aspects of production, essentially transplants quality. You could really see the difference as some plants had great yields and some other none. Greenhouses are full, waiting for the price to go up and so far acclimation to colder temperature is smooth. Hoping for a mild winter with lots of snow.

(Argyle NY) It's been a great year for us with most of our 35+ crops doing well. Overwintered onions in the field had some loss for the first time, and also we lost over 50% of our garlic due to very strange spring rains/frozen ground. Farmers' markets sales have been strong, will be up 10-15% in sales, but we also added almost an acre of production. Last winter's farmers' market was our second highest gross since 2011, and we hope for busy winter markets again.

Warm autumn weather has led to great yields on all fall storage crops, which we harvest weekly and get packed away in the root cellar. Still to go are turnips, rutabagas, winter radishes, a few beets, kohlrabis, and many tons of carrots. The rains cause some harvest concerns, so we use tarps to keep areas dry to be able to get equipment on the fields to harvest. Works well for us.

Many acres were seeded to rye/vetch cover crop in late September and they are nice and green. Garlic was planted October 15 and the overwintered onions, both Forum sets and greenhouse seeded varieties, are to be planted asap. Our 3 high tunnels are completely planted now, with the last spinach transplants going in this past week. Growth on the chard, kale, Asian Greens, herbs, salad mixes, Salanova lettuce, in the tunnels has been impressive with the warm weather. We will monitor night temperatures as they drop, to avoid damage on fleshy growth, and work to harden crops off well. There are some minor field diseases like downy mildew on romaine lettuce, Alternaria on cabbage, and Cercospora on chard, but overall, fantastic yields. Could use a few more hands to finish the long list of tasks, build temporary tunnels over crops, split wood etc. before winter sets in.

(Little Compton RI) The last Nor'easter in southern New England ripped the plastic off two of our greenhouses. Yes, the plastic was 2 to 3 years old, but the real problem was the wiggle wire. A couple of years ago, we were changing some greenhouse plastic and had to undo long runs of

wiggle wire off a 148' side wall. When our crew started, I heard a popping sound and saw, rather than unwigging to reverse the process of inserting the wiggle wire, they had decided it was quicker to remove it with one quick pull. At the time, I thought to reward them for their ingenuity! But later, as we were reinstalling the wiggle wire on the new plastic, I noticed it had not retained its normal shape and tension—it was damaged and not to be trusted in high stress points. This problem was added to by the lack of second wiggle wire when the high winds came. In high stress points of plastic attachment, it is crucial to use double wiggle wire. Our plastic failure happened right along the single wiggle wire attachment, where you could see the zipper like stress points from the single wiggle wire use.

Fall harvest is going well, potatoes did so well we don't know where to store them! Thumbs up on downy mildew resistant basil

December 10-