

Grower experiences with Phytophthora blight

John Hand, Hand Melon Farm. Greenwich, NY

Dan Henry, W.D. Henry & Sons, Inc., Eden, NY

This session will feature talks and discussion with two New York vegetable growers who have extensive experience managing Phytophthora blight on their farms.

John Hand graduated Cornell in 1984 with a BS in General Studies in Agriculture. Upon graduation, he joined his father in operating the Hand Melon Farm, raising vegetables and small fruits. He then assumed full management of the business in 1990 after his father's passing. Currently, the farm raises 50 acres of sweet corn, 8 acres of strawberries, 3 acres of blueberries, and about 25 acres of assorted vegetables, including 8 of pumpkins and fall ornamentals. The vegetables are all on raised beds with plastic and trickle irrigation.

Dan Henry is co-owner of W.D. Henry & Sons, Inc. – a fifth generation family farm located in Eden, NY. They grow, pack and ship a variety of fresh market vegetables and operate approximately three acres of greenhouses that produce flowers, cuttings and vegetable transplants on a year-round basis.

Experiences with Phytophthora at W.D. Henry & Sons:

- We have been battling Phytophthora in our vegetable fields for several decades.
- Primarily in bell peppers, eggplant and cucurbits
- We have experimented with and implemented a number of different practices to combat the disease and prevent it from spreading to other fields.
- There is no set “recipe for success” when dealing with Phytophthora as every year and field is unique. The key is to have basic best practices in place on your farm and have as many tools in your toolbox as possible to fight it.