



**Washington County Ag Report
July 6, 2004**

Contributors are Sandy Buxton, Colleen Converse, Aaron Gabriel, Laura McDermott, and JJ Schell.

“Never ruin an apology with an excuse.” -- Kimberly Johnson

Announcements

FIELD CROP SCOUTING, COME EARN A PESTICIDE RECERTIFICATION CREDIT BY SCOUTING WITH ME FOR ONE HOUR:

No scouting again until July 13, call me on July 12 for the location.

July 13 – NYS Farmer’s Direct Marketing Association Summer Bus Tour in the Finger Lakes Region. For more information or to register contact Diane Eggert at 315-475-1101 or diane99@dreamscape.com.

Wed., July 14, 5-8pm Czajkowski Farms, Hadley MA 170-acre veg & berry farm. Wholesale and PYO berries, machine-picked green beans. New storage facility with washing, peeling and packing line for organic butternut and carrots. Perimeter trap cropping in butternut and pumpkin, and no-till and conventional tillage systems in pumpkins. For More info Contact: Ruth Hazzard, (413)545-3696 of Umass Veg program.

July 14 – Cornell Vegetable Weed Science Field Day, H.C. Thompson Research Farm, Freeville, NY; 9:30 – 2 pm. Pre-registration (\$14.00 includes coffee/beverage, doughnuts, lunch, and informational trial packet) is due by July 8th. Contact Sue Thompson at 607-255-7889 or sdt1@cornell.edu. CCA and DEC credits available.

Friday, July 23 – 11-3, Make Something With Your Milk – a field day touring and talking with several small value-added dairy businesses and distributors. Register with Regional Farm and Food project at 271-0744. CCE will be driving if you would like to carpool out – call Sandy.

Monday, August 9, See What’s New with Manure Management Tour – Ridgecrest Dairy, Genoa; Fessenden Farms; Dairy Support Services (mobile draghose demonstration), and Cornell Manure Compost Facility. See McClanhan sand-manure separator, Integrity liquid-solids separator, dissolved air flotation system, forced-air composting, vermicular processing, and more. Call Northeast DairyBusiness to register (\$10) at 800-334-1904, Ext 222. *I will be taking a van out to the tour. Call Aaron for a seat, 800-548-0881. Leave 1st Pioneer in Greenwich at 6:30 am and return at about 9 pm. Bring a couple dollars for gas & dinner money.*

Midwest Commodity Prices - from the Wall Street Journal

Corn per bushel	\$2.48/bu	Cotton Seed Meal per ton	\$182/ton
Soybean per bushel	9.20/bu	Corn Gluten Feed	72/ton
Hominy Feed per ton	79/ton	Wheat, soft white	4.02/bu
48% Soybean meal per ton	329/ton	Tallow per pound	.2/lb

These prices are provided only to show where the general market trends are moving and to help you determine appropriate ration ingredients. Local prices will vary due to shipping, processing, and discounts.

Weather Data – 2004 and average of 1999 - 2003

	Argyle		Easton		Whitehall		Jackson	
	2004	Average '99 – '03	2004	Average '99 – '03	2004	Average '99 – '03	2004	Last Year
Rain Past Week	1.65	0.77	0.80	0.70	0.74	1.74	0.98	0.00
So far this month	1.19	0.48	0.80	1.19	0.27	1.58	0.98	0.00
Total since April 1 st	11.83	10.16	11.80	11.80	10.45	11.83	13.22	7.74
GDD Base 41 Growing Degree Days = [hi temp + low temp]/2 – 41								
Past Week	199	229	164	228	201	238	196	233
Since April 1 st	1626	1623	1701	1695	1868	1843	1677	1660
GDD 86/50 [hi temp + low temp]/2 - 50 High's >86°F are set to 86°F, low's <50°F are set to 50°F								
Past Week	138	161	118	155	140	167	133	152
Since April 1 st	1099	1093	1181	1166	1248	1244	1165	1138

DAIRY NOTES: As the summer heat intensifies so does the bacteria count in your milk if the proper steps aren't taken to minimize growth in your milking equipment and bulk tank storage facilities. According to a recent article by Quality Milk Promotion Services in the July issue of Northeast Dairy Business there are six ways to cut your bacteria count. First ensure your wash systems are operating correctly by periodically checking water temperature and that cleaners are being dispensed properly. Second make sure your entire milking system is getting washed, including some bulk tanks that might be only getting picked up on a semi regular basis. Partial pickups can lead to the buildup of milk protein and fat if the system is not washed during this 48-hour time frame. Third it is important to visually inspect milk and wash water contact service for buildup or film to ensure your wash system is working effectively. The fourth way is to maintain routine maintenance of your milking system according to manufactures recommendations and changing schedules to meet increased demand on the system like milking more cows. Ensure water quality is not affecting the effectiveness of the cleaning products by having your cleaning products representative do periodic checks. Finally make sure proper milking procedure protocol includes sanitized and dry teats before milking. The recently high milk prices have made your tank of milk valuable so don't wait till you have to pay for a truckload of high bacteria milk to initiate these practices.

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: Many farms that have part-time and youth labor develop systems for performing jobs that are focused around standard operating procedures or SOPs. It may be hard to see how having a manual or page of standard operating procedures could enhance your business but that may be because you never really thought about how much time it takes to train employees and how much variation there can be. Like the game of watching how a whispered story develops into something completely different, instructions have a habit of developing constantly which is not always desired.

Having written SOPs provides a good basis for training, consistency with all of the employees, and something against which performance can be measured. Think about what it could mean to your business. For more info, give Sandy a call.

Sorry no Crops Report this week. Look for more info next week.

VEGETABLES

'Pulse' Drip Irrigation To Improve Water Efficiency:

Running drip for several hours at a time can create downward channels in the soil, which will result in water moving predominantly down through the soil. Consequently it will be difficult to provide plants with adequate water later in the summer when plants are bigger and need more water. If the watering period is broken up ('pulsed'), with an hour or 2 off after 1-2 hr on, there will be more lateral movement of water as this will also occur during the intermittent times when the drip is off. Monitor soil under plastic so that the bed does not get too dry between irrigation periods, and also that it isn't kept too wet which will provide conditions favorable for root rot. Use irrometers to measure soil moisture and/or lift the edge of the bed and look at the soil. (*Meg McGrath* LI Fruit and Veg Update)

Late Blight Found in Western NY- Tom Zitter, Cornell, Samples from two fields in western NY were delivered to Cornell University this morning (July 1, 2004) to confirm the occurrence of late blight. Indications are that the inoculum source was a nearby cull pile that had not been properly treated. Growers have been advised to begin sprays on these and adjoining fields using a combination of Curzate (cymoxanil) plus Bravo (chlorothalonil). Curzate should be used at the rate of 3.3 oz/A and Bravo Weather Stik at 1 1/2 pt/A (Bravo Ultrex at 1.4 lb/A). This same tank mix combination should be repeated in 5 days. Attempts to get the worse affected field destroyed are underway.

Pesticides: Are You Exposing Your Family to Pesticides? – At the 2004 Dry Bean Meeting last March growers learned just how easy it is to expose your family to pesticide residues. A dye that is only visible under ultraviolet light was used to “contaminate” a spray boom and nozzles, the top of a “pesticide” can, and a sprayed “field” (carpet). Two “growers”, one with personal protective equipment and one without, mixed “pesticide” in a spray tank, “sprayed”, and unclogged a nozzle. Afterwards, we could see with a black light that the grower without the PPE had “pesticide” on his hands, shoes and hat while the other grower was clean, except for where she touched the other grower’s “contaminated” hat! In addition, the audience had walked through the “field” when coming back from lunch and their shoes were also “contaminated.” University researchers have shown that farmer’s have pesticide residues in their carpets, probably from tracking them in on their boots. Don’t bring pesticide residues home to your family! Read and follow the PRECAUTIONARY STATEMENTS at the beginning of each label. (OWYS Veg Update)

7/1/04 Veg Update By John Mishanec, IPM Vegetable Program. To receive the entire Vegetable Pest Status Report (PSR) by e-mail, sign up now. Information is obtained from CCE agents, field scouts and growers from New Jersey up to the Canadian border. The PSR will be updated weekly, usually on Tuesday afternoons and more often if important pest events are

happening. Emergency information on insects or diseases will go out as it happens to warn you about problems you need to know about. Send an e-mail message asking to receive the PSR to jjm27@cornell.edu and you will be on the list. Best of all, it's free.

Tomatoes: We are starting to find some tomato diseases. A little earlier, we found a field of tomatoes with **white mold**. White mold can come in through spores in the air, on seed and it can be in the ground from previous infestations. Stems on tomatoes dry up and turn tan colored. Plants will be effected randomly through the field. If you open up the stem, you will find white fluffy growth and little black fruiting bodies that look like grains of black rice. These are called sclerotia. They can stay active in the soil for 5 years or more and re-infect susceptible plants. At this point Tom Zitter at Cornell recommends removing infected plants from the field. Be careful when removing them, as you do not want to spread the sclerotia through out the field or around your farm. Put infected plants in a bag and remove them from any area where you will likely grow vegetables. There is nothing you can spray to help slow down the disease.

Next on tomatoes, we have found a field with **Phytophthora**. This disease is one of the most difficult to control as it stays in the ground for a long time and has a wide host range from vine crops to tomatoes. Plants grown from seed will damp off while transplants will have the stems turn black and the rest of the plant dry up and die. Again, Prof. Tom Zitter recommends removing the infected plants from the field, as we are sure to have more wet weather and it can only spread the disease if they remain in the field.

Otherwise, we are not finding much else in diseases on tomatoes. Professor Chris Smart at the Geneva Experiment Station is looking for samples of bacterial disease so she can study the races. So far, we have not found any. If you find or suspect you have a bacterial disease – canker, speck or spot, give me a call at 518-434-0016 (note the new number) and I will come out and have a look. (jjm)

Cole crops : We are seeing a couple problems on cabbage and kale. On cabbage, we suspect a fungal disease called **black leg**. Early in the disease cycle, the otter edges of the leaves turn black and curl up. You will see black spores on dead tissue. As the disease progresses, the stems will turn black and the plant will die. Copper or Rovral will help stop the spread of the disease as will removing infected plants from the field. The other problem we are seeing is a general browning of lower leaves and stunting of kale. Where the leaf meets the stem, there is blackening and the leaf will usually fall off. Again, we think this is black leg and infected plants should be removed from the field to help stop spread of the diseases. (jjm)

Sweet corn: Many fields of sweet corn have tasseled and full silks can be found. Harvest is not too long away. Scouting fields we are finding anywhere from 30-60% infestation especially on the earlier corn. Later planted fields show less damage. The flight of **European corn borer** (ECB) did not last much past the first week of June. It is important to scout your fields. Later planted corn may not have high levels of damage and therefore may not need to be sprayed. In late whorl corn, look at least 5 locations and five plants per location. Look for elongated holes and frass (sawdust) on the leaves. If you find over 15% then when the field just starts to come into tassel, and the individual tassels are still pointing upright, that is the perfect time to spray the corn. Timing is everything. Knowing the whole field never comes into tassel at once, apply the first spray when 30-40% of the field is showing tassel and then make another application 4-5 days later when the rest of the field is coming into tassel.

With the thunderstorms that have been coming up from the south, I expect we might start seeing some **Corn ear worm (CEW)**. We have put CEW traps out and are scouting for them. (jjm)

Spinach Leaf Miner Spinach leaf miner is the larvae of a fly that burrows between the layers of a leaf eating everything but the epidermis. Early damage is a slender, winding mine but later these expand and become blotches on the leaves. The fly overwinters as pupae in the soil and hatches in late April and May. The adult fly then lays eggs on the leaves and the resulting larvae begin their damage. The oblong white eggs, less than 1 mm long, are laid in neat clusters on the underside of the leaves. They are easy to spot if you scout by looking under the leaves. The maggots may migrate from leaf to leaf down a row. They become fully grown in just a few weeks and drop into the soil to pupate. The entire life cycle is 30-40 days. There are three to four generations per season. Typically mid-late May, late June and mid August are peak activity periods. In most seasons the damage is minimal and the plants will out grow it leaving only early leaves with cosmetic damage. In other years, or other fields in the same year, the damage may be great and if the plants are hit early and the growing is slow because of weather conditions, the loss may be great. If you catch it early enough and you think the crop is worth it, spinosad (Spin-tor 2SC, liquid, or Entrust dry, certified organic; both 1DH) is labeled for spinach leaf miner on beets, swish chard, and spinach. An adjuvant is recommended to improve efficacy. The spinach leaf miner also feeds on beets, chard and many weeds including chickweed, lamb's quarters and nightshade. Weed control and crop rotation are the first line of defense. Row covers can also be used to exclude flies if placed over the crop before flies are active. "Spinach" and "beet" leafminers are very similar species in behavior, appearance, and damage. (Umass Veg Update)

Landscape:

Yellow Woolly Bear caterpillar was identified to be feeding on geraniums this week in Maryland. We occasionally see this insect on a variety of plant material. It can skelotonize the leaves, but is rarely present in numbers that it would put an entire crop at risk.



Yellow Woolly Bear Caterpillar

Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus is widely evident at garden centers. Fortunately most of the infected inventory will be discarded as it is so late in the season. Thrips control is the key to eliminating this disease in greenhouse operations.



Sincerely,

Aaron D. Gabriel
Extension Resource Educator
Crops and Soils