



UMASS
EXTENSION



Vegetable Notes

For Vegetable Farmers in Massachusetts

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CROP CONDITIONS

This past week's cool dry weather has solved some problems – fields are drying out, leaves are no longer wet for days at a time. As soils warm up, soil organic matter releases nutrients and overall crop growth is picking up. Crops had wet roots for so long that root growth was stunted and plants have little tolerance for dry conditions. All the rain has leached nitrogen out of most fields, so crops that haven't filled in yet could benefit from sidedressing. Fruiting crops, squashes and corn still need a good steady dose of summer heat instead of 50 degree nights and 70 degree days. Peppers seem to have been the hardest hit by the cold, wet June, and are still spindly as they start to put on flowers and fruit. Many fruiting crops and squashes are shifting to fruiting stage even when they don't have the growth and size to support good fruit production. Sweet corn is late, but most sweet corn growers have something to sell by now. Summer squash

and zucchini are producing, though not as fast as usual for this time of year and sometimes with poor quality, distorted fruit. New potatoes are being harvested. The good news: prices are great – as long as you have product ready to pick and sell!

The pattern of planting and growth in succession crops and even full-season crops like winter squash and pumpkin is extremely varied. Crops that got a good start before June are not too far behind what is 'typical' for this time of year, but those that were planted in early June or planted late because of the wet period may push up against the limits of the growing season come fall. It's certainly a year to hope for a warm fall!

Late blight has been found in field tomatoes in Hampden and Middlesex counties in MA, and is being reported in every state that borders Massachusetts. See late blight update, below. UMass Disease Diagnostic Lab correct phone number is 413-545-3209.

Colorado potato beetle and flea beetles are in a lull following the end of the first generation. Emergence of the summer adults will begin soon; watch eggplant, Brassicas and potato. European corn borer is about to begin second generation flight. Potato leafhoppers are building up in potato and beans, and producing nymphs – look on the underside of leaves to find them. In cucurbit crops, watch for powdery mildew and Plectosporium, which first show up in zucchini and summer squash especially on lower leaves of the first planting. They have not been reported yet, but often show up around the end of July, especially if we get 'summer heat'. According to the NCSU forecast, the risk for downy mildew in vine crops is still low.

LATE BLIGHT UPDATE

Late blight was confirmed on field tomatoes in Hampden and Middlesex counties in MA this week. It is being reported in states that borders Massachusetts: CT, NH, RI, NY. It is being found most often in tomato, but is showing up in potato as well and can infect both crops. In the Connecticut Valley region of Connecticut, the disease is building up and has been found on at least five farms out of ten that were visited last week. This is a Phytophthora disease, a water mold like downy mildew and Phytophthora capsici. Its hosts include tomato, potato, and solanaceous weeds like nightshade. The spores of late blight move easily on the wind and can infect fields that are miles away from the source. Once infections begin, a field can be lost to this disease in less than a week. You should assume that all tomato and potato fields are at risk. It's

fortunate to have a spell of drier weather. Still, commercial growers should be on fungicide program that includes both protectants and systemics. Systemics have translaminar or curative properties, but the pathogen can develop resistance rapidly so don't rotate at least two different systemic products. Mix with protectants to help prevent resistance, such as chlorothalonil or mancozeb/manzate (note 5 dh interval on tomatoes). Organic growers are limited to copper products, which are protectant fungicides with limited efficacy against late blight. Champ WG and NuCop 50 W.

Continue to scout potatoes and tomatoes regularly. If you suspect late blight, call the UMass Disease Diagnostic Lab for confirmation: 413-545-3209.

The following list of effective late blight fungicides was prepared for the UConn Vegetable IPM program pest alert by Jude Boucher:

Curzate is a systemic Group 27 Fungicide that can provide up to 2 days of kickback or burnout action when temperatures are cool, but not if temperatures are over 80 degrees. That means it will actually destroy late blight lesions that have formed up to 2 days earlier, which can make all the difference when dealing with a disease that spreads as quickly as this one does. The problem is that it only lasts a few days and should be followed by an application of a different mix in only 5 days. Curzate has a 3 dh restriction on tomatoes and 14 dh on potatoes. It should be mixed with chlorothalonil or manzate/maneb.

Tanos is a premix of the active ingredient in Curzate and a group 11 strobiluron fungicide similar to Flint, Quadris or Cabrio. The group 11 fungicide is added to help stretch the activity of the Curzate active ingredient. Again you should make your next application 5-7 days later. Tanos has a 3dh restriction on tomatoes and 14dh on potatoes. It should be mixed with chlorothalonil, maneb/mancozeb or copper.

Previcur Flex is a systemic product that has performed well on downy mildew on cucurbit crops, which is another water mold and a near relative to late blight. It has a 5dh restriction on tomatoes and 14 dh restriction on potatoes. It can also be used twice on greenhouse tomatoes and has just a 2dh restriction in the greenhouse. Previcur Flex should also be mixed with chlorothalonil or maneb/mancozeb in the field, but not in the greenhouse.

Presidio is a new systemic fungicide that has not yet been widely tested against late blight in the field, but which is supposed to work very well on other water molds. It also claims to have some curative or kickback action. It has a 2dh restriction on tomatoes but is not registered on potatoes. The label calls for 10 day intervals between sprays and recommends mixing it with a protectant, but doesn't specify which ones are safe to prevent phytotoxicity.

Gavel is a premix that contains both a systemic and a mancozeb type product, so it does not need to be mixed with another protectant. However, the label states that a Latron surfactant should be added for maximum spray coverage during high disease pressure.

Ranman is not a systemic, but is labeled specifically for late blight and has performed well in tests and in previous years on some strains of downy mildew in Connecticut. Best of all, it has a 0dh restriction on tomatoes and just a 7dh restriction on potatoes. The label recommends adding either an organosilicon adjuvant or a non-ionic surfactant for maximum spray coverage.

You should also be aware that the other strobiluron group 11 fungicides such as Flint, Quadris, or Cabrio, are not rated very highly for late blight control and are not expected to hold off the disease with the pressure we are facing this season. Copper is really the only choice that organic growers have but unfortunately it also is not rated highly against late blight.

UPDATE ON RESEARCH ON ETHNIC CROPS, PART II

Research and Extension activities are in full swing at the UMass Research Farm in S. Deerfield, on cooperating farms and in markets in Massachusetts and the Northeast. Customers are beginning to see these crops in their markets now. This is the second part of an article in a series on these crops.

Okra (Quiabo) (*Abelmoschus esculentus*). Okra is a warm-season crop, called "quiabo" in Portuguese, that is very popular in many parts of Brazil, among many other countries. It is originally from India and was introduced to Brazil with the slave trade. The plant can get 7 feet tall, depending on the variety.

Frango com Quiabo (chicken with okra) is a Brazilian dish that is especially famous in the state of Minas Gerais, the state of origin of a very high percentage of Brazilians living in the US. Fresh Okra is a popular ingredient in which the highly viscous mucilage provides fiber, protein and vitamin C in the diet.

Okra is frost sensitive and needs to be put in the field after any chance of frost. It can be started from seed or as a transplant – it is recommended to grow from transplant in Massachusetts for early harvest. It should be grown for 4 – 6 weeks in the greenhouse before planting into the field. Flowering will occur as soon as 45 days after seeding, depending on the variety, and pods are ready for harvest 4 to 5 days after flowering. As pod size increases, tenderness decreases. Most varieties will lose their tenderness, desired by the market, when they exceed 3 inches in length. For this reason okra plantings must be picked almost every other day. It has a single main stem, making them easier to pick but prickly hairs on the okra pod can cause skin irritation, so gloves and long sleeves are recommended for harvest.

In 2009, research on okra is focusing on evaluating the most popular varieties and optimum densities for our climate.

Chipilín (*Crotalaria longirostrata*). Chipilín is a leguminous plant used as an herb in Central America and Southern Mexico. In parts of Mexico it is also known as Chepil, which might be a different variety or possibly species. It is a perennial crop that can be grown as an annual in temperate climates such as Massachusetts. Chipilín is a staple in El Salvador and Guatemala where it is used in soups and tomares – it has a distinctive aroma and flavor that is released when cooked. It is never eaten raw.

Research began on this crop at the UMass Research Farm in Deerfield in 2006 with seed from the Salvadoran Ministry of Agriculture (through USDA). The plant grows well in our climate, but was severely affected by potato leaf hopper (*Empoasca fabae*). This insect severely damage the leaves which makes it unmarketable. Research continued in 2007 and 2008 to evaluate cultural practices, with an emphasis on management of potato leaf hopper.

The most effect management system for this insect has been the use of row cover in combination with pyganic (pyrethrin). Pyganic will give short-term control, with very little residual, so the use of row cover after spraying the pyganic is essential, based on our trials. The use of row cover will increase yield through higher temperatures, but will also add higher production costs.

The focus of our work in 2009 is to work with two cooperating farmers to produce and market chipilín, based on successful market work in 2008, and to continue to evaluate the market potential beyond Massachusetts. Markets in metro New York City are being canvassed for potential sales this season. Hunts Point, the terminal market in New York, is only 2.5 hours from Deerfield MA.

Postharvest strategies for tropical vegetable crops. Good postharvest techniques are critical to ensure that fresh produce harvested in the field arrives at the retail or wholesale markets in good quality. There has been no previous research implemented to evaluate postharvest practices for taioba, chipilin, and maxixe. There has been postharvest work in okra, given its importance in the Southern US and other countries, but not for commercial operations in Massachusetts.

Dr. Fernando Finger, a visiting professor of postharvest physiology from the Federal University of Viçosa in Brazil, is taking the lead on evaluating postharvest strategies for these crops that can be used by cooperating farmers in Massachusetts. These strategies, in addition to all of the cultural and pest management practices developed based on this research, will be available at www.worldcrops.org.

Use of High Tunnel. We purchased a used “high tunnel” (actually a car port) from a commercial farm and set it up at the UMass Research Farm to evaluate the growth and production of these ethnic crops in this environment. Given that they are all truly tropical, like tomatoes, we felt they would respond well in a high tunnel. The crops described above were put into the high tunnel in mid-May, two weeks before being put in the field. The taioba and maxixe produced marketable leaves/fruit three weeks before field production, and they seem to be the best suited to the high tunnel. They have especially benefited from this cool, wet spring/early summer by being protected from the rain and averaging about 15°F higher temperatures during the day compared to outside.

- Frank Mangan, UMass Extension

ECB, APHIDS AND PEPPER MAGGOT IN PEPPERS

Pepper maggot fly (*Zonosemata electa*), which is closely related to the apple maggot fly, has one generation per year. It is typically a problem in southern New England, including southeastern Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. However in 2006, it showed up and caused crop losses as far north as New Hampshire. Its range seems to be expanding. Pepper maggot fly activity has always tended to be quite localized. It varies by farm, by region, and by year. Many farms never have a problem with this pest. Some may have it and not realize it, because it is possible to confuse maggot damage with damage caused by European corn borer. Check infested fruit carefully for proper identification. If a given farm has a history of pepper maggot activity, and pepper maggot fly has been captured nearby, then it is recommended that an insecticide be applied on that farm. Farms that have never had a problem with this pest generally do not need to be concerned.



Pepper Maggot Egg-Laying Scars

Adult pepper maggots emerge in mid to late July and are active for several weeks. Flies are smaller than a house fly, bright yellow with three yellow stripes on the thorax, green eyes, and clear wings with a distinct banding pattern. Females insert their eggs directly into the pepper fruit. The legless white maggots feed and tunnel inside the fruit, especially in the placenta. Maggots reach about ½ inch in length over a period of about two weeks, and have no distinct head capsule. When they are ready to pupate, they exit at the blossom end, leaving tiny round exit holes. These holes allow for the entry of pathogens into the fruit. Sometimes the oval brown pupae can be found inside the fruit. Often damage is detected only because of premature ripening or decay of the fruit.

Pepper Maggot Monitoring: Hot cherry peppers placed in the border rows can also be used as indicator plants. The egg-laying stings appear as depressions or scars and are easy to find on these small, round fruit. These stings may also be found on bell peppers. By timing insecticide applications with the first occurrence of the stings on the indicator plants fruit, damage to the main crop can be avoided. Pepper maggot threshold: If stings are observed on fruit, make two insecticide applications, 10-14 days apart, with a material labeled for pepper maggot. Dimethoate and acephate products (eg, Orthene) give the most effective control.



ECB Larvae in Pepper Fruit

European Corn Borer

The second generation of European corn borer moths will be starting soon. It is the second flight, which usually begins the third or fourth week of July, which causes damage to pepper fruit.

ECB Damage in Pepper. Moths lay flat, white egg masses on the underside of leaves. Eggs hatch in 4-9 days, depending on temperature. ECB caterpillars are whitish or gray with a pattern of dark spots and a black or dark brown head. This dark head capsule distinguishes them from pepper maggots, which are completely white. Young larvae usually enter the fruit by tunneling under the cap. They leave a pile of light brown frass on the surface. Often this is the only indication that a pepper is infested

until two or three weeks after the borer enters, when bacterial soft rot causes the fruit to decay.

ECB monitoring: Flight is detected by placing two white nylon mesh Heliiothis Scentry™ traps in weedy areas near pepper fields. Traps should be placed 50-100 feet apart with the base at the top of the weed canopy. Bait one trap with a lure for the Iowa strain (Z I) and the other with a lure for the New York strain (E II), as both of these strains occur throughout New England. Check traps once or twice a week from the third week of July.

ECB threshold: Insecticide applications should begin one week after trap counts reach 7 per week (or one per night). This week delay provides an ample time margin, because mating, egg-laying and egg hatch must occur before the larvae can enter the fruit. During the period when ECB moths are active, a regular schedule of insecticide applications should be maintained. This flight period usually lasts through August. At the end of the flight, when trap captures drop below 20 per week, insecticides should no longer be needed.

Insecticides for ECB. The intervals recommended for insecticide applications depend on the active ingredient used as well as the pest pressure. There are currently a lot of options for insecticides. Acephate products (7dh) can be used at 10-day intervals; synthetic pyrethroids (products range from 1 to 7 dh) and spinosad (Spintor or Entrust, 1dh) or spinoteram (Radiant SC, 1dh) at 7-day intervals; and *Bacillus thuringiensis* products twice weekly. Chlorantraniliprole (Coragen) is a new product that is effective both through drip application and as a foliar spray. Insect growth regulators include Intrepid 2F (1dh) and Confirm (7dh), and can be used at 7-10 day intervals; they must be ingested so ensure good coverage of foliage and fruit. Avaunt is another effective caterpillar control (3dh), labeled for bell pepper only. Use of selective products will conserve the natural enemies that keep aphids under control. This includes spinosad, Bt, Confirm, Intrepid, Coragen, and Avaunt. Do not rely entirely on one product or chemical family, to prevent resistance. If you are concerned about pepper maggot, use of Acephate product for the first ECB spray will also control the end of pepper maggot flight. For more details check the 2006-2007 New England Vegetable Management Guide . The online edition, www.nevegetable.org, has current, updated pesticide information.

Aphids

Aphids fly into pepper fields in June and July. The most common species is green peach aphid (*Aphis gossypii*), which is light green, yellow green, or pink, with no distinctive markings. Aphids can easily be seen with the naked eye, but a 10X hand lens allows you to observe them more clearly. Wingless females use their piercing-sucking mouthparts to feed on the underside of leaves. Females produce smaller, light-green nymphs, which feed in clusters nearby.

Most of the time, beneficial insects such as ladybeetles and lacewings keep aphid numbers under control in peppers. By avoiding unnecessary insecticide applications, these natural enemies can be conserved. Use of broad-spectrum insecticides, particularly synthetic pyrethroids, to control other pests may cause aphid outbreaks. High numbers cause a buildup of sticky honeydew secretions on leaves and fruit.

Green peach aphids can vector viruses such as cucumber mosaic virus (CMV). Insecticides are not effective in controlling these viruses because the transmission occurs rapidly at low population numbers.

Aphid monitoring: From mid June to September, examine the underside of four leaves per plant on 25 plants chosen at random. Count aphids found. Calculate the average aphids per leaf (divide total by 100).

Aphid threshold: 10 per leaf. If five per leaf are found, check again within a week to determine if numbers are rising or falling.

See also the Northeast Pepper IPM Manual, available from UConn Extension.

-R. Hazzard and A. Cavanagh, University of Massachusetts

GARLIC HARVEST, CURING AND STORAGE

Garlic production has gained a strong foothold on diversified vegetable farms in New England for sale through CSA's, farmstands, farmer's markets and occasionally for wholesale. Mid to late July is harvest season, and it's important not to wait too long for harvest. The ideal timing attains maximum bulb size (bulb size doubles in the last stage of growth) but does not allow the cloves to begin to separate. Separated bulbs sell and store poorly. Harvest when leaves begin to turn yellow, but when about 60% are still green. Check bulbs to determine when they are ready.

Use hand tools to loosen soil under the bulbs or a mechanical harvester to undercut the bed. Pulling bulbs out when they are tight in the ground can open wounds at the stem/ bulb junction and allow infection. Treat the bulbs like eggs or apples: they bruise easily! Don't knock off dirt by banging bulbs against boots, shovels, or buckets – shake or rub gently, and leave the



rest to dry out during curing. Fresh bulbs are fragile. Bruises will encourage infection.

Most growers will store their garlic for a period of weeks or months before selling. Curing is important for successful storage. Curing in the field runs the risk of sunscald, while poorly ventilated barns can result in loss from disease. Avoid high temperatures (over 90 F) and bright sunlight. A hoophouse covered with a sunshade cloth, with sides and ends open, with bulbs placed roots-up on 1" wire mesh, and maybe even a fan running, will provide for rapid curing. A well-ventilated barn will also work, but be sure that bulbs are hung with adequate air circulation, or on open racks up off the floor. Curing takes 10-14 days. Stems may be cut before or after curing. Curing is complete when the outer skins are dry and crispy, the neck is constricted and the center of the cut stem is hard.

Optimum storage temperature for garlic for seed is 50 F with a humidity of 65-70%. Garlic cloves sprout most rapidly between 40 to 50 F, hence prolonged storage at this temperature range should be avoided. Storage of planting stock at temperatures below 40 F results in rough bulbs, side-shoot sprouting (witches-brooming) and early maturity, while storage above 65 F results in delayed sprouting and late maturity.

Store other garlic just above freezing (32 - 35 F) and 60 to 70 % relative humidity. If in good condition, and well cured when stored, garlic should keep for 6 to 7 months at 32 F. Relative humidity should be lower than for most vegetables because high humidity causes root and mold growth; on the other hand, if it is too dry the bulbs will dehydrate. Storage at higher temperatures (60 °F) may be adequate for the short term, but it is important to select a place with proper relative humidity and good air flow.

Separate and discard bulbs that show symptoms of disease. Bulb diseases include Fusarium, which causes a reddish streaking on the stem and clove plates, and splitting of the bulb. Because many growers save their own seed, taking care to avoid carrying disease from one year to the next is critical.

-R Hazzard. Resources: New England Vegetable Mgt Guide, Oregon State, ATTRA, Wishngstone Farm, Pratt Farm.

SWEET CORN

Some growers are harvesting large amounts of corn from their early plantings but many are still hand picking ears here and there for their farm stands. Hopefully the warm temperatures that are forecasted for the weekend will encourage ear development and silk production where needed.

The second flight of European corn borer has not begun as of yet. We are still seeing some large borers left over from the first generation that are feeding in the tassels but no fields were above threshold this week. We can expect the second flight to begin within the next two weeks. If you are planning to monitor for ECB in your pepper fields now would be the time to get your traps up around the edges of your pepper fields. Corn earworm does not appear to be showing up in the northeast yet but could arrive at any time. Remember to monitor for CEW flight on your own farm in fields with fresh silk. Trap counts can jump overnight and sprays must be timed to prevent larvae from entering the ears. Once flight begins we can assume egg laying has begun and that hatch will occur in 2 to ten days. Once caterpillars hatch they tunnel into ears by moving down the silks. Once they are in the ear, caterpillars can not be reached with insecticide sprays. Sprays should target the silks where caterpillars are hatching and

Location	Z1	EII	Total	AVG
CT Valley				
South Deerfield	0	0	0	0
Deerfield	0	0	0	0
Sunderland	0	0	0	0
Hadley (1)	0	0	0	0.5
Hadley (2)	0	0	0	0
Granby	0	0	0	0
Central & Eastern MA				
Lancaster	0	0	0	0
Tyngsboro	0	1	0	0
Concord	0	0	0	0
Northbridge	0	0	0	0
Leicester	0	0	0	0
Rehobeth	0	0	0	0
NH				
Litchfield, NH	0	1	1	13
Hollis, NH	0	0	0	0
Mason, NH	0	0	0	0

Corn Earworm Threshold		
Moths/Night	Moths/Week	Spray Interval
0-0.2	0-1.4	no spray
0.3-0.5	1.5-3.5	every 6 days
0.6-1	3.6-7	every 5 days
1.1-13.0	7.1-91	every 4 days
Over 13	Over 91	every 3 days

feeding before they enter the ears. See threshold table below for spray guidelines.

No fall armyworm flight has been detected in the state either but we are expecting to see it start along the coastal areas within the next weeks or so. FAW flights are sporadic and difficult to predict, and do not necessarily correspond with corn earworm flights so monitoring with pheromone traps is very helpful.

- Amanada Brown, UMass Extension

BEGINNING FARMER PRODUCTION & MARKETING TRAINING

Friday, July 31 – Saturday, August 1, 2009

Lancaster, MA

Who should attend? Farmers, gardeners, state and local officials involved or interested in agriculture, nutritionists and health educators, and organizations working with immigrants.

Registration: Registration is free and open to all. There will be a (\$30) per person fee for attending dinner on Friday, and for transportation and lunch (\$20) on Saturday.

Event Details, including registration form: Visit our website at www.flatsmentorfarm.org

Highlights of this event:

On the field hands-on trainings: vermicomposting; Farmer led tours of Asian crops at FMF; Cultural lunch on Friday on the field; Cultural Sharing dinner with Hmong, Portuguese and African dancing; Market visits

Agenda for 2009 Program

Friday, July 31st, 2009

8:00 - 9:00 AM – Registration and Introductions

9:00 - 12:00 PM Developing Vermicomposting Systems: Farmers from FMF will share the lessons learned from Will Allen of Growing Power for the past four years (worm kit is included).

12:00 - 2:00 PM Lunch: Will include veggies fresh from our farm, goat African style, Pig Roast Hmong style. Attendants will have the opportunity to talk with farmers and presenters during lunch.

2:00 - 4:00 PM Small Crop Production (attendants will learn about production while touring the farm)

Crop Production: Frank Mangan, UMass Plant, Soil and Insect Sciences with Mr. Vue, at his farm plot.

Pest Management: Ruth Hazzard, UMass Extension with Sheng Lor, at her farm plot.

Growing for Farmers Markets: Nou Yang, FMF Farmer at his farm plot.

6:30 - 10:00 PM

Dinner: Hudson Portuguese Club Riverview in Hudson, MA. All food will be local including vegetables from our farm. Performances: Hmong, African and Portuguese cultural dancers.

Saturday, August 1st, 2009

7:30 AM - 11:30 AM Marketing: Visiting urban farmers' market (Dorchester) and wholesale market (Watertown) where farmers from Flats Mentor Farm sell their produce.

12:00 – 1:00 PM Lunch (Hudson Portuguese Club Pavilion)

1:00 – 3:00 Food Systems – Innovative Marketing Opportunities for Beginning Farmers

Sheng Lor- FMF Farmer - Developing and marketing a value added product at a farmers market in Massachusetts

Terrie Bad Hand and Pati Martinson, Taos County Economic Development Corp - Assessing the need of beginning farmers for Mobile Meat Processing - A four legged USDA inspected mobile processing facility.

Ali Berlow- IGI- Developing a sustainable mobile two-legged processing unit that fills the needs of both the farmers and their markets.

3:00- 4:00 Next Steps

Adjourn

If you would like to become a Vegetable notes sponsor, please contact Jessica Dizek at jdizek@outreach.umass.edu or 413 545 1445

Vegetable Notes. Ruth Hazzard, editor and Amanda Brown and Andrew Cavanagh, assistant editors. Vegetable Notes is published weekly from May to September and at intervals during the off-season, and includes contributions from the faculty and staff of the UMass Extension Vegetable Program, other universities and USDA agencies, growers, and private IPM consultants. Authors of articles are noted; author and photographer is R. Hazzard if none is cited.

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