## Vermont Vegetable and Berry News May 5, 2009 Compiled by Vern Grubinger, University of Vermont Extension (802) 257-7967 ext.13, vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry

## REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Montpelier) Things are beyond full swing around here. Tomatoes are flowering in the greenhouses, lettuce is hanging in with this heat. Space spinach starting to bolt but it's been in since last October and yielded extremely well. Transplanted sugar snap peas are in for CSA pick-your-own which starts at the end of the month. Asparagus not up yet but it's early and the mulch was put on pretty thick to avoid frost loss like last year. The last winter market in April was strong. Wholesale accounts are doing real well and are real local, within 4 miles of farm. Having some part time labor this season and it is nice. No pest issues yet except in one greenhouse where something has been munching the bok choy a bit. Still no flea beetles or grubs. Becoming a big fan of nematodes. Released some preventative green lacewing larva into the greenhouses. If it stays this dry aphids aren't going to be much of an issue though. Had 4 new fields tilled up, really excited for this season.

(S. Royalton) We need some rain. Beets, carrots, greens are out of the ground and starting to move. I am sick of using rye and vow that I'll not use it again. It is too damn hard to kill in the spring and it becomes the worst weed I have to deal with. Starting to transplant onions out and first planting of melons started in the greenhouse. With Early Queen not being offered any more I have to figure out another great tasting melon.

(W. Rutland) The garlic is up and looking great. The winter rye is 8 inches high and the four hoofed rats did not ruin it, even though they tried real hard. The ground warmed up so fast the potatoes are planted. It Id help a lot. And of course, what you re all waiting for, the critter report. Seems the woodchuck population is at an all time high. Holes and sightings are all over the farm. Since I am growing more peppers this year, now is the time to start planting several steel surprise packages. I kid you not, personally I have flagged 27 holes, that s a lot of chucks. Since the garlic planting has been doubled, a new curing area needs to be hoed out and readied. August will be here before you know it. Greenhouses are coming along well and the first shipments have been sent. Not sure how the entire flower season will be but seeing the economic indicators and the stock market are currently doing better, I am slightly optimistic.

(Tunbridge) I hate to say how nice the weather is in because that might trigger the pay back. I will just say that things are going well so far. Onions are in, taters are in, all the first rounds of greens are in. It is really pleasant not having to work in mud. Plants in the green house and cold frames like the sunny days. Basically this past week was a nice week to be a farmer.

(Hampton, NY/Fair Haven, VT) Everyone is planting corn and reseeding the fields while it is dry. Most fields that you can't normally get onto have been OK to work already. Rhubarb is up with lots of leaves but still pretty short. Few strawberries flowered but picked those few flowers because it is too early here to let them go since we don't have covers for them for frost. Honeyberry bushes are in full blossom and leafed out. Blueberries are getting ready to blossom and just the first leaves coming out on some of the plants. Grapes are breaking bud and the Raspberries are starting to leaf out and send

new shoots. Fruit trees are breaking bud also and some have a few leaves out. Ground is VERY dry ur watering system set up for the season yet. We have been working feverishly to clean and mulch every bed on the farm to get ahead of the weeds. And we plan to work the vegetable gardens over and get ready for planting in another week or two.

(Plainfield NH) Interesting weather we had last week. We hit 90 or very close to it for 4 days running, and a couple of those high temp days were accompanied by a 30 mph wind. It was pretty tough on trying to transplant anything in the greenhouse or field and we spent a lot of time watering. As a result, the dogwood blooms are gone by (they bloomed for about 20 minutes in that heat) and the

appearance until the 15th-20th of May) are unfurling. Welcome to New England.

Now that we are back to more seasonal temps the work continues at a more measured pace. The onion transplants are in, some lettuce and beet transplants out, and carrots, beet greens, peas, and greens like arugula have been seeded in the field. Hope to get our first corn direct-seeded within the next 4 days. We are trying to nurse the strawberries along with supplemental fertilizer and extra water (we are