

Vermont Vegetable and Berry News – August 18, 2014
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REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

(Rochester) We captured a few male SWD on 8/17, in both summer and fall raspberries and in early blueberries (Patriot). There were no captures in our later blueberries (Blue Ray and Jersey).

(Warren) Still no major disasters. The biggest issue we are having this season is keeping up with harvesting and finding storage space. Shallots are the size of onions and onions are the size of softballs. Really solid too. Tomatoes are cranking out of high tunnels and every last one is getting sold. High tunnel red peppers are in. I think that's my favorite crop. Potatoes are starting to die back and are looking really clean. Salad greens are still cranking along but it's getting harder and harder to find the time to seed them every week. Hoping to start seeding winter cover of oats and peas this week.

(Williston) We have had plenty of rain here in Northwestern VT. Slugs and snails are plentiful along with lots of weeds, and some mushroom growth in straw mulched rows. Downy mildew hit my basil; I need to pull it but basil in hoophouse is clean so far. Fields will be seeded down to pea/oats/vetch for fall/winter cover crop. Japanese beetles still present but hand picking reduced their numbers. Farmers market sales are holding on but numbers of people are down. Value-added product sales are a bit slow but increase dramatically when doing demos. Regrowth has been good in herbs and I have not had to irrigate much. Eggplants are done in hoophouse; put in some purple basil to see what happens. Garlic is all harvested and drying. Size was good but not outstanding like a few years ago. Cold weather this past winter did not seem to bother it, they mulched with straw. Cherry tomatoes have been producing great this season. I sprayed Dipel in early August at the first sign of frass and was amazed at how many hornworms there were in plants! Dipel was very effective! Winterbor kale transplants look great which will follow hoophouse tomatoes in early September. I had powdery mildew in tarragon and rosemary so sprayed Milstop. The next time I went to harvest the tarragon all the areas that had mildew were black. Not sure if I sprayed too heavy but last time I sprayed I used same dose. Rosemary was not affected and still had some mildew. Overall good season with sales just down a bit.

(Plainfield NH) We have dodged some pretty foul weather this summer that has pounded some others. The fairly moist summer favored our sandy soils, but in our fall cucurbits on some heavy ground we have suffered a crop failure. Onion crop is wonderful; tops on many varieties still upright and booking. I hope they die down soon before the summer help leaves. Late blight is not a problem here. Downey mildew on basil, hoppers in mums and new planting of beans, Erwinia in a couple of my potato varieties, PM on cucurbits-- signs of where we are in the season. A cool season has resulted in variable brix levels in the melons, but the set and overall quality are good. Corn has been great with good flavor and the cool temps have allowed us to keep up with it. Wrapping up blueberry harvest, and now the gargantuan task of summer pruning and beating back the weeds that got a foothold during harvest. Summer raspberries all pruned up and looking good; Autumn Britten and Caroline are coming in. SWD has not shown up in any appreciable numbers either in the Extension traps or the USDA sphere experiment. Historically we have not built high numbers until late September. Lucky, I guess. Sales good this summer, starting to flag a bit now as the schools ramp up and the tourists head back to work.

(Monkton) This is our first year with a high tunnel for tomatoes and I am loving it. Sprayed with copper when we heard late blight was in Mass. and so far it seems effective, though we do have Alternaria in our single bed of heirlooms and Sungolds. We spend a lot of time wiping the fruit before sale, but I think it's worth it. Onions are drying in the barn, and the garlic crop was stellar. Our Brassicas are heavily damaged by swede midge, which seems to move around. Fall cauliflower is so far unaffected, but kale of all varieties is suffering.

(Brookline) SWD are causing moderate damage, really time to take action. It's that time of year I fear. If we can dry out it would be nice. We have seen that light to moderate SWD damage for three plus wee

Beets: Leaf spotting fungal diseases on the rise with wet weather. The same guidelines apply for spraying the beets as the carrots. Early preventative sprays would have the most effect. Plow down crops as soon as they are finished to slow spread.

<https://extension.umass.edu/vegetable/articles/cercospora-leaf-spot-swiss-chard-beets-and-spinach>

Cucurbits: