



Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – August 14, 2012
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

(Montpelier) Many interesting insects are enjoying feeding on vegetables. Crops in abundance. Having to work a bit harder to move product this summer. A fair amount of wholesale competition as well as home gardener competition. Value added product continues to add to sales and gives me the ability to process excess product and inventory it for later. It does present some cash flow challenges. That said the farm is looking to be in excellent shape and we are shifting gears into beginning fall and winter production. CSA continues to run well with some hiccups here and there but member satisfaction remains high. Starting to see some disease in house tomatoes but have been able to stay ahead of it.

(Craftsbury) Blueberry season commenced on July 19 and with just one rainout and has proceeded nicely since. The crop yield is 12% higher than the same time last year and visitors are up 10%. The berries are healthy, plump and pest free. We hope to pick through August.

(Proctorsville) Brassicas are abundant, available fourth week in a row for CSA members. Broccoli bolted earlier than normal due to earlier heat. Harvests of many crops are numerous and/or early; the 'late' crops are not so late. Armyworm has arrived but isn't terrible yet; they are staying on grass in the main field and haven't made their way to the corn, which will be ready to harvest soon. Early blight has affected our potatoes so some must be harvested

(Burlington) Although

Not many diseases; the copper/serenade preventative sprays may have helped. Just started seeing downy mildew on basil and hoping there is a control soon, haven't seen anything for that. Onion/shallot crop is the best in years and we now have too many sweet onions all at once. Red and storage onions are still finishing off. The markets remain strong but we need a larger labor force to keep up, especially as we start production for three large high tunnels for winter growing. The best spinach for us over the summer in the tunnels as well as in the field has been Reflect, which doesn't seem to be

The usual blossom end rot showing up, and some bacterial canker in greenhouses on heirlooms. If you see wilting of plants that don't recover, skin the 'bark' off the stem and look for the diagnostic browning in the vascular tissue. It is very easy to see. Pull out any infected plants and dispose of away from the greenhouse. Watch the plants next to the infected one for new symptoms.

Broccoli and Cauliflower: Swede midge damage in Burlington, diagnostic dead and rotting growing points, curling and puckering of leaves and scarring on the stems. Some comments from Andy Jones at the Intervale "Swede midge is an emerging pest in Vermont and New England. Introduced to North America in Ontario about 10 years ago, it is slowly spreading throughout the region. It feeds on the growing points of Brassicas, forming galls and stunting their growth, and has several generations a year. I have a particular interest in the pest, as ours was the first farm in the state where it was identified in 2006. We've suffered complete losses of our late summer and early autumn broccoli crops in many years since, and damage to many other planting slots. It also affects other Brassicas, in minor to major ways. Chief among the control problems is that the adult flies are hard to target and kill, and the larvae, which do the actual damage, are sequestered so far inside the plant that you can't reach them with sprays. For that reason it is of particular concern to organic growers, as only systemic materials have any demonstrated efficacy. Likewise, rotation can help, but small diversified growers with a limited land base are going to have a hard time out-rotating it. While it may not be a problem yet on your farm, it is spreading throughout the Champlain valley, with populations now noted in Charlotte, Hinesburg, and Fairfax as well as Burlington. Projections are that it will eventually become endemic throughout most of the northern tier states."

Peppers: Fusarium canker on pepper showed up last week. Large sunken areas on stems causing wilt and death.

Basil: downy mildew showing up; it looks like a nutritional problem on the upper side of the leaf (yellowing) but it looks like dirt on the undersides of the leaves. Hard to manage and major crop losses result.

http://www.longislandhort.cornell.edu/vegpath/photos/downymildew_basil.htm.

Cucurbits: scab on zucchini, small circular fruit lesions are showing up on fruit with green/black with fungal spores. http://vegetablemdonline.ppath.cornell.edu/factsheets/Cucurbit_Scab.htm. Wilting in squash seems to be the major problem of the last 2 weeks. Lots of things can cause this; bacterial wilt is common, especially with high populations of cucumber beetles earlier this summer.

Before you chalk up the wilt to bacterial disease, check the crown of the plant for squash vine borer (need to split the stem longitudinally since you don't always see the telltale frass.) If this