



# New York Berry News

Volume 11, Number 10

November 19, 2012

## Events Calendar

**December 4-6, 2012.** *Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market EXPO*, DeVos Place Convention Center, Grand Rapids, MI. For more information: [www.glexpo.com](http://www.glexpo.com).

**January 22-24, 2013.** *Empire State Producers EXPO*, OnCenter, Syracuse NY. Day-long berry session Tuesday 1/22/13 and blueberry intensive Wednesday morning 1/23/13. More information follows below. To register: <http://nysvga.org/expo/info>.

**January 27-30, 2013.** *North American Strawberry Growers Associations*, Portland OR. More information: Kevin Schooley, 613-258-4587, [info@nasga.org](mailto:info@nasga.org) or [www.nasga.org](http://www.nasga.org).

**January 28-30, 2013.** *North American Raspberry and Blackberry/Strawberry Growers Association*, Portland OR. More information: 919-542-4037, [info@raspberrylblackberry.com](mailto:info@raspberrylblackberry.com).

**January 29-31, 2013.** *Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention*, Hershey, PA. More information: William Troxell, 717-694-3596, [pvgga@pvga.org](mailto:pvgga@pvga.org) or [www.mafvc.com](http://www.mafvc.com).

**February 27 – March 1, 2013 –** *US Highbush Blueberry Council Spring Meeting*, in Savannah, GA. More information: 916-983-0111 or [www.blueberry.org](http://www.blueberry.org).

**March 13, 2013 –** *Cape Cod Cranberry Growers' Association Winter Meeting*, in Hyannis, MA. More information: 508-866-7878, [info@cranberries.org](mailto:info@cranberries.org), or [www.cranberries.org](http://www.cranberries.org).

**June 17-19, 2013 –** *Berry Health Benefits Symposium*, in Concord, NC. Join leading researchers and industry leaders to learn about the newest research in this field. Held biennially; this fourth Symposium will be the first time the event has been held on the East Coast. For more information, contact [catmc@peak.org](mailto:catmc@peak.org). Info about the 2011 Symposium may be found at [www.berryhealth.org](http://www.berryhealth.org).

**December 4-7, 2013 –** *Joint North Carolina Strawberry Growers Association and North American Strawberry Growers Association Conference*, Sheraton Imperial Hotel, Durham, North Carolina. More information: [info@ncstrawberry.com](mailto:info@ncstrawberry.com) or [www.ncstrawberry.com](http://www.ncstrawberry.com).

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## 2013 Empire State Producers EXPO Berry Sessions – Something for Everyone...

Join commercial berry growers from across the state on Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> and Wednesday January 23<sup>rd</sup> for berry education sessions at the Empire State Producers EXPO held at the OnCenter in Syracuse, NY.

### Special Joint Spotted Wing Drosophila Session

Day one of the day and a half long program begins with a special joint fruit and vegetable session on the new invasive pest Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD). This pest was first detected in NY at the end of the 2011 growing season and caused significant damage and crop loss to berries across the state and region in 2012. SWD causes damage to late season summer raspberries and blueberries; fall raspberries and blackberries, and day neutral strawberries. In addition, reports of SWD infested fruit were also verified in stone fruit (peaches, plums, and nectarines), grapes, as well as multiple species of wild hosts. Verification of SWD in grape tomato has yet to be confirmed.



Dr. Greg Loeb, grape and small fruit entomologist at Cornell University will recap SWD infestation for the 2012 season including results from a damage assessment survey. Dr. Hannah Burrack, small fruit entomologist from North Carolina State University is a featured speaker who will discuss the biology and life cycle of Spotted Wing Drosophila to help growers gain a better understanding of the pest. Drs. Andrew Landers and Arthur Agnello from Cornell University's Department of Entomology will instruct growers on modernizing their sprayers for optimal control of SWD and progress made using fixed spraying systems for high-density fruit plantings.

### **Mid-Day Berry Session**

The mid-day session includes Ms. Sarah Johnson from the NYS Department of Ag and Markets speaking on crop insurance for specialty crop growers. Also featured in this session is a talk by Dr. Kerik Cox, Cornell University tree fruit and small fruit pathologist, on a no frills approach to managing berry fruit rots, and a discussion by Ms. Dale Riggs, president of the NYS Berry Growers Association (NYSBGA), on a new cooperative agreement between Cornell University's Small Fruit Breeding program and NYSBGA along with its benefits for NYSBGA members.

### **Afternoon Berry Session**

The final session for day one features Dr. Kimberly Lewers from the USDA Henry A. Wallace Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC). Dr. Lewers has been with the BARC fruit lab since 2001, conducting research on strawberry, blackberry, and raspberry. She serves as a Research Geneticist developing improved cultivars of these valuable fruit crops while studying inheritance of important traits and developing molecular markers and genetic maps to help track these traits in breeding populations. Dr. Lewers will be speaking on low tunnel strawberry production. This strawberry production system, used commercially in the Middle East and Northern Europe for winter production as well as in Brazil as a rain shield during summer production, is now being modified by Dr. Lewers to extend day-neutral strawberry production along the northern and mid-Atlantic seaboard of the US.

The low tunnel talk will be followed by grower Tim Stanton of Stanton's Fuera Farms and Laura McDermott of the Capital District Fruit and Vegetable program discussing their work with zone tillage in June-bearing strawberries.

Cornell University's Dr. Marvin Pritts will present preliminary results from a Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension (NE SARE) project looking at improving berry soil and nutrient management using the Cornell Soil Health test.

The day will close with highlights from the 2012 berry pricing survey presented by Cathy Heidenreich, Cornell Berry Extension Support Specialist.

### **Blueberry Intensive Workshop**

A new feature included as part of the 2013 EXPO berry sessions occurs on day 2 of the program. Dr. Gary Pavlis from Rutgers University will present a 2 hour blueberry intensive workshop focusing on maximizing production.

Cultivated blueberry production in New Jersey ranks second in the nation behind Michigan. Atlantic county, where he is located, is the center of production with almost 80% of the total crop produced in NJ. Dr. Pavlis has changed the methodology of fertilizing commercial blueberries. His research has changed the timing of application, computerized fertilizer recommendations and introduced fertilizing through trickle systems (fertigation) to blueberry growers. The result has been higher yields, better fruit quality and healthier plants. Benefit from his expertise during this workshop, which also includes a 15 minute Q&A session with the speaker at the end of the workshop.

## **Cornell Agribusiness Economic Outlook Conference**

ITHACA, N.Y. —Cornell University's annual Agribusiness Economic Outlook Conference will be held on Tuesday, December 18, from 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Due to ongoing construction of Warren Hall, the location will remain at The Statler Hotel. Registration and refreshments will begin at 9 a.m. in the foyer of The Statler Hotel Ballroom.

The morning session will begin with a welcome by Loren Tauer, Professor and David J. Nolan Director of the Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management. Steve Kyle, Professor in the Dyson School, will provide the national perspective on the economy and agriculture. Then featured is the "Agricultural Economic and Political Environment after the Election". We will have three panelists: Marc Heller (Reporter with Bloomberg BNA); David Salmonsén (Sr. Director of Congressional Relations with American Farm Bureau); and Julie Suarez (Director of Public Policy, NY Farm Bureau).

The two concurrent afternoon sessions will examine specific commodities and topics in more depth.

Feed Grains and Dairy Markets —Ed Staehr, Director of FarmNet and Extension Associate of the Dyson School will describe the outlook for feed grains. Mark Stephenson, Director of Dairy Policy Analysis at University of Wisconsin-Madison, will give an update on the dairy markets. Andrew Novakovic will give an update on dairy policy --- current thinking.

Fruit and Vegetable Outlook, Grape, Wine, and Ornamental Outlook, and Partnership between Applied Research and NYS Agriculture — Bradley Rickard, Assistant Professor in the Dyson School will discuss the fruit and vegetable situation and outlook. Miguel Gómez, Assistant Professor in the Dyson School, will describe the grape, wine, and ornamental situation and outlook. And finally, Marc Smith, Extension Associate in the Dyson School will discuss the essential partnership of comparing applied research with New York State agriculture.



**2013 EXPO Spotted Wing Drosophila Session Tuesday January 22, 2013**

Location	Presentation time (min)	Topic/Title	Speaker
West Ballroom	8:45 AM	DEC credits sign-up/Welcome/Announcements	Laura McDermott, CCE CDVSFP
West Ballroom	9:00 AM (20 min)	Spotted Wing Drosophila in NY: Where we are and where we are heading	Greg Loeb, Cornell
West Ballroom	9:20 AM (40 Min)	Understanding Spotted Wing Drosophila	Hannah Burrack, NCSU
West Ballroom	10:00 AM (30 min)	Modernizing sprayers for optimal control of SWD	Andrew Landers, Cornell
West Ballroom	10:30 AM (30 min)	Progress in the development of an in-canopy fixed spraying system for high-density orchards	Art Agnello, Cornell
	11:00 AM to 1:00 PM	Lunch/Trade show	--

**2013 EXPO Berry Session (mid-day) Tuesday January 22, 2013**

West Ballroom	1:00 PM	DEC credit sign-up/Announcements	Jim O'Connell, CCE Ulster
West Ballroom	1:05 PM (30 min)	Crop Insurance for Specialty Crop Growers	Sarah Johnston, NYS Dept. of Ag and Markets
West Ballroom	1:35 PM (25 min)	NYSBGA Annual Meeting Cooperative agreement Lobbying discussion	Dale Ila Riggs, NYSBGA president
West Ballroom	2:00 PM (30 min)	Fruit Rots of Berries: A No Frills Approach to Management	Kerik Cox, Cornell
	2:30 PM	Break/Trade show	--

**2013 EXPO Berry Session (afternoon) Tuesday January 22, 2013**

West Ballroom	3:30 PM	DEC credit sign-up/Announcements	Sandra Menasha, CCE Suffolk
West Ballroom	3:35 PM (30 min)	Zone tillage in June bearing strawberries	Tim Stanton, Stanton's Fuera Farm and Markets and Laura McDermott, CCE CDVSFP
West Ballroom	4:05 PM (10 min)	Industry Update	TBA
West Ballroom	4:15 PM (40 min)	Low Tunnel Strawberries	Kim Lewers, USDA
West Ballroom	4:55 PM (20 min)	Cornell Soil Health Test for Berry Crops – What We Have Learned So Far	Marvin Pritts, Cornell
West Ballroom	5:15 PM (15 min)	2012 Berry Pricing Survey – What Do the Results Tell Us?	Cathy Heidenreich, Cornell

**2013 EXPO Blueberry Session Wednesday January 23, 2013**

Location	Presentation time (min)	Topic/Title	Speaker
Rooms 1-2	8:15 AM	DEC credits sign-up/Welcome/Announcements	Laura McDermott, CCE CDVSFP
Rooms 1-2	8:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Blueberry Intensive – Maximizing Production	Dr. Gary Pavlis, Rutgers
Ballrooms	10:15 AM	Welcome	TBA
Ballrooms	10:15-11:30 AM	Conference Keynote – The Big Picture on Produce	Jim Prevor, The Perishable Pundit

This conference will address your many questions concerning the outlook of agriculture. The popularity of the conference makes pre-registration important. The pre-registration fee is \$65 if postmarked by December 7th; \$80 if postmarked after December 7th or if registering on-site. The registration fee for Cornell University and CCE staff is \$30. The fee for media personnel with valid ID will be waived. Parking will be in the Parking Garage located within a short walking distance to Statler Hotel. Parking permits are available at the Hoy Road INFO Booth as you enter campus located by the Parking Garage. For Lunch, we are offering a prepaid buffet (\$25.00) at The Statler Hotel (paid in advance with registration form). This lunch is open to any registrant and is convenient and informal. Relax and mingle with friends!! We encourage this option for lunch!

For further information or to obtain a pre-registration form: [http://dyson.cornell.edu/outreach/ag\\_outlook\\_conference.php](http://dyson.cornell.edu/outreach/ag_outlook_conference.php) or contact Carol Thomson at (607) 255-5464.

### **Vegetable, Small-Fruit Production Webinar Series to Start Dec. 19**

**UNIVERSITY PARK, PA.** -- A series of monthly, Web-based seminars covering topics related to vegetable and small-fruit production issues will kick off Dec. 19.

Presented by Penn State Extension's Vegetable and Small Fruit Program Team in the College of Agricultural Sciences, the monthly webinars will be offered from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesdays, with time for questions and answers.

Aimed at those involved in commercial production of vegetables and small fruits on any scale, the webinars will provide access to timely updates in commercial vegetable and small-fruit production for extension educators, producers and industry representatives in Pennsylvania and surrounding states.

"Because these presentations are so convenient and don't require participants to travel, they are ideal for busy growers," said Lee Stivers, extension horticulture educator. "No software downloads are needed, and registration gives you access to handouts and recordings. So even if you miss the live webinar, you can catch it on the recording."

Stivers noted that in addition to providing easy access to the timely information about key vegetable-production issues, the webinars serve as an online forum that allows participants to interact with researchers, extension educators and other farmers.

"This webinar series was a big hit last year, with 144 people registered," she said. "They were mostly Pennsylvanians, but we also had folks from surrounding states and even Canada. Between 85 and 95 percent of participants last year indicated they learned something they would use in their own operations."

Planned webinar topics include the following:

--**Dec. 19:** Irrigation in a Hot, Dry Season. "This one offers basic information, but it is so fundamentally critical to producing a high-quality crop," Stivers said.

--**Jan. 8, 2013:** Nutrient Management and Fertigation. "Best management practices for managing irrigation and fertilizer nutrients are especially important in the Chesapeake Bay watershed," she said.

--**Feb. 20, 2013:** Good Ag Practices (GAPs) Farm Food Safety Update. "In this webinar, registrants will get the latest updates on the GAPs harmonization program, a very recent development in farm food-safety regulations," Stivers explained.

--**March 13, 2013:** Recognizing and Protecting Pollinators for Vegetables and Small Fruit Production. "This one will give research updates on honeybees and other pollinators," Stivers said. "This information is so important in the wake of colony collapse disorder."

--**March 27, 2013:** Cucurbit Pest Management Strategies: Organic, Biorational and Conventional. "Pest management in cucurbits -- vine crops -- is always a challenge, particularly for organic farms," Stivers said. "Participants will learn the latest in what works and what doesn't with organic, biorational and conventional strategies. This webinar will extend until 2:30 p.m."

The cost for the webinars is \$10 per session or \$35 for the entire series of five. The fee includes access to hand-outs and webinar recordings.

Register for the webinars online at <http://agsci.psu.edu/vegetable-production-webinars> or by phone at 724-627-3745. For more information, contact Stivers at 724-554-8815 or by email at [ljs32@psu.edu](mailto:ljs32@psu.edu).

Related publications and information also are available on the Penn State Extension Vegetable and Small Fruit Production website (<http://extension.psu.edu/vegetable-fruit>), covering topics such as vegetable gardening, organic vegetable and fruit production, potato diseases in Pennsylvania, ever-bearing strawberries, fungicide resistance management, mid-Atlantic berries and commercial vegetable recommendations.

## Chautauqua County Annual Small Fruit Tour Focuses on Organics and High Tunnel Production - Ginny Carlberg, Chautauqua CCE

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County's 5th annual Small Fruit Tour was held at Abers Acres in Kennedy, NY on October 11th. Abers Acres, owned by John, Susan, and Adam Abers, grows certified organic fruits and vegetables on over 100 acres in Kennedy. The Abers are currently growing and marketing their strawberries, red and black raspberries, blueberries, currants, elderberries, and gooseberries through a home farm stand on Route 394 in Kennedy, a stand in Warren, Pennsylvania, and farmers markets in Jamestown and Lakewood, New York. The farm tour, led by the Abers, began at the home farm and culminated at their nearby farm property where they utilize high tunnels for raspberry production.



Twenty-two people currently growing or interested in growing small fruits were in attendance. Cornell University small fruit specialist, Cathy Heidenreich, was on hand to answer questions about small fruit production and gave a presentation about the invasive insect, Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD), which had a dramatic impact on fruit crops in New York State during the 2012 growing year.

The growers in attendance were given a complete farm tour on this sunny fall day. The Abers gave a brief farm history and shared some of their thoughts on their motivation to pursue organic certification. They are currently certified by Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO), and are members of NOFA-NY.

As the tour commenced, the Abers shared their practices for bird management, which is 3/4 inch netting directly on the bushes. This has worked well for them in the past, and still allows for

removal during harvest. Participants shared other options they have used for bird management, such as bird distress calls (i.e. Bird Gard, and Cathy Heidenreich described a new system called "Smart Net."

The Abers showed the group their irrigation system, which is fed by a pond and pump on a hill. The drip-line irrigation has emitters every 2-3 feet, and they have had good success with the tubing with small yearly maintenance. They do not do much overhead irrigation, but they do use sprinklers for frost protection on strawberries.

Weed control is done primarily with string trimmers, and by hand in the strawberry fields. They use a variety of organic mulches to suppress weeds and retain moisture, depending on what is available. They had just laid down corn shucks from their popcorn fields, and they use a lot of a leaf and bark compost mixture that is available locally. The lanes between rows are sod, offering a nice firm foot bed for U-pick customers.



The Abers grow a large amount of fall red raspberries, as well as tomatoes, under high tunnels (Haygrove), which were purchased in 2005. They replace the plastic at least every four years, and discussed other maintenance and labor concerns with the group. They are very happy with the results of the high tunnels, and plan on moving the tunnels over to a new raspberry planting next year.

Pest control on some of the property is done by three very friendly but productive black Labrador retrievers. The dogs keep deer, woodchucks and small rodents at bay, and are controlled with invisible fence lines. They actively move the dog's kennel and feed from field to field depending on where the most control is needed.

Of particular interest to growers was Cathy Heidenreich's presentation about the Spotted Wing Drosophila. SWD was confirmed locally and at least one grower had experienced a significant infestation. Cathy shared with the group about the biology of the insect, why it can be so devastating, and some management options. She stressed the importance of doing what we can to control the pest now, without giving up hope that better management options will be available in the future.



We sincerely thank Cathy Heidenreich for her continued involvement and support of our annual field walks, and the Abers for hosting this year's tour.

## UCCE Fresh Market Caneberry Manual Now Available - Mark Bolda, UC Cooperative Extension

**October 17, 2012.** University of California Cooperative Extension proudly presents the *Fresh Market Caneberry Production Manual*. Written for California and West coast fresh market caneberry growers by UCCE caneberry experts Mark Bolda and Mark Gaskell, along with extremely valuable contributions from Michael Cahn on irrigation and Elizabeth Mitcham on post-harvest fruit management, readers will find up-to-date information on all aspects of raspberry and blackberry production.

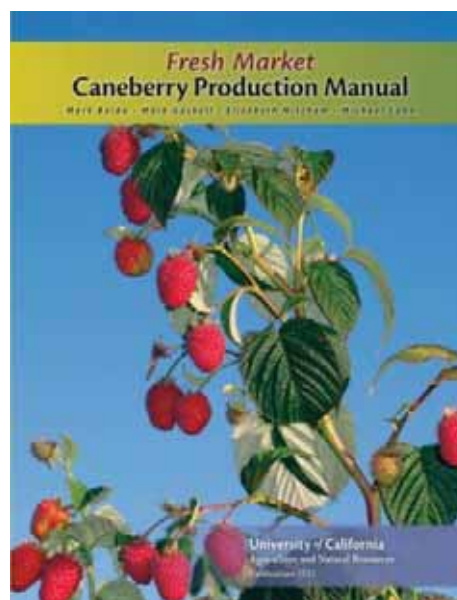
This manual is chock-full of accurate and detailed information on raspberry and blackberry production—no California grower should be without it.

Chapters include:

- Plant description
- Flowering and fruit production
- Plant varieties
- Macro-tunnel and field management
- Pest management
- Irrigation, water quality, and fertility
- Training and pollination
- Harvest methods
- Post-harvest handling

With more than 90 color photos (including some gorgeous cover and chapter lead photography by Ed Show), tables and illustrations, this manual is the perfect field reference for growing blackberries and raspberries in California and the western United States.

Copies are available through the ANR on-line catalog <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/items/3525.aspx> for \$@5 plus shipping and handling.



## NEW YORK STATE NEWS

### Attention NYS Farmers Market Nutrition Program Participants

**November 17, 2012.** Due to the severe weather conditions the downstate region experienced as a result of Hurricane Sandy, in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the NY Farmers Market Nutrition Program has been granted permission to extend the program season statewide as follows:

- Recipients may continue to exchange FMNP checks for fresh, local produce through **Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup>**
- Authorized farmers may continue to deposit FMNP checks at KeyBank branches through **Friday, December 14<sup>th</sup>**

Farmers who experience any difficulty transacting their FMNP checks at non-KeyBank branches should continue to contact our agency for support. Given the deadline extension we will not be in a position to reimburse for “late checks” after December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Also, keep in mind that while farmers may deposit any volume of checks, no more than 250 checks per day may be cashed “on-the-spot” at KeyBank branches. All other program rules and regulations apply.

Thank you for your assistance in operating the FMNP at your markets,  
*Jonathan Thomson, Program Director*

**Questions? Contact Jacqueline Follain, MPH,** Assistant Program Coordinator, New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets, 10B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235. (518) 457 6880 – Desk (518) 457 7076 - Division of Ag Development (518) 457 2716 - FAX

**Farm Service Agency Urges Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections Beginning Monday, Nov. 5th Syracuse, New York, Nov. 6, 2012**—Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Director James Barber announced today that the 2012 FSA county committee elections will begin on Monday, Nov. 5, with the mailing of ballots to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices is Dec. 3, 2012.

“The role and input of our county committee members is more vital than ever,” said Barber. “New county committee members provide input and make important decisions on the local administration of disaster and conservation programs. With better participation in recent years, we also have seen promising increases in the number of women and minority candidates.”

Eligible voters who do not receive ballots in the coming week can obtain ballots from their local USDA Service Center. Dec. 3, 2012, is the last day for voters to submit ballots in person to local USDA Service Centers. Ballots returned by mail must also be postmarked no later than Dec. 3. Newly elected committee members and their alternates will take office Jan. 1, 2013.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm also may be eligible to vote. Agricultural producers in each county submitted candidate nominations during the nomination period, which ended Aug. 1.

While FSA county committees do not approve or deny farm operating loans, they make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Nationwide, there are about 7,700 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA county committees. Committees consist of three to 11 members that are elected by eligible producers.

More information on county committees, such as the new 2012 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections) or at a local USDA Service Center.

### Senator Nozzolio Named to New York Farm Bureau's "Circle of Friends" for 2012

In recognition of his continued efforts to help New York State farmers grow and create jobs, State Senator Mike Nozzolio has once again been honored by the New York Farm Bureau with its "Circle of Friends" award. The "Circle of Friends" award acknowledges Senator Nozzolio's active support of New York agriculture and the New York Farm Bureau.

"In the Finger Lakes region, agriculture is the backbone of our economy. Virtually every business, family and individual in our region directly or indirectly depends on agriculture, the single largest job producing enterprise in New York State," said Senator Nozzolio. "It is an honor for me to receive this recognition from the New York Farm Bureau and I commend them for their continued advocacy on issues important to our farm families in Upstate New York."

Senator Nozzolio has been named to the "Circle of Friends" by the Farm Bureau each year since he was elected to the State Senate for his long-standing support of New York State agriculture. This year he helped secure funding for the Finger Lakes Community College to construct a new state-of-the-art Viticulture Center at the New York Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva. The funding will expand FLCC's innovative Viticulture and Wine Technology program, which is critically important to the Finger Lakes Region's continued emergence as one of the premier winemaking areas of the Country. In the past he led the fight in defeating the New York City-driven Farm Labor Bill, which would have devastated Upstate farmers with the most repressive and costly labor mandates in the entire country.



Earlier this year, Senator Nozzolio fought to enact legislation known as the "Buy from the Backyard Act" (S.2468), which would require State agencies with food contracts to purchase at least 20 percent of their food from growers and producers here in New York. He also worked to adopt legislation that was signed into State law (S.7727A) creating a "Farm Brewery" license, which would provide opportunities for local breweries to expand and prosper.

"At a time when farms are struggling, we need to do everything we can to support our Upstate farmers so that they can remain on their land and continue to feed their fellow New Yorkers," said Senator Nozzolio. "I will continue to fight to cut taxes for our farmers, oppose intrusive regulations that make it harder for them to survive and strongly support programs that provide badly-needed relief for our State's farms at a time when they need it most."



### Assemblyman Oaks Named to New York Farm Bureau's "Circle of Friends"

Assemblyman and Ranking Minority Ways and Means Committee Member Robert Oaks (R,C-Macedon) has been named to New York Farm Bureau's prestigious "Circle of Friends" for the 2012 Legislative session. The award is based upon the assemblyman's voting record on issues of importance to New York agriculture, as well as other evidence of legislative support during the 2012 Legislative Session.

Assemblyman Oaks, who has received the Farm Bureau honor every year since taking office in 1993, said it is extremely gratifying to be recognized by the organization because of his farm background. "I grew up on a farm in North Rose and I have a personal understanding of the issues that challenge those who make their living from farms and farm-related businesses," he said. "Agriculture is central to the economy of New York State, and particularly to my district."







**New York State Department of Labor**

**Andrew M. Cuomo**, *Governor*

**Peter M. Rivera**, *Commissioner*

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November, 2012

Dear Stakeholder:

The Agriculture Labor Program invites you to attend our Post-Harvest Meeting. There are seven such meetings planned throughout the state. These meetings are intended for all growers and producers of agricultural products who have employees of any category (domestic or foreign, seasonal or year round) or think they might hire workers next year.

Supervisory staff as well as field staff will be present at each meeting. We will be discussing our observations on the 2012 season and share our outlook and plans for 2013. We will also provide some information about the new electronic application for the H-2A guest worker program. Most importantly, we will be seeking input from you about your experience in 2012 and what you anticipate for 2013.

The Agriculture Labor Program exists to promote the success of New York's large and diverse agriculture industry. While we welcome your input at any time, it is my hope that you can join us at one of the meetings listed below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Vilda Vera Mayuga".

Vilda Vera Mayuga

Director, Division of Immigrant Policies and Affairs

Date: **Monday, December 3, 2012** Time: **10:00 A.M. - 12:00 noon**  
Location: **The William H. Miner Agricultural Research Institute**  
**1034 Miner Farm Road**  
**Chazy NY 12921**  
Web site: <http://www.whminer.com>  
RSVP: **Ami Kadar** by E-Mail: [Ami.Kadar@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Ami.Kadar@labor.ny.gov) or by phone: **518-561-0430 ext -3012**

Date: **Friday, December 7, 2012** Time: **10:00 A.M. - 12:00 noon**  
Location: **The Alamo**  
**888 Pulaski Highway**  
**Goshen NY 10924**  
Web site: <http://www.hrhcare.org>  
RSVP: **Justin Ferber** by E-Mail: [Justin.Ferber@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Justin.Ferber@labor.ny.gov) or by phone: **845-568-5375**

Date: **Monday, December 10, 2012** Time: **10:00 A.M. - 12:00 noon**  
Location: **Cornell Cooperative Extension Suffolk County, 1st floor meeting room**  
**423 Griffing Avenue**  
**Riverhead NY 11901**  
Web site: <http://ccesuffolk.org>  
RSVP: **Jose Vega** by E-Mail: [Jose.Vega@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Jose.Vega@labor.ny.gov) or by phone: **631-853-6716**

Date: **Wednesday, December 12, 2012** Time: **1:00 PM - 3:00 PM**  
Location: **Cornell Cooperative Extension Wayne County**  
**1581 Route 88 North**  
**Newark NY 14513**  
Web site: <http://blogs.cce.cornell.edu/wayne>  
RSVP: **Jennifer Karr** by E-Mail: [Jennifer.Karr@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Karr@labor.ny.gov) or by phone: **585-258-8815**

Date: **Friday, December 14, 2012** Time: **10:00 A.M. - 12:00 noon**  
Location: **Farm Credit East - Batavia Branch**  
**4363 Federal Drive**  
**Batavia NY 14020**  
Web site: <https://www.farmcrediteast.com>  
RSVP: **Caylin Gwise** by E-Mail: [Caylin.Gwise@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Caylin.Gwise@labor.ny.gov) or by phone: **585-344-2042 ext -225**

Date: **Monday, December 17, 2012** Time: **10:00 A.M. - 12:00 noon**  
Location: **Cornell Cooperative Extension Broome County**  
**840 Front Street**  
**Binghamton NY 13905**  
Web site: <http://cce.cornell.edu/broome>  
RSVP: **Erin Kelly** by E-Mail: [Erin.Kelly@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Erin.Kelly@labor.ny.gov) or by phone: **607-778-2215**

Date: **Thursday, January 17, 2013** Time: **1:00 PM - 3:00 PM**  
Location: **Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County**  
**24 Martin Road**  
**Voorheesville NY 12186**  
Web site: <http://www.ccealbany.com>  
RSVP: **Christina Marzello** by E-Mail: [Christina.Marzello@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Christina.Marzello@labor.ny.gov) or by phone: **518-485-9269**

Any growth of agriculture has a positive effect; it triggers jobs in many industries. It fuels the economic vitality of the whole community while providing high-quality food."

Farm Bureau is a non-partisan, volunteer organization. It does not endorse candidates for office. Rather, it encourages its members to become involved in the political process as individuals, supporting candidates who have like-minded views. The "Circle of Friends" award, while not an endorsement, is one of the highest honors New York Farm Bureau bestows upon state legislators.

"Membership in the 'Circle of Friends' is reserved only for those who actively support the farm families of New York State and is renewed at the end of each Legislative session," said New York Farm Bureau President Dean Norton.

Assemblyman Oaks will be presented with the award by Wayne, Cayuga and Oswego County Farm Bureau representatives at their 2013 State Lobby Day in Albany in March.



**Scaling Up Institutional Purchasing of New York Grown Food** -*American Farmland Trust, [New York Staff](#)*  
**October 19, 2012.** Selling local food to institutions is a "win-win" for farmers and consumers in New York. Yet buying local is challenging for institutions. [Scaling Up: Strategies for Expanding Sales of Local Food to Public and Private Institutions in New York](#), released by American Farmland Trust's Farm to Institution New York State Working Group, identifies barriers to institutional purchasing of local food and recommends actions to get more local food served in institutions. "This needs assessment encourages a coordinated approach to increasing farm to institution sales in New York state," said David Haight, New York State Director.

## USDA News

### Farmers and Ranchers Urged to Record Losses from Hurricane Sandy

**Washington, Oct. 31, 2012.** Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia today urged farmers and ranchers affected by Hurricane Sandy to keep thorough records of all losses, including livestock death losses, as well as expenses for such things as feed purchases and extraordinary costs because of lost supplies and or increased transportation costs.

FSA recommends that owners and producers record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences, including:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses;

- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;

- Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures;

- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed;

- Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records;

- Pictures of on-farm storage facilities that were destroyed by wind or flood waters; and

- Evidence of damaged farm land.

Producers with damaged farmland should contact their local FSA office. The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) may be able to assist producer who need to repair farmland or remove debris due to Hurricane Sandy. FSA currently has \$15.5 million available for producers in counties that received a Major Disaster declaration pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. Producers located in counties that have not received a Major Disaster declaration should visit their local FSA office for information on ECP if funding becomes available in the future.

Producers with private forest land that was damaged should also visit their local FSA office for information on the Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP). EFRP provides assistance to landowners of private forest land to help carry out emergency measures to

restore land damaged by a natural disaster. Currently no funding is available, however, producers should visit their local FSA office for information if funding becomes available.

USDA's Risk Management Agency reminds producers faced with questions on prevented planting, replant, or crop losses to contact their crop insurance agent for more information. Producers who need emergency credit due may receive assistance through the Emergency Loan Program if they need assistance recovering from production and physical losses due to natural disasters. Producers are eligible for these loans as soon as their county is declared a Presidential or Secretarial disaster county.

Agriculture Secretary Vilsack also reminds producers that the department's authority to operate the five disaster assistance programs authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill expired on Sept. 30, 2011. This includes SURE; the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP); the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP); and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). Production losses due to disasters occurring after Sept. 30, 2011, are not eligible for disaster program coverage.

To deliver assistance to those who need it most, Secretary Vilsack effectively reduced the interest rate for Emergency Loans in July 2012, while streamlining the Secretarial disaster designations process, resulting in a 40-percent reduction in processing time for most counties affected by disasters. Among other administrative actions, USDA has also worked with crop insurance companies to provide more flexibility to farmers.

USDA will continue working with state and local officials, as well as our federal partners, to make sure people have the necessary resources to recover from this challenge.

Crops insured by federal crop insurance or by the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) are covered when floodwaters have rendered them valueless. USDA encourages all farmers and ranchers to contact their crop insurance companies and local USDA Farm Service Agency Service Centers, as applicable, to report damages to crops or livestock loss. More information about federal crop insurance may be found at [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov). Additional resources to help farmers and ranchers deal with flooding and other damage may be found at [www.usda.gov/disaster](http://www.usda.gov/disaster).

To find the USDA Service Center nearest you, please visit <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=us&agency=fsa>.

### **USDA Designates 29 Counties in New York as Primary Natural Disaster Areas with Assistance to Producers in Surrounding States**

**Washington, Oct. 24, 2012** - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has designated 29 counties in New York as primary natural disaster areas due to damage and losses caused by drought and excessive heat that began June 1, 2012, and continues. The counties are:

Albany	Madison	Schoharie
Broome	Niagara	Schuyler
Chenango	Oneida	Seneca
Columbia	Ontario	Steuben
Cortland	Orange	Tompkins
Dutchess	Orleans	Ulster
Erie	Otsego	Westchester
Greene	Putnam	Wyoming
Jefferson	Rensselaer	Yates
Lewis	Schenectady	

"Our hearts go out to those New York farmers and ranchers affected by the recent natural disasters," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "President Obama and I are committed to ensuring that agriculture remains a bright spot in our nation's economy by sustaining the successes of America's farmers, ranchers, and rural communities through these difficult times. We're also telling New York producers that USDA stands with you and your communities when severe weather and natural disasters threaten to disrupt your livelihood."

Farmers and ranchers in the following counties in New York also qualify for natural disaster assistance because their counties are contiguous. Those counties are: Allegany, Bronx, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Delaware, Genesee, Herkimer, Livingston, Monroe, Montgomery, Onondaga, Oswego, Rockland, Saratoga, St. Lawrence, Sullivan, Tioga, Washington, Wayne.

Farmers and ranchers in the following counties in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Vermont also qualify for natural disaster assistance because their counties are contiguous. Those counties are: Fairfield and Litchfield (CT); Berkshire (MA); Passaic and Sussex (NJ); Pike, Potter, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wayne (PA); Bennington (VT).

All counties listed above were designated natural disaster areas Oct. 24, 2012, making all qualified farm operators in the designated areas eligible for low interest emergency (EM) loans from USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for loans to help cover part of their actual losses. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. FSA has a variety of programs, in addition to the EM loan program, to help eligible farmers recover from adversity.

The Obama Administration is committed to helping the thousands of farm families and businesses who continue to struggle with the drought. Recently, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced an extension for emergency grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres through Nov. 30, 2012, freeing up forage and feed for ranchers as they look to recover from this challenging time. Other actions by USDA to provide assistance to producers impacted by the drought include:

- Intent to purchase up to \$170 million of pork, lamb, chicken, and catfish for federal food nutrition assistance programs, including food banks, to help relieve pressure on American livestock producers and bring the nation's meat supply in line with demand.
- Reducing the emergency loan rate, from 3.75 percent to 2.25 percent, as well as making emergency loans available earlier in the season.
- Allowing haying or grazing of cover crops without impacting the insurability of planted 2013 spring crops.
- Authorizing \$16 million in existing funds from the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to target states experiencing exceptional and extreme drought.
- Initiating transfer of \$14 million in unobligated program funds into the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) to help farmers and ranchers rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and for carrying out emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought.
- Authorizing haying and grazing of Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) easement areas in drought-affected areas where haying and grazing is consistent with conservation of wildlife habitat and wetlands.
- Lowering the penalty on CRP acres used for emergency haying or grazing, from 25 percent to 10 percent in 2012.
- Simplified the Secretarial disaster designation process and reduced the time it takes to designate counties affected by disasters by 40 percent.

Additional programs available to assist farmers and ranchers include the Emergency Conservation Program, Federal Crop Insurance, and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. Interested farmers may contact their local USDA Service Centers for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available online at <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.

Secretary Vilsack also reminds producers that the department's authority to operate the five disaster assistance programs authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill expired on Sept. 30, 2011. This includes SURE; the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP); the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP); and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). Production losses due to disasters occurring after Sept. 30, 2011, are not eligible for disaster program coverage.

# 2012 | CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

**YOUR VOICE. YOUR FUTURE. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.**

## **Census of Agriculture Reminder**

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will mail census forms at the end of December, and responses are due by February 4th, 2013. By responding, farmers and ranchers can have a voice in shaping their future. For more information about the census, visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) or call 1-800-4AG-STAT (1-888-424-7828).

Also visit: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=HurricaneInfo.xml>.

## **Statement of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on Expiration of Authority for 2008 Farm Bill Programs**

**Washington, October 1, 2012** – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today made the following statement on the expiration of authority for 2008 Farm Bill Programs:

"Many programs and policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture were authorized under the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 ("2008 Farm Bill") through September 30, 2012. These include a great number of critical programs impacting millions of Americans,

including programs for farm commodity and price support, conservation, research, nutrition, food safety, and agricultural trade. As of today, USDA's authority or funding to deliver many of these programs has expired, leaving USDA with far fewer tools to help strengthen American agriculture and grow a rural economy that supports 1 in 12 American jobs. Authority and funding for additional programs is set to expire in the coming months. Without action by the House of Representatives on a multi-year Food, Farm and Jobs bill, rural communities are today being asked to shoulder additional burdens and additional uncertainty in a tough time. As we continue to urge Congress to give USDA more tools to grow the rural economy, USDA will work hard to keep producers and farm families informed regarding those programs which are no longer available to them.

## **NYSBGA NEWS**

### **2012 Berry Pricing Survey on its Way to Commercial Berry Growers in NY**

The Cornell Berry Team, in conjunction with the New York Berry Growers' Association, is collecting data for a 2012 Berry Pricing Survey. You may have participated in similar surveys conducted in 2006 and 2009. The results of the earlier surveys are available on line from the NYS Berry Growers' website at: <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/grower/nybga>.



A self-addressed, stamped post card is enclosed in the mailing. We hope you will assist us with our 2012 survey by taking a few minutes to fill out the information requested on the postcard and dropping it in the mail. We would like to have all the postcards back to us by November 30, 2012.

Survey results will be presented at the 2013 Empire State Producers Expo, at the OnCenter in Syracuse, NY on Wednesday January 22nd, 2013. Results will be tabulated for the state, as well as individual counties. Data will include minimum, maximum, and average price per pound for u-pick, retail and wholesale berries. A written summary of the results will also be posted after the meeting on the NYS Berry Growers' web site.

If you do not receive a survey letter and would like to participate or would like a written copy of the results, please contact Cathy Heidenreich at 315-787-2367 or e-mail [mcm4@cornell.edu](mailto:mcm4@cornell.edu).

Your help in this matter is greatly appreciated.  
Thank you.

*Marvin Pritts*  
The Cornell Berry Team

*Paul Baker, Executive Secretary*  
New York State Berry Growers' Association

### **NYSBGA Board Member Profile: Tony Emmi, Emmi & Sons Inc., Baldwinsville, New York**

Tony Emmi has served on the NYSBGA board since 1995. Currently he serves as the treasurer.

Tony is a third generation farmer. He is the General Manager of Emmi & Sons Inc. Tony's grandfather, Anthony Emmi, started the farm during World War II in the North Syracuse area of Syracuse, New York. Tony's father, Carmen Emmi, and uncle, Sam Mangano continued on and the farm was incorporated in 1961. In those early years, sweet corn, strawberries, tomatoes, and cauliflower were the main crops on the farm. A farm stand was and is still opened during the season to this day. The farm's produce was sold retail on the farm stand and at the farmer's market in Syracuse. Produce was also sold wholesale to local accounts.

Tony Emmi grew up working on his family's farm. He left for West Point in 1981 and after graduation served seven years on active duty in the US Army as an Armor Officer. A year after service in the First Gulf War, he returned home to work with his father on the family farm. At that time, the farm consisted of about 80 acres and the farm stand in North Syracuse. Sweet corn, strawberries, and peppers were the main crops on the farm.

Over the years the farm was expanded to approximately 300 acres. An ice cream stand was added to the original farm stand and a second farm stand was opened in Baldwinsville when the main operation was moved from North Syracuse to Baldwinsville during the mid- 1990's. During this time new farm purchases included 15 acres of blueberries.

Currently there are 300 acres in crops. Emmi & Sons Inc. has over 70 employees during the season. There are 12 acres of strawberries, 15 acres of blueberries, and 6 acres of apples. Sweet corn, tomatoes, peppers, squash, cabbage and processing beans make up the rest of the acreage. About 70 percent of the farm business is wholesale and 30 percent is retail. Strawberries, blueberries, sweet corn, and processing beans are the main crops on the farm today.

Strawberries and blueberries have always had strong sales on the farm. Tony used the stronger sales to expand retail operations where profit margins are better. Processing beans were added as a less labor intensive crop to replace some of the higher labor intensive crops. Process beans also add to the diversification of the farm.

Tony says the NYSBGA is important because it provides a link between growers and researchers. The membership dues growers provide for research shows that New York's growers are committed to the research needed to raise berry crops in New York State. This is important especially in the face of budget cuts that threaten agricultural research that is needed to advance small fruit farming in New York State.

## NASGA/NARBA NEWS

### North American Berry Conference 2013

The final touches are being added for the North American Berry Conference in Portland, Oregon, on January 27-30, 2013. This special conference will be hosted by the North American Strawberry Growers Association (NASGA) and the North American Raspberry & Blackberry Association (NARBA) in the heart of a major berry production region. An annual Oregon Blueberry Meeting that attracts several hundred growers will also join us at the DoubleTree Hotel on January 29.



### LOCAL SCOOP ON A GREAT CITY TO VISIT

A visit to Portland, Oregon, at any time of year is a treat for all your senses. On a sunny day (yes, there are sunny days even in the winter), you can see majestic Mt. Hood towering over the city, enjoy a stroll along the Willamette River in downtown, or join the natives by renting a bicycle for a quick spin around this eminently bike-friendly town – and stop on your travels to sample coffee and a home baked treat at one of the neighborhood coffee shops. Portland is the center of Food Cart dining, offering everything from ethnic specialties to the world's best burgers. If your tastes run a bit more upscale, Portland abounds with gourmet restaurants. Take the time to visit Powell's Books, the largest new and used bookstore in the world; it takes up a city block and is just blocks from the legendary Voodoo Doughnuts. With parks big and small, world-class shopping in the Pearl District, the Portland Art Museum, and a laid-back atmosphere, Portland has something for everyone to enjoy! Winter weather is "mild and damp," with average of 50<sup>o</sup> daytime and 38<sup>o</sup> nighttime, with little snow but a good chance of rain.

So make your plans now to join us in Portland - a great city, a great meeting, great berry production information from berry researchers across the nation - who could ask for more?! Here are some schedule details:

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 27 – OPENING RECEPTION

Meet, greet, and enjoy a presentation by Dr. Bernadine Strik of Oregon State University on "The History of Berry Crop Production in Oregon – From Wagon Trail to the 21st Century."

### MONDAY, JANUARY 28 – ALL-DAY TOUR

Stops include:

- The OSU North Willamette Research and Extension Center, with lots of field research as well an opportunity to evaluate frozen berries of different cultivars.
- Unger Farms (Matt and Cathy Unger), growers of both caneberreries and strawberries, with a fine retail market. The group will have lunch here
- Ayers Creek Farm (Anthony Boutard), a sustainable berry and vegetable farm in Gaston
- Afternoon stops at several farms/berry fields (final schedule TBD)
- The tour ends up with dinner at a local favorite, McMenamins– see below.



and U-cut flowers.

### ON THE TOUR

Originally sending most of its produce to processors, Unger Farms has evolved into a fresh market/wholesale farm. Starting with one farmers market, year after year, the Ungers built a loyal customer base and continued to add more outlets. Now, 27 years later, the Ungers attend 18 farmers markets a week, sell to 20-plus grocery stores/roadside stands/restaurants/school lunch programs, offers PYO strawberries, and have added a Farm Store. Their crops include strawberries (with some Albion strawberries in hoop houses), blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, table grapes,

### TOUR DINNER at McMENAMINS

Highly recommended by local folks on the planning committee. Says Cat McKenzie (Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission): "McMenamins is a unique experience. The McMenamin brothers buy up and re-use wonderful old buildings, many of them surrounded by gardens. Some were hotels, old pubs, bars, and schools; one was a poor farm; this one used to be a retirement home for Masonic and Eastern Star members. Each one has lots of wonderful quirky touches, paintings, fantastic lamps and other great stuff. The food is very good and they have the best hand-crafted beer and even wine which they make themselves."



## TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY JANUARY 29 – 30

### MAIN CONFERENCE

Many speakers have been confirmed and we continue to add more every day. The schedule combines general sessions with three breakout tracks: one focusing on strawberries, one on caneberries, and one on topics of shared interest. Here is some of what you can look forward to in the sessions:

- Grower Spotlights:
  - Julie Schedeen, Schedeens' Farm, Boring, OR. A dynamic presenter from a diversified and successful farm!
  - Carolyn Vouligny, Production Horticole Demers, Quebec
  - David Mutz, Berry Haven Farm, Abbotsford, British Columbia
- Managing Spotted Wing Drosophila: Panel Discussion, followed by breakout sessions for both caneberries and strawberries.
- Understanding Soil Biology – *Elaine Ingham, Rodale Institute*
- New Food Safety Regulations: What Will They Mean for Berry Growers?
- Making the Most of Berry Health Benefits
- Caneberry and Strawberry CSI: Figuring out your mysterious problems in the field. *Mark Bolda, UC-Santa Cruz Extension* (these will be separate sessions for caneberries and strawberries)
- Breeding Updates for both Strawberries and Caneberries with a North American Perspective: *Chad Finn, USDA-ARS, Corvallis, OR* will lead this discussion
- Organic Blackberry Research- *Bernadine Strik, others*
- Growing Strawberries in Low Tunnels – *Kim Lewers, USDA-ARS Beltsville, MD*
- Experiences Managing PrimeArk 45 – Panel from Different Regions
- Berry Tissue Nutrient Levels and Fertiligation – *David Bryla, USDA-ARS Corvallis*

NASGA will hold its annual meeting at lunch on January 29; NARBA will hold its annual meeting at lunch on January 30. Conference attendees will be able to attend concurrent sessions of the Blueberry Meeting on January 29 and the nearby Northwest Ag Show (January 29-31), one of the West Coast's largest trade shows, at no additional cost.

### HOTEL AND REGISTRATION

Hotel rates at the Hilton DoubleTree Portland are only \$79/night. To make reservations call 503-281-6111 or 800-996-0510 and ask for the room block under "NAFDMA". Conference details, registration forms and online registration links can be found at [www.raspberrylblackberry.com](http://www.raspberrylblackberry.com) and [www.nasga.org](http://www.nasga.org).

### POST CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES

On Thursday, January 31 a second tour of several research facilities in Corvallis, OR is in the process of being finalized. Attendees may also wish to stay on for the North American Farmers Direct Marketing Association conference, which starts February 1.

### FOCUS ON FOOD SAFETY

#### Need to get GAPs?

Is your buyer requiring for GAP certification for 2013? Need help writing a farm food safety plan for your farm? Attend one of 4 scheduled 2-day Good Agricultural Practices workshops planned for this winter to help your farm get answers to these and other burning food safety questions you may have.

**January 15-16, 2012.** "Save the Date, Farm Food Safety Training with GAPs, in Ontario County, location TBA. The focus is on berries, but all fresh produce growers are invited. For updates, see <http://www.gaps.cornell.edu/eventscalender.html> Registration info to follow in early December."

**January 30-31 2012,** "Save the Date, Farm Food Safety Training with GAPs, in Livingston county, location





TBA. The focus is on potatoes, but all fresh produce growers are invited. For updates, see <http://www.gaps.cornell.edu/eventscalendar.html> Registration info to follow in December.”

**February 7-8, 2012.** “Save the Date, Farm Food Safety Training with GAPs, in Genesee or Monroe county, location TBA. All fresh produce growers are invited. For updates, see <http://www.gaps.cornell.edu/eventscalendar.html> Registration info to follow in late December.”

**March 6-7, 2012.** “Save the Date, Farm Food Safety Training with GAPs, March 6-7 Yates County, at CCE- Yates in Penn Yan, co-hosted by CCE Steuben. All fresh produce growers are invited. For updates, see <http://www.gaps.cornell.edu/eventscalendar.html> Registration info to follow in January.”

### **Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Reaches Beyond the U.S. Borders - Carlos García-Salazar, Michigan State University Extension**

*The impact of the FSMA is being felt not only by U.S. berry growers, packers and shippers, but for anybody outside of the U.S. borders exporting or interested in exporting fresh berries to U.S. markets.*

**October 25, 2012.** Berry production (raspberries, blackberries and blueberries) continues to grow in countries south of the border. Recently the importance of the berry industry in that part of the world was highlighted at the 2nd Congreso Internacional de Berries de Mexico (2nd International Congress of Berries of Mexico). Among the topics of especial importance for U.S. berry growers and consumers around the world were those related to the [Food Safety Modernization Act](#) (FSMA), traceability and phytosanitary issues related to the movement of fruits across borders.

Under the new [FSMA](#) legislation, foreign companies will have to follow the same food safety and traceability requirements than growers, packers and shippers in the United States. Currently, American companies that are the major exporters of berries from Mexico and South America have already implemented strict food safety programs at their operations. That includes food safety training for pickers, farmworkers and personnel at packing facilities, and advanced traceability programs. This is very reassuring for U.S. consumers and for the berry industry in general.

Companies like [Driscoll](#), [Natureripe](#), [North Bay](#) and others that are heavily involved in the production and export of berries from Latin America are conscious about the importance of implementing strict GAP and food safety programs in farms and packing or shipping facilities dedicated to the international markets. They are aware that any food safety incident involving imported berries will hurt not only their business abroad, but also their local operations.

With this in mind, the organizers of the international congress invited Dr. Ana Lilia Sandoval, International Regulatory Affairs Analyst for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in Mexico, to update the Mexican berry industry on the progress on the implementation of the FSMA. For those that were not aware of the FDA activities outside of the U.S. borders, the [Food and Drug Administration](#), like the [USDA-APHIS](#), maintain an office in Mexico. Personnel assigned to this office are in charge of monitoring all issues related to food safety in shipment of fresh produce from Mexico to the United States.

The other important topic was related to phytosanitary issues associated with import and exports of fresh produce from foreign countries. Two issues were discussed: the preclearance of shipments and inspections at the Mexico and U.S. borders, or at ports of entry to the United States; and the spread of invasive insect pests across borders on shipments of fruit produced in problematic areas.

Marcos Bautista, [USDA-APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine](#) (PPQ) preclearance program coordinator, explained to packers and shippers the process by which fruit shipments are allowed into the United States. He explained the difference between the inspection process conducted at the reception centers the USDA-APHIS has established in Mexico and the inspections at the border or port of entry to the United States. Bautista was able to clarify some misconceptions about the preclearance process and inspections at the border.

Some complaints from both Mexican and U.S. packers and shippers are related to the belief that once the shipment of berries has been inspected by the USDA-APHIS PPQ at the inspections center in the country of origin, the shipment should not be inspected anymore at the port of entry. He explained that inspections at the border are more related to bio-security than to phytosanitary issues that could have been already cleared by USDA-APHIS inspectors at the inspection center in the country of origin. However, if during the inspection at the port of entry unknown biological agents (insects, weeds, pathogens, etc.) are found, they turn the shipment to the USDA-APHIS inspectors for further identification and clearance.

In summary, the quality of the presentations and the speakers provided a wealth of information that will be of great benefit for those that participated in the 2nd International Congress of Berries of Mexico in Guadalajara, Mexico. It may also provide U.S. berry growers with insights into the future of the international berry market to take advantage of new opportunities south of the border.

*(This article was published by [Michigan State University Extension](#). For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>.)*

**OCTOBER 1990**  
CONGRESS PASSES ORGANIC  
FOODS PRODUCTION ACT

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF  
**USDA ORGANIC**

**OCTOBER 1992**  
FIRST NATIONAL ORGANIC  
STANDARDS BOARD MEETING

**OCTOBER 2002**  
USDA ORGANIC  
REGULATIONS GO LIVE

**DECEMBER 2000**  
USDA ESTABLISHES NATIONAL  
ORGANIC PROGRAM

**OCTOBER 2012**  
USDA CELEBRATES 10 YEARS  
OF USDA ORGANIC



[WWW.AMS.USDA.GOV/ORGANICINFO](http://WWW.AMS.USDA.GOV/ORGANICINFO)



# USDA ORGANIC CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

As we celebrate 10 years of USDA's oversight of organic products, we recognize the dedication of those involved in organic agriculture's origins, helping it flourish into a growing sector of the U.S. food system.

**Late 1980s** Early organic farmers—concerned about conflicting standards, dubious “organic” claims, fraud, and consumer confusion—request federal oversight of organic products.

## Organic Foods Production Act of 1990: Setting the Foundation

**October 1990** Congress passes Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA, Title XXI of the 1990 Farm Bill), setting the foundation for national standards covering the production and handling of “organic” products. OFPA also authorizes USDA to establish the National Organic Program (NOP) to administer these standards and the National Organic Standards Board to advise the NOP.

**January 1992** Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan appoints the first members of the National Organic Standards Board, beginning almost 10 years of work to develop national organic standards.

**December 1997** NOP publishes the first proposed rule for national organic standards, receiving more than 280,00 public comments. NOP receives the coveted Hammer Award from Vice-President Al Gore for its use of the Internet and other communication technology to manage comments.

## USDA Organic Regulations: Implementation and Oversight

**December 2000** NOP publishes final rule published in Federal Register, establishing national organic standards. Rule is effective 60 days after publication and is fully implemented 18 months after effective date.

**April 2002** Certifying agents, accredited by the NOP, begin certifying organic farms and businesses.

**August 2002** USDA announces the allocation of \$1 million for the first Organic Certification Cost Share program for 15 states, reimbursing certified operations in those states for up to 75 percent of their certification costs, up to a maximum of \$500.

**October 2002** USDA organic regulations “go live” (are fully implemented).

**November 2002** USDA announces Organic Cost Share Program for all 50 states, allocating \$5 million to reimburse certified operations for up to 75 percent of their certification expenses.

**June 2005** The First Circuit Court rules on a number of critical questions related to organic handling, livestock transition, and the role of synthetic ingredients. Ruling helps further shape the USDA organic regulations.





# USDA ORGANIC CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

- November 2005** Congress amends OFPA to allow approved synthetics in organic foods and address the transition of organic dairy herds and pasture to organic production.
- January 2006** The number of certified organic farms and businesses in the U.S. exceeds 10,000.
- April 2006** NOP hosts a symposium to discuss ruminant livestock's access to pasture.
- June 2008** Congress signs the 2008 Farm Bill, renewing support for certification expenses for thousands of farmers and businesses via the Organic Certification Cost Share Programs.
- April 2009** Kathleen Merrigan, a former Senator Leahy staffer that helped draft OFPA and former USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Administrator that signed the December 2000 final rule, is sworn in as Deputy Secretary of Agriculture.
- June 2009** Agricultural Marketing Service Deputy Administrator Barbara Robinson signs a first-of-its-kind organic equivalency arrangement between U.S. and Canada, creating new markets for organic operations.
- October 2009** The NOP is elevated to its own program within the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. Miles McEvoy becomes the first NOP Deputy Administrator.
- February 2010** NOP publishes final rules requiring that ruminant livestock graze on organic pasture during the grazing season and receive a significant portion of their diet from grazed forages. More than 100,000 public comments were received to help shape and revise this rule.
- November 2010** NOP sends the first NOP Organic Insider message, using this email newsletter to inform the organic community of activities related to NOP's oversight of organic products.
- January 2012** 17,281 organic farms and processing facilities in the U.S. are certified to the USDA organic standards, fueling a \$31.4 billion U.S. organic industry. Worldwide, there are 28,386 USDA organic operations across 133 countries.
- February 2012** U.S. and the European Union sign an organic equivalency arrangement, streamlining trade and creating a partnership between the two largest organic markets in the world.
- June 2012** NOP civil penalties issued surpasses \$200,000.
- September 2012** USDA launches the Organic Literacy Initiative, a training program to help connect organic customers with appropriate USDA resources. A companion toolkit also helps prospective farms and businesses answer the question, *is organic an option for me?*
- October 2012** NOP marks 10 years of overseeing certified organic products.

Interested in hearing about future USDA organic milestones? Join the 15,000 individuals currently receiving NOP Organic Insider email updates at <http://bit.ly/NOPOrganicInsider>.

## ON THE ORGANIC SIDE...

### USDA Releases Results of the 2011 Certified Organic Production Survey

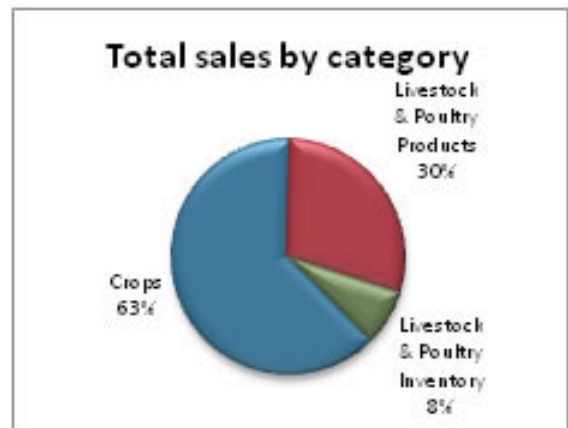
Washington, Oct. 4, 2012 –U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-certified organic growers in the United States sold more than \$3.5 billion organically grown agricultural commodities in 2011, according to the results of the *2011 Certified Organic Production Survey*, released today by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). NASS conducted the survey for USDA's Risk Management Agency to help refine federal crop insurance products for organic producers.

"This is the first time we have conducted a survey focused solely on the USDA-certified organic producers," said Hubert Hamer, Chairperson of NASS's Agricultural Statistics Board. "With this survey's results, policymakers will be able to better assess the Federal Crop Insurance program and its impact on the organic industry."

Mirroring its conventional counterpart, corn leads organic field crops in sales and accounted for more than \$101.5 million in 2011. The only other field crops to have more than \$50 million in sales were alfalfa dry hay and winter wheat, accounting for \$69.5 million and \$54 million in sales respectively.

When it comes to organic field crops acreage, Wisconsin leads the nation with more than 110,000 acres harvested in 2011. Wisconsin is followed by New York, with organic growers harvesting more than 97,000 acres.

California closely follows the Empire state growers with more than 91,000 acres of organic field crops harvested in 2011. These top three states illustrate just how geographically diverse organic crop production is in the United States.



In addition to looking at organically produced crops, the survey also gathered information on the organically raised livestock, which accounted for \$1.31 billion in sales in 2011. Organic milk was the top livestock commodity last year, accounting for \$765 million in sales. The other key organic livestock commodities were chicken eggs and broiler chickens, earning \$276 million and \$115 million in sales respectively.

The survey results also include statistics on organically grown fruit and vegetables, value-added products and marketing outlets. The full results of the survey are available online at <http://bit.ly/2011OrganicSurvey>.

## DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

### CCE Educates About Disaster Preparation and Recovery

When disaster strikes, NYS citizens turn to Cornell Cooperative Extension for reliable information and research-based educational resources to aid in preparation and recovery efforts.

Through the New York Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN), CCE plays an active role in assisting its federal and state partners to ensure that all New Yorkers receive the help they need in the aftermath of disasters like Hurricane Sandy.

The **New York Extension Disaster Education Network (NY EDEN)** is a collaborative educational network based at Cornell University, dedicated to educating New York residents about preventing, preparing for and recovering from emergencies and disasters that could affect their families and communities. NY EDEN is affiliated with both the national USDA EDEN network and with Cornell University Cooperative Extension.



NY EDEN works to link the emergency preparedness resources of New York agencies and organizations with the community networking and outreach capabilities of Cornell Cooperative Extension Education Centers throughout the state.

CCE's NY EDEN equips county and regionally-based Extension educators to participate in local disaster management and recovery efforts, and provides citizens with education and resources on up-to-date best practices for families, farmers, businesses, and communities.

- ⇒ Do you want to know what to do about power outages, thawing freezers, tree damage, and generators?
- ⇒ Have you experienced flooding and want guidance about flood recovery, mold, and insurance issues?

**If a DISASTER  
hit your Farm or  
Ranch today, would  
you still be in business next month?**

- ✓ FLOOD
- ✓ DROUGHT
- ✓ POWER OUTAGE
- ✓ DISEASE OUTBREAK
- ✓ TERRORIST INCIDENT
- ✓ WINTER STORM
- ✓ FIRE
- ✓ OTHER



# ReadyAG

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for Production Agriculture

**BEFORE disaster strikes, ReadyAG can help you:**

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CATTLE



CROPS



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Ready Ag—Disaster and Defense Preparedness for Production Agriculture developed by Cooperative Extension faculty and staff from Cornell University; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; University of Maryland; Oklahoma State University; The Pennsylvania State University; Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey; and the University of Vermont



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Where trade names appear, no discrimination is intended, and no endorsement by Penn State Cooperative Extension is implied.

**PROJECT SUPPORTED BY USDA/NIFA**

In partnership with land-grant universities, and other public and private organizations, NIFA provides the focus to advance a global system of extramural research, extension, and higher education in the food and agricultural sciences.



United States Department of Agriculture

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

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Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USDA – NIFA.

⇒ Are you a farmer who has experienced the effects of Hurricane Sandy and have agriculture-related questions and concerns?

Visit the CCE NY EDEN website at <http://eden.cce.cornell.edu/> to get factsheets and other resources for home or business use. We have compiled evidence-based resources from across the nation, combining the research expertise and experience of more than 50 land-grant universities, in addition to Cornell.

**Reducing Storm Damage to Your Greenhouses** - John W. Bartok, Jr., *Extension Professor Emeritus and Agricultural Engineer, NRME Department, University of Connecticut, Storrs CT 06269-4087*

Nature seems to be getting more violent in recent years with frequent earthquakes, increased numbers of hurricanes and record breaking snowstorms. Insurance damage claims have increased considerably. The International Building Code has revised upward its wind and snow loading requirements for some areas of the U.S.

Each year there are reports of greenhouses that have been damaged by weather and natural events. Greenhouse design is different than conventional farm buildings in that the structural profile has to be small to allow maximum light to reach the plants. Most farm buildings are over designed to handle severe weather conditions.

Damage to greenhouses can include racking of the frame, bending of the hoops, broken glass or torn plastic and uplifted foundation posts. Preparation ahead of time can minimize the damage.

### **Wind loading**

Wind forces that act on a greenhouse are influenced by numerous factors including the basics wind speed, building orientation, exposure, height and shape of doors or vents that may be open. The wind passing over a greenhouse creates a positive pressure on the windward side and a negative pressure on the leeward side. These can combine to create a force that wants to collapse or overturn the building. An 80 mph wind can produce a pressure of 16 pounds per square foot (psf). For example, the 10' by 100' sidewall of a gutter-connected greenhouse would have to resist a 16,000 pound force.

Wind can also create a force similar to an aircraft wing that wants to lift the greenhouse off the ground. An 80 mph wind blowing perpendicular to the side of a 28' x 100' hoophouse can create a lifting force of 220 pounds per foot of length or 22,000 pounds of uplift on the whole structure. When you consider the total weight of materials and equipment in the greenhouse is about 6000 pounds, the foundation must have a withdrawal resistance of about 300 pounds each. This is why building inspectors frequently require that the posts be surrounded by concrete.

Although you have no control over the force or direction of severe winds, here are a few tips to help minimize storm damage:

Check the area for loose objects. Anything that can be picked up and hurled through the glazing should be secured or moved indoors. Metal chimney (stove pipe) sections should be secured with sheet metal screws.

Inspect for dry or weak tree limbs that could fall on the greenhouse.

Close all openings including vents, louvers and doors. The effective force of the wind is doubled when it is allowed inside the building. The wind on the outside puts a pressure or lifting force on the structure. The wind inside tries to force the walls and roof off.

On air inflated greenhouses, increase the inflation pressure slightly by opening the blower's intake valve. This will reduce the rippling effect. Check to see that the plastic is attached securely and that any holes are taped.

Disconnect the arm to the motor on all ventilation - intake shutters and tape the shutters closed. Then turn on enough exhaust fans to create a vacuum in the greenhouse. This will suck the plastic tight against the frame.

Windbreaks can reduce the wind speed and deflect it over the greenhouse. Conifer trees (hemlock, spruce, pine, etc.) in a double row located at least 50' upwind from the greenhouse can reduce the damaging effects of the wind. Wood or plastic storm fencing can be used as a temporary measure.

### **Snow loading**

Snow that accumulates on a greenhouse can put significant weight on the structural members. Snow loads vary considerably from 0 along the southern coastline to more than 100 pounds per square foot in Northern Maine. Local building codes specify the design snow load.

Snow can be light and fluffy with a water equivalent of 12 inches of snow equal to 1 inch of rain. It can also be wet and heavy with 3 inches equal to 1 inch of rain. Snow having a 1 inch rain water equivalent will load a greenhouse with 5.2 psf. This amounts to 6.5 tons on a 25' x 96' greenhouse.

The following are a few pointers to consider before the next snow season:

The foundation piers or posts should be large enough to support the weight of the building including crop and equipment loads.

All greenhouses should have diagonal bracing to keep it from racking from the weight of the snow or force of the wind.

Collar ties and post connections should have adequate bolts or screws. This is a weak point in some greenhouse designs.

Allow 10' to 12' between individual greenhouse for snow accumulation and to prevent sidewalls from being crushed in.

When building new hoopouses, consider using a gothic design that sheds snow easier. In hoop shaped houses, install 2 inch x 4 inch posts under the ridge every 10' when heavy snow is predicted.

The heating system should be large enough to maintain 60F to melt snow and ice. It takes 250 Btu/hr per square foot of glazing to melt a wet snow falling at a rate of 1 inch per hour. Heat should be turned on in the greenhouse or under the gutter several hours before the storm begins.

The plastic should be tight and inflated to at least 0.25 inch water pressure. This can be checked with a monometer. Any cracked or broken glass should be replaced.

Energy screens should be retracted to allow heat to the glazing.

A standby generator should be available with adequate fuel for the duration of the storm to power heaters, fans and blowers.

Selection of greenhouses that meet the International Building Code and good construction techniques are important considerations when building new greenhouses. A little preparation before a storm can minimize damage from severe weather events.

(UMASS Amherst Greenhouse Crops and Floriculture Program Factsheets (<http://extension.umass.edu/floriculture/fact-sheets/>).

## **FOCUS ON PEST MANAGEMENT**

**Disease Snapshot: Angular Leaf Spot of Strawberry** - Zachary Frederick, Graduate Student and Dr. Kerik D. Cox, Assistant Professor Plant-Pathology & Plant-Microbe Biology, Cornell University

**Causes:** *Xanthomonas fragariae*

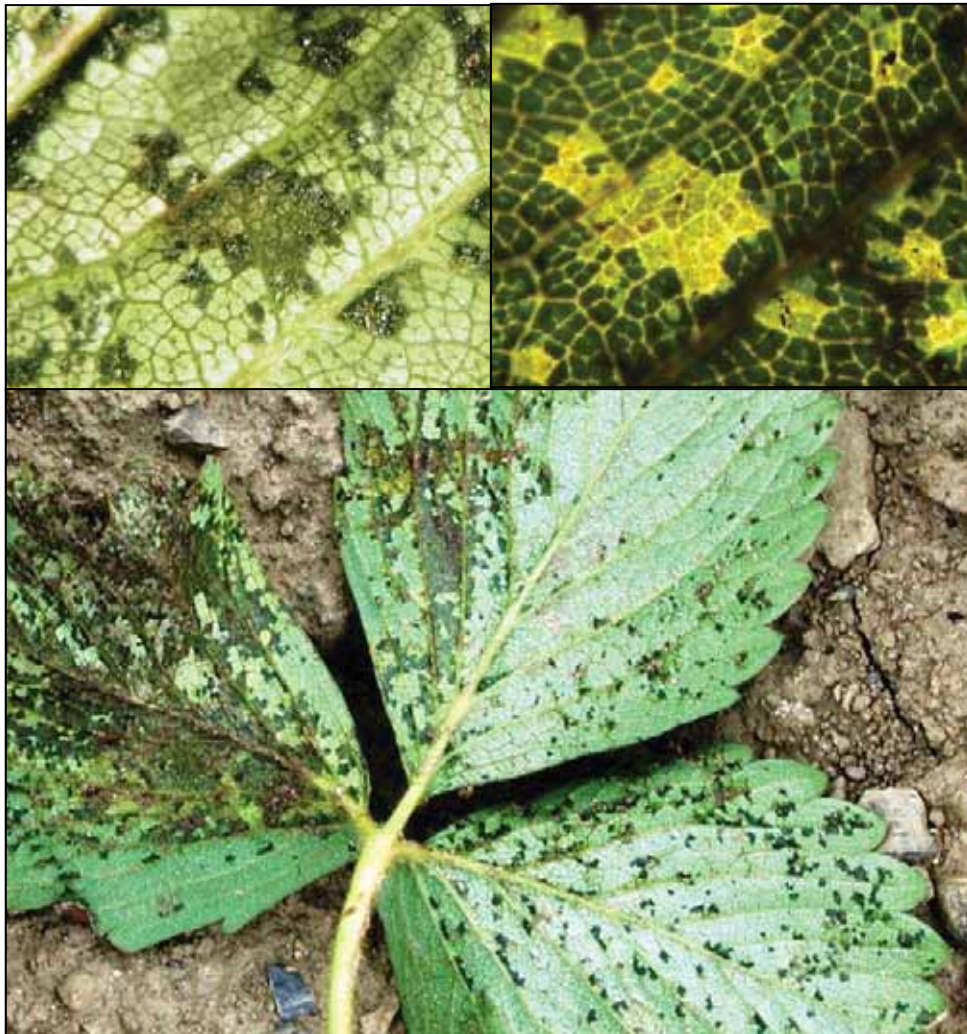
**When to watch for it:** Year round.

**First line of defense:** Purchase disease free stock.

**Summary:** Angular leaf spot of strawberry has been introduced to major production areas by the importing infected plant material. The bacterial pathogen, *X. fragariae*, is very resistant to desiccation and can survive adverse conditions for extended periods in or on dead plant matter both in transit and in the field. *X. fragariae* cannot overwinter freely in soils, which implies that one key cultural control is the removal of strawberry plant matter before new production fields are planted. Young, vigorous plants are more likely to be infected during the spring when temperatures remain around 68°F during the day and when the leaf wetness is prolonged by rain or sprinkler irrigation. Symptoms begin as water soaked lesions that enlarge but are delimited by veins, creating the angular spots. The lesions are easiest to identify by their translucent appearance when viewed with transmitted light, but look green when light is reflected over the leaf surface. During moist periods viscous bacterial ooze may be visible on the undersides of infected leaves, which dries to a white film. Severe infections will result in the death of the leaf.

Preventing the introduction of *X. fragariae* on transplants has proven to be more effective than control measures. Applications of streptomycin sulfate and oxytetracycline has shown to be effective protectants in the early season, but not be labeled for agricultural use. Applications of copper hydroxide (Kocide) have also been effective protectants on 6 days intervals. However, more than 7 applications may result in the development of severe phytotoxic symptoms on treated tissues. An organic option is the use of hydrogen peroxide (Oxidate) at highest rate if disease pressure is severe.





Above, **A:** The bacterial lesions seen from the underside of an infected strawberry leaf. In direct (transmitting) light, the lesions are transparent. Unlike in **B:** where the lesions are a different shade of green in reflected light, which is a characteristic feature for identification. Above, **C:** the underside of a severely infected strawberry leaf showing that lesions coalesce if they are prevalence enough.

**Spotted Winged Drosophila – Forcing Berry Growers to Evaluate Options** *Laura McDermott, Capital District Vegetable and Small Fruit Program*

Berry production in New York State has never been easy, as berries are highly perishable crops that require a great deal of hand labor. Until now however, blueberries, strawberries, raspberries and blackberries have been worth the effort as consumers valued locally grown, high quality fresh fruit. The onset of Spotted Winged Drosophila, *Drosophila suzukii*, (SWD) resulted in a significant loss of late season blueberries and has forced many growers to close fall raspberry fields well ahead of schedule to avoid selling infested fruit to customers.

SWD has been monitored throughout the state for most of the spring and summer, and was caught in very low numbers throughout most of the winter (2011-12) in Suffolk County LI. In the beginning of July 2012, southern areas of the state started catching very small numbers of mature flies in vinegar baited traps and by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in July most regions involved in trapping were finding specimens. Unfortunately, at the same time these first captures were being positively identified as SWD, researchers were finding larvae in fruit that was randomly being picked and examined for oviposition scars etc. An initial discovery was that the traps were not capturing early fly presence. Within 2 weeks populations of SWD had risen dramatically so that most berry growers became aware of a problem before they knew what it was. In New England, single trap counts in a 1 week interval exceeded 3,000 individual flies. A map of the sightings of this pest is available at: <http://hudsonvf.cce.cornell.edu/NY%20SWD%20Monitoring.html>.

The adult flies lay eggs that mature rapidly, in optimum conditions in as little as 2 hours, and the resulting larvae quickly begins consuming the fruit. As the larvae grow, fruit quality rapidly deteriorates.



Crops that are susceptible include raspberry and blackberries, cherry, peaches, plums, strawberries, elderberries and blueberries. These crops should be protected with insecticides as SWD has been in most areas across the state. Tomatoes, specifically cherry tomatoes, may also be a target for egg laying, but it is unclear if the eggs will mature in the less hospitable tomato fruit. Thin skinned grape cultivars may also be at risk. Many wild hosts such as pokeweed and autumn olive exist.

When constructing a spray program, be aware of the REI and PHI for each material as these may not be the same from crop to crop. A maximum of 7 days should be allowed between sprays in order to interrupt the life cycle of this pest and slow the population growth. Growers should carefully evaluate their spray application equipment and prioritize investment in appropriate pesticide delivery tools.

Some cultural controls include clean picking and removing all culls from the field. Cull piles of apples and tomatoes, despite the fact that they are not a desired host, may also prove to be breeding grounds for SWD. Fruit that is harvested should immediately be stored in a cooler set as close to 32° as possible. Consumers should be advised that fruit should be immediately stored in the refrigerator.

Fly exclusion using very fine insect netting like ProTek 80 may provide protection for small plantings and there is some literature implying that it is possible to use baited traps to trap-out adults. Given the incredibly large populations witnessed by this extension person, it is hard to imagine that this could be successful, but it may be a technique worth using in the future.

Farmers, researchers and extension personnel will be sharing information and developing research priorities this fall. At this juncture there are many questions and few answers but it is imperative to find successful management strategies for this serious threat to the berry industry.

For more information about SWD, visit <http://www.fruit.cornell.edu/berry/pestaalerts/drosophilapestaalert.html>.

### **How to Avoid a Common Blueberry Planting Error - Mark Longstroth, Michigan State University Extension**

*Blueberries are often planted in the fall. Break up the root ball at planting so new roots grow out into the native soil.*

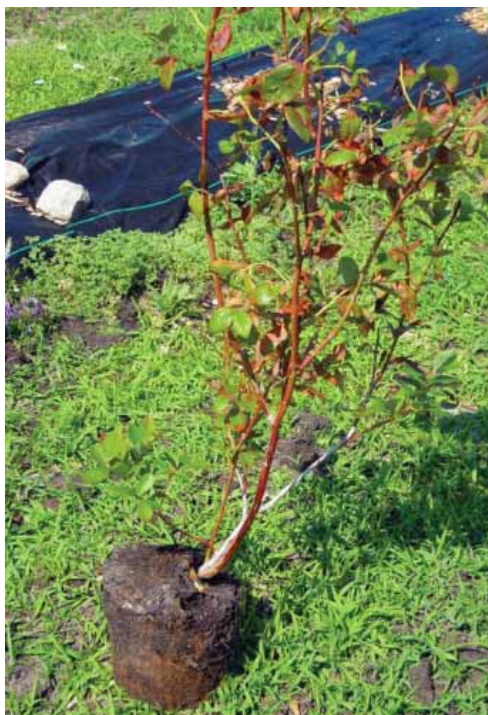
**October 16, 2012.** I am often called to look at new blueberry plantings to determine what is wrong because of poor growth. Many times the field was planted before the soil was tested and the soil pH was too high for blueberries. Blueberries prefer a soil pH of 4.5 to 5.5.

Sometimes the soil pH is fine, but the plants stopped growing early or dried up during the first dry weather of the summer, even in fields that have irrigation. When this is the case, I can often walk up to the plant and easily pull it out of the soil. The plant's roots never moved out of the peat soil that they grew in when they were raised in the nursery. This is especially true when the soil texture in the field is different than the potting medium the plant grew in before.

The peat mixtures used to grow blueberry plants hold water very well, but the sandy soils in many blueberry plantings do not. As the soil water drains away, there is little reason for the plant roots to grow into the relatively dry sand. This results in a small, restricted root system supporting a relatively large plant. This problem is not apparent early in the season when there are few leaves and the soils are moist. Later

as the plant develops leaves, it starts to use more and more water until the day comes when the plant sucks all the water out of the little pocket of peat soil where its roots are.

I see this problem usually in sandy soils, but I also see it in heavier soils. I often see it in young plants where they just are not growing. They get off to a good start in the spring and then just stop and sit there for the rest of the year because the small root system just cannot supply enough water to the leaves to allow the shoots to grow for very long in the spring before they run out of water and stop. These plants just sit there year after year. They grow a little bit every spring and then shut down and hang on for the rest of the growing season. Often, people think the plant needs more fertilizer and sometimes fertilize them to death by giving them more and more fertilizer to get them to grow. The solution is to dig up these stunted, root-bound plants in the spring or fall and replant them. Be sure to break up the root ball and replant them.



*This 3-year-old plant looked good in the field after planting. It was planted in a trench that was soil and peat. During the hot summer, the leaves dried out and it came out of the ground easily. This bush thrived after the root ball was ripped open and replaced.*

Don't sacrifice a year or more of growth by being in a hurry at planting time. Be sure to thoroughly break up the root ball when you plant the plant. When you pop it out of the pot, don't just cut the edges or shake a little dirt off; pull it apart. Pull the bottom of the root ball apart so the root system is twice as wide and half as deep as it was and spread the root system out in the hole. Let the loose peat fall into the planting hole. Almost all the roots are around the outside of the soil mass where the aeration in the pot was best and this is where all the new roots will come from.

If there is a real difference in soil texture between the potting medium and the native soil, add some peat. This is especially true if the soil is mostly sand or clay. Compost or composted manures are not usually good to add to the planting hole since these materials have a higher, more neutral pH. These materials will raise the soil pH higher than blueberries like in the soil.

When you plant blueberries, your objective is to grow a big productive bush in eight to 12 years, and that bush requires a big root system. Make every effort to get the roots off to a good start so they can support vigorous growth for years to come. If the root system is restricted, that plant will always be small.

*(This article was published by [Michigan State University Extension](http://www.msue.msu.edu). For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>.)*

## Scientists Find Aphid Resistance in Black Raspberry - Sharon Durham, USDA ARS News Service



**October 31, 2012.** There's good news for fans of black raspberries: A U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) scientist and his commercial colleague have found black raspberries that have resistance to a disease-spreading aphid.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) horticulturist Chad Finn with the agency's Horticultural Crops Research Unit in Corvallis, Ore., and colleague Michael Dosssett of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada are the first to find and report black raspberry resistance to the large raspberry aphid. (Left: *The raspberry aphid, Amphorophora agathonica, is a major culprit in spreading black raspberry necrosis virus and raspberry mottle virus. Photo by Stephen Ausmus*)

ARS is USDA's chief intramural scientific research agency, and this research supports the USDA priority of promoting international food security.

The researchers screened seedlings from 132 wild black raspberry populations for aphid resistance.

According to Finn, strong resistance was found in three of these populations—one each from Ontario, Maine, and Michigan. Aphid resistance in the Ontario and Maine populations seems to be controlled by multiple genes, while resistance in the Michigan population is governed by one dominant gene.

Identifying these genes makes it easier for breeders to incorporate aphid resistance into commercial black raspberry cultivars.

Aphid control is important because fruit production is severely impacted by black raspberry necrosis virus, which is transmitted by the large raspberry aphid. This and other aphids are important virus vectors in North American black raspberries. (Right: *Geneticist Chad Finn evaluates black raspberry plants for resistance to black raspberry necrosis virus. Photo by Stephen Ausmus.*)



Although breeding for aphid resistance has been recognized as an important tool for protecting red raspberries from viral infection, this is the first report of aphid resistance in black raspberry, according to Finn.

## Research Aims to Extend Strawberry Growing Season in Mid-Atlantic Region - Sharon Durham, USDA ARS News Service

October 22, 2012. Growing strawberry plants in the U.S. Mid-Atlantic region beneath canopy-like structures called low tunnels can allow the season to start earlier and continue through the summer and fall, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) scientists. (Right: *ARS geneticist Kim Lewers and ARS horticulturist John Enns are testing the idea of growing strawberries under low row covers to extend the berry's growing season in the northern and eastern United States.*)



At the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Genetic Improvement of Fruits and Vegetables Laboratory in Beltsville, Md., geneticist Kim Lewers is testing some strawberry cultivars in the new production system designed to extend the growing season in the northern and eastern United States. Lewers' research partners are horticulturist John Enns and support services staffer George Meyers. ARS is USDA's chief intramural scientific research agency.

Low tunnels are canopies made of long sheets of plastic laid over support hoops that hold it about 30 inches above the strawberry bed. Strawberries are planted beneath these structures, which protect the fruit from rain, provide shade from damaging infrared and UV light, and can capture warmth during the cooler spring and fall seasons. (Left: *Low tunnels can extend the strawberry growing season and allow ARS scientists to develop cultivars that produce fruit over several months. Photo by Stephen Ausmus.*)

By protecting the plants from rain, the tunnels help to minimize two important diseases of strawberry, *Botrytis* and anthracnose, which thrive in the rain. *Botrytis* occurs in cool, wet conditions, while



anthracnose takes hold in hot, wet conditions.

According to Lewers, high tunnels also are used by growers, but they can be problematic because the humidity is higher in the tunnel, which causes more *Botrytis* and more powdery mildew, another strawberry disease. But in low tunnels, the humidity is the same as outside the tunnel when the sides of the tunnel are up.

The Maryland peak strawberry season is usually mid-May to mid-June, but in Lewers' low-tunnel production system, strawberries start earlier and continue through the fall—essentially a whole new season. In some months, yields in the low tunnels can be as high as those from the same cultivars when they are grown in California, where they were developed.

All of the strawberry plant material developed in Lewers' research program has been and still is freely available. The plants are not patented, so they are available without special license to any nursery that wants to grow them.

### **Scientists Aim to Sustainably Outsmart 'Super Weeds'** - [Sarah Thompson](#), Trumansburg, NY.

**Oct. 22, 2012.** Across the United States, fields of genetically engineered crops have become laboratories for the evolution of glyphosate-resistant (GR) weeds. These fast-growing "super weeds" -- resistant to the highly effective herbicide glyphosate -- are cutting crop yields and raising costs for farmers, whose only recourse is to spray more and different chemicals.

The issue, according to Matthew Ryan, assistant professor of crop and soil sciences, isn't going away; three new GR weed species have been documented since January, bringing the total to 24. To combat GR weeds, the agrichemical industry has developed new transgenic crops that are resistant to multiple herbicides. But Ryan and Thomas Bjorkman, associate professor of horticultural sciences, believe this is not a long-term solution. *(Right: Scientists are looking for a sustainable method to help farmers combat "super weeds.")*



"The industry's solution doesn't get at the problem of using a single tactic for weed management," said Ryan. "It's not just herbicides. Overusing any one method of weed management, even hand weeding, can create selection pressure on weeds to build resistance."

Just as the overuse of certain antibiotics led to resistant bacteria strains, "super weeds" emerged shortly after transgenic GR crops were introduced in 1996 and farmers began relying almost exclusively on glyphosate to control weeds in those crops. This is why Ryan and Bjorkman are investing instead in preventing the evolution and spread of GR weeds by using diverse integrated weed management (IWM) strategies.

"Prevention involves killing weeds with multiple modes of action, and preventing movement of any potentially resistant weeds from field to field, or from field margins into fields," Bjorkman said.

Integrated weed management includes tactics such as cover cropping, mechanical cultivation, mowing, mulching, crop rotation and targeted herbicide application. Ryan's research shows that using multiple IWM strategies is most effective for managing weeds. IWM strategies also help lower the selection pressure on weeds, preventing them from easily developing resistance.

But Ryan said prevention is a tough sell to farmers who aren't currently battling GR weeds. Bjorkman believes this is because most farmers' finances don't take into account the benefits of avoiding future uncontrollable weed infestations. Also, the industry has pushed their transgenic seed and herbicide development research toward simplicity.

"There are instructions on bottles of herbicides, but not on integrated weed management plans," said Ryan. "IWM can be economical and feasible, but we need more on-the-ground research and work with farmers."

To fill this gap, Ryan and Bjorkman are refining IWM techniques to make them easier for farmers to adapt to their locations and cropping schedules. Ryan is conducting cover crop seeding rate experiments on farms in New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland and North Carolina. He is also leading a newly funded multistate project to research pre-harvest interseeding of cover crops in corn and soybean fields.

Bjorkman's cover crop research has fueled development of two online decision tools that help farmers narrow down to a small number myriad choices for cover-cropping by situation. Bjorkman designed one [tool for New York vegetable farmers](#); the other, developed in conjunction with the Midwest Cover Crops Council, [covers several states with an emphasis on field crops](#).

Ryan and Bjorkman hope their research and aggressive outreach will encourage more farmers to shift away from rote applications of glyphosate herbicides to more diversified weed management strategies. Large-scale farmers remain skeptical about whether IWM is practical for their size. But Bjorkman said there is nothing inherent about large-scale farms that make tactics such as cover cropping impossible or less effective.

"There are large farms that cover crop successfully and, in their analysis, profitably," Bjorkman said.

*(Sarah Thompson is a freelance writer based in Trumansburg, N.Y. Reprinted from Cornell Chronicle Online at: <http://www.news.cornell.edu/>.)*

## **Challenges to Feeding the Seven Billion and Beyond – Part I: Food Production Strategies - George Silva, Michigan State University Extension**

*The first in a series of articles to review some of the current information gathered by scientists and stimulate an unbiased discussion on food security and environmental stewardship among all segments of the society.*

In a [Michigan Farmer](#) article titled [Strategy for feeding world now and later](#) published in June 2012, I provided an overview of the challenges that lie ahead for feeding the current seven billion people on earth.

In 2050 the population is projected to be nine billion people. Agricultural production will need to double because of better living standards to meet the food, fiber, animal feed and biofuel needs. Farmers worldwide will be expected to grow crops and raise livestock under conditions of rising input costs, dwindling natural resources, stricter environmental regulations and climate change.

It is also clear that the debate is broader than just production agriculture. It includes the complex food system that deals with economic and social relationships and linkages that tie the food consumers to producers. A billion people in the world today are either malnourished or have no access to adequate food, primarily due to logistics, dietary habits or ill-conceived government policies. Meanwhile, 1.3 billion are overweight or obese.

### **Shifting food habits**

In terms of resource utilization, plant-based diets are generally more efficient than animal protein-based diets, partly because not all the calories are captured when feed goes through an animal.

However, as developing countries progress and their incomes rise, about four billion people in the world are currently changing their dietary habits seeking to consume more meat. This will require additional crops to feed animals, putting enormous demands on the limited land, water and nutrient resources.



Even though plant-based diets are more efficient in feeding people, currently only 60 percent of the plant food is directly fed to humans, the balance consumed by livestock and used for biofuels. A point that should not be ignored here is that livestock is capable of utilizing roughages and low quality biomass unfit for human consumption and convert them to high quality milk and meat.

### **Food production strategies**

An international team of environmental and agricultural scientists has recently proposed a five-point plan to double food production by 2050 without seriously affecting the environment. These points are summarized below:

**1. Closing “yield gaps” on underperforming lands.** Parts of Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Asia are known to have substantial yield gaps because of farmland not producing to its full potential. Researchers reported that by simply using improved crop varieties and better management practices, the current corn, wheat and rice yields could be increased substantially.

**2. Closing “diet gaps” with plant-based rations.** This involves shifting to more balanced diets with emphasis on plant-based food. This will provide opportunities to increase efficiencies in resource utilization and feed more people per acre compared to animal protein-rich diets.

**3. Increase production efficiencies.** This implies the strategic use of scarce and expensive inputs such as fertilizer, pesticides, water and animal feed. There is room for reallocation of resources



from areas that use too much to areas where not enough inputs are used.

**4. Reduce waste and spoilage.** It is estimated that 30 percent of both plant and animal-based food is wasted in the supply chain due to lack of markets and infrastructure. Consumers and retailers should also consider reducing domestic waste.

**5. Address the issues of land degradation and unrestrained agricultural expansion at the expense of rain forests and wetlands.** The [Food and Agriculture Organization](#) (FAO) has reported that from 1990 to 2005 the world lost 3 percent of its total forest area. Net forest losses amount to 7.3 million hectares per year. Some 40 percent of world's agriculture land is degraded, exposed to erosion and loss of top soil. Embracing conservation practices on forests and wetlands preserves soil quality and biodiversity and reduces the overall carbon footprint from agriculture.

One important consideration that needs to be added to this list is the role of science and technological innovation towards increased agriculture production. This includes the potential applications of biotechnology and genetically modified crops. That topic will be discussed in [Part II](#) of this series.

Throughout the past, agriculture has faced many complex challenges. Human ingenuity triumphed when confronted with the same challenge in the mid-20th century. It was achieved through the implementation of the "green revolution" spearheaded by U.S. scientists. This time, however, a new blueprint will be needed considering the scarce natural resources and fragile environment.

The challenge to feed the expanding population requires global approaches. A fundamental need for any successful outcome would be the greater cooperation, respect and compromises between opposing viewpoints, rich and poor economies, rural and urban populations, traditionalists and environmentalists, and food producers and consumers. The demands of feeding a global population will economically impact our local farmers, consumers and rural communities. [Michigan State University Extension](#) with its tradition and history will be called upon to educate and assist all segments of the society in dealing with this humanitarian issue.

For additional information, read [Solutions for a cultivated planet](#) by Foley et al. Nature. Volume 478 337–342 pp. Oct 20, 2011, and [Sustainable agriculture systems in the 21st century](#) by the National Research Council.

## **Challenges to Feeding the Seven Billion and Beyond – Part II: Role of Scientific Innovations- *George Silva, Michigan State University Extension***

*This is the second in a series of articles to review some of the current information on challenges to feeding the nine billion world population in 2050.*

Production agriculture has become a fertile ground for technological innovations. From small farmers who tweet the availability of their U-pick crops, to dairy farmers who rely on robots to milk their cows. Farm operators have discovered that they can benefit immensely from advanced technology. With scarcity of inputs, competition for land and water combined with climate change, farmers are realizing that technology can help towards sustainable production protecting the biodiversity and environment degradation. Emerging technologies, such as biotechnology, powerful sensors for precision farming and diagnostics, waste treatment, food preservation and genetically modified crops have the greatest impacts on production agriculture.

Genetically modified crops, or GMOs, despite some initial controversy, have revolutionized agriculture. In the future, scientists will be able to develop new varieties that can lead to a dramatic reduction in the use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. Scientists have already developed vitamin and iron-rich crops that are much needed by the children in sub-Saharan Africa. Another potential has been the development of climate-resistant crops that can withstand environmental stresses such as drought and flooding. Industry watchers predict that seed genetics will be a sustainable pathway to boost food supplies.

With advanced genomic insight and molecular markers, scientists will be able to identify and transfer complex traits that require more than one gene, such as water utilization. There is also realization that yields need to be driven not just through breeding, but also improved agronomic practices. Scientific advancements have led to the development of GPS-based precision planting tools and site-specific practices.

The opponents of GMO believe there may be long-term risks associated with transferring genes across species. However, no major adverse human health effects have occurred to date due to the consumption of GM crops, nor are any anticipated in the future. Ultimately, it is the nature of the society, as much as science, that will determine what options it will choose to adequately feed its people.

Greater understanding of the soil microbes and nutrient recycling would enable scientists to unleash vast quantities of the nutrients that are present in the soil, but not currently available to plants. Rather than depending on chemical fertilizers, farmers will be able to feed and

propagate soil microbes that will, in turn, release nutrients that are currently tied up in the soil. The same approach can be taken to identify microbes that will enable N fixation in non-leguminous plants.

At the cellular level, scientists are beginning to unravel why photosynthesis in plants is not as efficient as it could be. Photosynthesis is the process by which green plants as primary food producers are able to produce food by combining water and carbon dioxide in the presence of sunlight and chlorophyll. Even though photosynthesis has evolved over millions of years, one bottleneck has been an enzyme known as RuBisCO. Scientists in the United States and the United Kingdom have found that some naturally occurring green algae have developed a genetic mechanism to create high concentrations of carbon dioxide inside their cells, “turbo boosting” the enzyme RuBisCo to work at maximum efficiency.

By transferring such genes to crop plants, scientists hope to significantly increase crop yield. This work will provide new insights into how plants and algae utilize carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. In the long term, these advancements will have a bearing on new ways to improve crop productivity as well as mitigate climate change.

Through scientific innovations from the cellular level to advanced field technologies, modern agriculture is developing new ways to feed the increasing population with the limited resources of land, water and nutrients.

*(These articles were published by [Michigan State University Extension](http://www.msue.msu.edu). For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>.)*

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Questions or comments about the New York Berry News?

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