Vermont Vegetable and Berry News June 9, 2009

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REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Cabot) June frost was dramatic. It was 32 degrees by 10 pm and 34 degrees with patchy frost at 5 am the next morning. It snowed for 20 minutes in the evening, no accumulation. A neighbor has a pretty heavy onion maggot problem. I've noticed 3 plants with maggots out of our third-of-an-acre field of onions, and some actual flies on chives in the garden. Not a lot to do at this point I guess. Strawberries pulled through the frost OK with some covering, but some blackened blossoms. Winter squash under row cover and hoops on plastic just squeaked by. Beets and parsnips look good. Hay crop is thin, with some fungus on grass. Clover looks good. Things are growing slowly and need heat.

(Montpelier) We missed the frost last week but not so lucky the with the previous ones. High winds have been the big issue this spring; causing a lot of trouble with the biotelo mulch and general havoc on the transplants and greenhouses, but everything is moving along nicely so far. Should have cherry tomatoes by the end of June. Our CSA goal came up short three shares this year. Farmer's Market in Barre is off to a good start, people seem very happy to have us in the old location. Wholesale accounts are doing fine, demand is good and I am seeing a lot of buy local support. Now if we could just get up to seasonal temperature

(Amherst MA) Still getting all of our summer plants in the ground as we were delayed by last Sunday nights' frost (May 31 is very late down here in the Pioneer Valley). The temps must be pretty cool as our spinach is a bumper - and it's been bad for a couple of years running. We opened our CSA distribution with a robust array of greens, lettuce, spinach and radishes. The Chinese cabbage, beets, hakkurei turnips, and strawberries are only days away. The flea beetles have been very bad on the brassicas, so much so that we tried Pyganic a couple of times and it seemed to have good control. We are also seeing a lot of black aphids on the spinach (which we've never seen before) with no idea what to do about that. Plenty of dry weather has made for excellent field prep conditions and luckily we have irrigation because we've needed it quite a lot already.

(Royalton) Galisse, Lollo Rossa, Nancy butterhead, Crispino iceberg lettuces that were planted as transplants on April 17 being harvested this week. Asparagus, marjoram, rhubarb, lovage, parsley and mint going strong. Strawberries and apples have

Users must provide the electric hook up. There is a \$75 delivery, pick up, and training fee for use of the unit. To receive more information, please contact Helen Labun Jordan at 828-3828 or Helen.jordan@state.vt.us. Details are also available at www.vermon

JUNE ON-FARM WORKSHOPS

Cosponsored by NOFA-VT, VT Vegetable & Berry Growers Assn. and UVM Extension Free for: VV&BGA Members and VOF Certified Farmers. Others: \$10 for NOFA members, \$15 for non-members.

Early Season Spinach Trials, June 10, 5-7pm, High Mowing Organic Seeds, Wolcott

The High Mowing Trial Gardens in Wolcott feature new and upcoming varieties that may be available as NOP organic seed in the future. This will be a great opportunity to connect with HMS staff and other growers to learn more about growing spinach, pests, and disease, breeding varieties and the current state of the spinach seed industry. In addition, High Mowing would like feedback and suggestions from professional growers to inform their selection of varieties available in future years. There will be a number of varieties in the field for review. This workshop is geared for professional growers. Presented by Heather Jerrett, R&D Trials Manager, Tom Stearns, President, and the HMS Sales Team.

Directions (do not go to our warehouse on Rt. 15). From Morrisville: Drive east on Rt15 through the town Wolcott. Take left onto East Hill Rd, at cemetery right outside of Wolcott town center. Follow up the hill and take right onto Marsh Rd near top of hill. Follow road a few miles until you see High Mowing greenhouses and parking signs. From Hardwick: Drive west on Rt15. Pass intersection of Rt14 N and follow for three miles. Watch for sign for blind turn onto Marsh Rd on right. Take right onto Marsh Rd. Follow Marsh road up hill, bear left at top of hill where road forks. You will see overlook of fields on left. Park in designated parking area at field entrance by the greenhouses.

Greenhouse Pest Management, Friday, June 12, 5-7pm, Killdeer Farm, Norwich

Jake and Liz Guest have been growing crops at Killdeer Farm for 29 years. Their 12 greenhouses produce their own vegetable transplants, as well as bedding plants, hanging baskets, and greenhouse tomatoes for retail sale at their farm stand. Jake relies on biological controls and cultural practices to manage pests like aphids, white flies, spider mites, and thrips. Margaret Skinner of the UVM Entomology Lab will join us for a discussion of scouting procedures, pest identification, and use of biorational greenhouse IPM strategies for managing pests. Directions: Take exit 13 (Norwich) off I-91 onto route 5 north. Stay on route 5 for about 2 ½ miles. Just after the vet clinic on left, turn left onto Butternut Road. The farm is at end of road.

Zone-tillage demonstration, June 17th, 5-7pm, Clearbrook Farm, Shaftsbury

(This event is free to all.) Zone tillage is a relatively new type of tillage for vegetable crops that has been developed to address soil health - especially compaction issues. It involves a subsoiler (with deep zone tillage) and sets of coulters followed by baskets to cut up residues and create a seedbed for planting into. Growers in NY and CT are finding that zone tillage is a faster way to prepare fields for crops like sweet corn than conventional plowing and harrowing.

Join Chuck Bornt of Cornell Cooperative Extension's Capital District Vegetable Program as he demonstrates the zone-till unit and explains how to optimize its performance. Andy Knafel of Clearbrook Farm has some different types of ground cover to test the zone-tiller on, and he will plant corn into the test plots so we can see how it does this season. Directions: meet at the Farm Stand, located 5mi. north of Bennington and 7mi. south of Manchester on Rt. 7A in Shaftsbury.

Commercial Organic Strawberry Production