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Washington County Ag Report August 2, 2005

Contributors are Sandy Buxton, Sandy Ferry, Aaron Gabriel, and Laura McDermott. Thanks to Connie Havens for compilation and formatting.

**“Handle them carefully, for words have more power than atom bombs.”
-- Pearl Stranchan Hurd**

Announcements

Friday, Aug. 12, 4 – 6:30pm - SOIL HEALTH FIELD DAY – at Cornell’s Research Farm in Willsboro, Essex County. CCA credits available. Presentations and demonstrations by Cornell Faculty and staff on tillage management, biological properties of soils, and more. Call me (Aaron) for directions.

Tuesday, August 16th, 2005 6:45 p.m. – 9 p.m. Equine Short Course in Dutchess County, this course will introduce a statewide program for horse farms, the latest in micro-chipping technology and up-to-date information about the devastating disease, EPM (Equine Protozoal Myelitis). To Register: Phone: 845-677-8223, ext. 118 FAX: 845-677-6563
There is a \$10 fee charged for this program.

Tues. - Wed., August 16-17 - Landscape Management Short Course and Floriculture Field Day. Cornell Campus, Ithaca. Focus will be on: Plant Materials at Cornell Plantations, trees, shrubs, perennials, and ground covers. Pest Management-diagnosing insect, diseases and weed pests. Soils and lawn workshops. Cornell campus, Ithaca, NY. Contact: Joann Gruttadaurio jg17@cornell.edu or 607-255-1792.
www.hort.cornell.edu/instruction/short/managelandscape.htm

August 23 - IPM Walk - Diagnosing Problems of Landscape Plants and Turfgrass. 6:30-8:00pm on August 23, 2005 at the RPI campus, Troy, NY, 12180. Contact: Chuck Schmitt at 518-765-3500 or email [cgs34@cornell.edu](mailto:cds34@cornell.edu)

Thursday, September 8th – Coach Bus Trip to Wave Hill Gardens and Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture. Sponsored by Master Gardeners of Washington County, but opened to the general public. Cost is \$50/person for guided tours and transportation. Please call 746-2560 for more information on this trip, or check out our website at <http://www.cce.cornell.edu/washington/washington.html>. Registration is due by August 25th, but trip should fill quickly.

Weather Data – 2005 and average of 1999 - 2004

	Argyle		Easton		Whitehall		Jackson	
	2005	Average '99 – '04	2005	Average '99 – '04	2005	Average '99 – '04	2005	Average '03 – '04
Rain Past Week	0.17	0.92	0.60	0.99	0.75	0.92	0.01	2.05
So far this month	0.00	0.28	0.35	0.67	0.00	0.28	0.00	0.95
Total since April 1 st	15.18	15.00	14.97	15.22	15.70	15.76	15.57	10.36
GDD Base 41 Growing Degree Days = [hi temp + low temp]/2 – 41								
Past Week	222	215	219	216	241	229	217	206
Since April 1 st	2575	2432	2611	2505	3009	2695	2644	2478
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	156	152	149	149	176	162	147	145
Since April 1 st	1763	1656	1828	1726	2064	1843	1862	1710

Midwest Commodity Prices - from the Wall Street Journal

Corn per bushel	\$2.12/bu	Cotton Seed Meal per ton	\$150/ton
Soybean per bushel	6.70/bu	Corn Gluten Feed	53/ton
Hominy Feed per ton	46/ton	Wheat, soft white	3.62/bu
48% Soybean meal per ton	215/ton	Tallow per pound	/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.

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Trading Post

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LIVESTOCK PEST MANAGEMENT: How many flies is too many? For stable flies, count the number of flies on all four legs of 15 cattle. An average of 10 flies per animal is high. For houseflies place at least five traps or 3 X 5 white index cards (spot cards) throughout the barn. Traps are plastic gallon jugs with two 4-inch holes cut out of the upper two sides with fly bait placed in the bottom. Suspend the traps with 18- to 24-inch wires from rafters, etc. Catching >250/week per trap means you have too many flies. Attache spot cards to obvious resting surfaces. High fly activity is indicated by >100 fly spots (fecal or regurgitation spots) per card per week.

AG ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Farm to Chef Express announces "A Trip to the Source" Farm Tour for Chefs

Chefs participating in Farm to Chefs Express (FCX) and other friends of FCX have been invited to tour several farms and meet the farmers. All producers are encouraged to attend, meet the chefs, and learn about FCX.

Sunday, August 14, 2005

Farm Tours - 12 noon - 6:15 pm

Elihu Farm in Easton

Flying Pigs Farm in Shushan

Sheldon Farms in Salem

Farm to Be Announced

Manx Station Farm in Greenwich

Bowman Orchards in Rexford

6:15 p.m.

Potluck Supper in the orchards for all Farm to Chef Express farmers and chefs and other guests at Bowman Orchards. If you plan to attend the Potluck Supper, we are asking everyone to bring a dish to pass. Mary Pratt of Eilhu Farm has kindly volunteered to coordinate the Potluck Supper. Please contact Mary by Thursday, August 11 at 518-753-7838 or by email at m.pratt@netheaven.com with what you are bringing.

If you plan to join us for the Sunday of touring, please contact Paula Schafer at 885-8995, 746-2560 or pjb11@cornell.edu.

DAIRY NOTES: I have been enjoying going out and meeting many Washington County dairy farmers. Planning the Dairy Tour at Chambers Valley Farms gave me the opportunity to meet more farmers and to look at the result of high internal growth on Chambers Valley Farms. It is exciting to see internal herd growth in action. Seeing the possibility of growth on paper is very different to seeing the outcome on a dairy. I am excited to be able to go out and see all the wonderful cows in Washington County and can't wait to see more. I am looking forward to seeing all the cows exhibited at the Washington County Fair.

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: Karl Czymmek, PRO-Dairy, just sent a little update that EPA has once again extended the sign-up deadline for the Air Consent Agreement until August 12, 2005. Make sure that you take a look if you haven't, or call us with any questions.

Our dairy tour at Chambers Valley Farms has been a good reminder that paying attention to the basics can give good results. The farm pays attention to cows and calves at calving. 4 qts. of colostrums within the first hour, comfy place to calve that is cleaned after every cow, and warm box stalls for calves in the winter are all things that have come together to provide a good internal herd growth (IHG) rate. The farm currently has about a 8% IHG which classifies them as a fast growing herd. This has provided them with the ability to do most of their own growing into their recent expansions, or if they are not expanding, have animals to sell. Good dollars for the bottomline.

CROPS

Soil Health: Since we should have our summer hay seedings planted this week, I am a little late to mention this. However, we often discuss deep tillage before planting corn. It *seems* to me that doing deep tillage before planting alfalfa would have a great benefit on soil structure. The long alfalfa roots would be able to grow deeper and faster. At the end of the rotation, there would be more and deeper channels formed by the roots. Deep tillage would remove the compaction and the alfalfa roots would establish good “soil structure” (tilth) deep down. However, deep tillage in the summer will dry out the soil more and possibly rob the new seeding of moisture. Perhaps, we should think about deep tilling after corn silage harvest (if the soil is dry enough to fracture and not smear) on those fields that will be seeded to hay in the spring.

The Cornell website on soil health is at: <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/soilhealth/>

Alfalfa: Check fields for potato leafhopper. A sweep net for sampling bugs cost around \$30 and is worth the money. Or, you can plant PLH resistant varieties and worry a lot less. I have noticed **lots of crinkled leaves** in some fields. I am also collecting a real lot of plant bugs. These insects feed on the growing points (leaf buds), which would cause leaves to crinkle (as the leaf buds expand). I think that plant bugs are causing these leaf deformations.

Field Corn: One field that I scouted this week was above threshold for **corn rootworm**. Honestly I do not expect farmers to take the 20 minutes/field required and scout all their fields for CRW. But, you really should select those fields that are high risk so that you can plan for 2006. CRW fly from field to field, so the number of beetles in field X right now, does not indicate if your CRW control this spring was good or bad. To monitor the effectiveness of this year’s control, you need to dig up some roots and look for feeding damage. That takes more than 20 minutes. **Diseases** in corn seem to be minimal at this time. Some fields are under water stress and the lower leaves have dried up. Corn has a very large yield potential this year because of early rain. Now we just need rain so that all those kernel can develop. Our yield potential is not as high as it could be however, because I think that our corn populations were thinned out a little with our cool May weather.

Pasture: I received a call on **horse slobbers**. (Working for Cooperative Extension can be very interesting.) There is a fungus, *Rhizoctonia leguminicola* that grows mostly on clovers. Its prevalence is weather dependant of course. Eating infected clovers causes horses to drool profusely, buckets in fact. It really disturbs horse owners because it is such an amazing sight. It is more of a nuisance to horses than a real health problem. Since we can not eliminate the fungus, we have to minimize it. The simplest thing to do is to fertilize horse pastures with nitrogen to promote grasses and reduce the clovers. Three applications per year of about 25lbs/ac of nitrogen should do the trick.

Grains: The potential of soybean rust in New York is considered to be low this year. So far it has remained in the southern states. Soybean aphids are having a good year in New York. I have only seen low to moderate numbers so far. It takes 250 aphids per plant to justify a control measure.

Reports (from central and western NY Educators and farmers) from wheat harvest have been favorable so far. Neither scab nor sprouting has been of concern.

FYI:

Online Guide to U.S. Organic Certifiers Published - The Rodale Institute's NewFarm.org and the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) today announced the *New Farm Guide to U.S. Organic Certifiers*, an online resource where farmers can find comprehensive profiles of participating organic certifiers, including fee structures, available services and geographic areas served. It is the only qualitative organic certifier guide available. Access the guide at www.newfarm.org/ocdbt/press

Featured is information on a wide variety of characteristics of certifiers accredited by the USDA National Organic Program (NOP). Farmers can browse all certifiers, compare the full profiles of two certifiers or search by criteria such as farm size and type of operations certified. As part of its commitment to expanding "farmer-to-farmer know-how," the website created the interactive "Certification Forum" where farmers can post exchanges and ask questions on their experiences with a certifier or the certification process.

Already, 65 certifiers have created profiles out of a total of 99 certifiers currently accredited by the USDA to work in the US. New certifiers are welcome to add their profiles, and participating certifiers may update their agency's listing at any time. The *US Guide to Organic Certifiers* can also be accessed from the OFRF website at www.offr.org

VEGETABLES - Keep an eye out for **Iris Yellow Spot Virus (IYSV)**, a new devastating disease of **onion** in the western onion producing states and Georgia. IYSV has not been detected in NY, but it is conceivable that it could arrive on western or southern transplants. IYSV is spread via OT. Scout fields where transplants were imported from states where IYSV occurs. Within fields, focus your scouting on field edges, stressed areas and where the stands are thin. Lesions tend to be more diagnostic on scapes, so pay special attention to plants that have bolted. IYSV produces straw-colored, dry, tan, spindle- or diamond-shaped lesions, without or with distinct green centers with yellow or tan borders on leaves and scapes. Symptoms vary greatly and are not always characteristic. Christy Hoepting, the CCE Vegetable Specialist in Western NY has been following this disease and has some excellent resources posted on the web. Check out the following sites.

http://vegetablemndonline.ppath.cornell.edu/factsheets/Onions_List.htm

<http://vegetablemndonline.ppath.cornell.edu/NewsArticles/NYDiseases.htm>

Crucifers: Flea beetles have begun their second assault on many different crops. This second generation are the progeny of the beetles you saw this spring. We have seen them on all types of crucifers and greens, but also on green beans. There are several different types of flea beetles, the potato flea beetle obviously prefers potatoes, but you can find it on tomatoes and eggplant and there is also an eggplant flea beetle that definitely prefers eggplant. To reduce the problems

with these pests, plant your fall cole crops away from where the spring crops were. Light weight row covers will help deter them, but you should try to keep a handle on these insects as they will be the egg layers for next springs insects.

Cucurbits: Powdery Mildew on cucurbits has been seen in several spots in the Greater Capital District area. Here are the recommended control materials according to Prof. Tom Zitter at Cornell: Recent reports of powdery mildew (PM) in upstate NY and the occurrence of downy mildew in states to our south prompt us to reexamine the fungicides available for the control of both diseases in cucurbits. Note that Quintec is now available, having received a sec. 18 permit for NYS for 2005 for use on non-edible peel cucurbits for powdery mildew control. In our research plots last year, the best performing materials for powdery mildew were Quintec, Pristine and Nova, and we suggest combining these materials with a protectant like chlorothalonil as part of resistance management strategy. Other protectants can be substituted for chlorothalonil. Use of the first three listed materials provided significantly better control than programs that still relied on strobilurin fungicides in the alternating weeks (ie. Quadris, Amistar, Cabrio, and Flint), at least when the strobilurins were used just for PM control. Note that Quintec and Nova only provide PM control, but the additional of chlorothalonil will expand the range of diseases controlled. Quintec, Nova and Pristine work best when used early in a PM control program, meaning that when the first colonies are note on the cucurbit of interest, the follow program should be followed: Quintec plus a protectant, followed by Nova at 5 oz plus chlorothalonil, followed by Pristine plus protectant. Continued alternation on subsequent weeks. If other diseases like downy mildew should occur, then specific materials need to be incorporated into the spray schedule (ie. Acrobat, Curzate, Gavel, Previcur Flex).

Squash Vine Borer Life Cycle and Management

Abby Seaman, WNY Area Vegetable IPM Educator

Squash vine borer can be a serious pest of cucurbit crops, and seem to be more serious in very small plantings. Winter squash, pumpkins, and zucchini are particularly susceptible. The larvae tunnel in the stems, destroying vascular tissue and causing the vine to wilt, and can kill entire plants if the boring occurs near the base of the plant. The adult insect is a clear-winged moth that flies during the day and resembles a wasp more than a typical moth. The moth is greenish-black with orange and black-fringed legs, and a wingspan of about 1 1/4 inches. Female moths lay small, brown eggs on the outside of the squash stem at the base of the plant, and larvae hatch and bore into the vine. A wet, tan-colored mass of frass may be found at the entrance hole. Larvae develop in about four weeks and then leave the stem to overwinter in the soil as a larva or pupae. New adults emerge the following year after approximately 1000 degree days (Base 50) have accumulated, usually in late June or early July.

Management

Because the larvae are protected from insecticides once they are inside the stem, control actions must focus on preventing egg-laying and/or killing newly hatched larvae before they bore into the stem. Adult activity can be monitored using pheromone traps. The University of Wisconsin recommends scouting plants for eggs starting when 900 DD have accumulated, and applying 2-3 insecticide treatments 5-7 days apart during the three weeks around 1000 DD accumulation. Degree day accumulations for many locations in New York may be found at

<http://newa.nysaes.cornell.edu>. Adult emergence and egg-laying have already occurred at many locations for this year.

Organic growers may use a pyrethrin product such as Pyganic, or Entrust, the OMRI-listed formulation of spinosad. In very small plantings, infested vines may be injected with Bt or parasitic nematodes to kill the larvae, or vines may be slit along their length and larvae removed. Vigorously growing plants may be able to tolerate infestation better than plants that are struggling due to water or nutrient deficiency. Late plantings of cucurbits that have not started to flower may be covered with floating row cover during the time the adults are active to prevent egg-laying. To reduce successful overwintering in fields infested this year, till the field after harvest to disrupt cocoons.

For more information on squash vine borer:

http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/recommends/18_2frameset.html
www.attra.org/attra-pub/squashbore.html

Solanaceae: Several areas of the state are reporting **European Corn Borer larvae in bell peppers**. Eggs are laid on the undersides of leaves and the young larvae enter the fruit by burrowing under the fruit cap. Signs of ECB infestation include darkened tissue, frass or small white larvae under and around the calyx. ECB levels do vary quite a lot from field to field, so if trap captures near you give conflicting results (above threshold here, not there), consider the fields where your peppers are: if you've had rain and generally get a lot of ECB in that field err on the side of caution and begin your sprays next week, since they should begin the first week after threshold is reached. The week delay allows for mating, egg-laying and egg hatch to occur so that the eggs and larvae can be targeted before larvae enter the fruit. **Laura's note:** I have not seen this in peppers in our area yet, but in larger plantings of peppers it has been a problem and we should be on the lookout for it.

Weeds: Summer grasses may be gaining a foothold in the furrow of many potatoes. The use of a selective postemergence grass control herbicide such as Select or Poast can be a very effective tool. Apply when grasses are actively growing and not stressed. Use these herbicides before the grasses become too tall. Both materials must be used at least 30 days prior to harvest. (From Dale Moyer, CCE Long Island Vegetable Program)

The online version of the 2005 Integrated Crop and Pest Management Guidelines for Vegetables is now available at <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/recommends/>.

ORNAMENTALS:

Greenhouse: Mites on Scaevola If you still have color bowls or hanging baskets of Scaevola in your greenhouse check them for the presence of two-spotted spider mites. They are very active this week with the high temperatures that is found in most greenhouses. One interesting bit of information on Scaevola. If you look at the flower it is shaped like a hand. The plant is named after the Roman military hero Mucius Scaevola, who demonstrated his bravery by burning off his hand. This bit of trivia will be good for your next family gathering.

Generation X: Hosta Virus X – written by Chuck Schmitt, Regional Nursery/Landscape Educator

Hostas have been a perennial favorite of many gardeners for a number of years. They tolerate shade, abuse, neglect and still produce abundant foliage and flowers each summer. Hostas are also one of those rare plants which have few pests in the landscape. Sure they have been plagued with foliar nematodes as of late but are still considered relatively problem free.

We have known that viruses exist in hostas since at least 1985. These viruses were not easily transferred from one plant to another and were therefore not considered a serious threat. In fact, some nurserymen have even attempted, unsuccessfully, to introduce more viruses into hostas in order to develop a new look. Some hostas such as ‘Lunacy’, ‘Eternal Father’, and ‘Leopard Frog’ continue to be popular in the trade despite the fact that they have tested positive for the presence of a virus.

Well, all good things must come to an end. With the discovery of this new easily spread virulent virus, we must examine our plants and cultural practices more closely to prevent its spread. Dr. Ben Lockhart from the University of Minnesota has isolated this new virus dubbed Hosta Virus X or HVX for short.

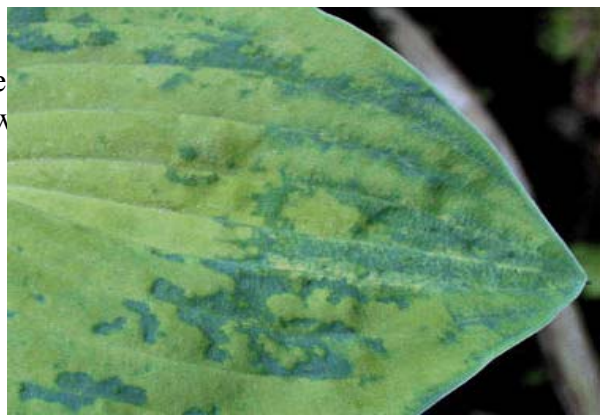
It is impossible to give a definitive description of the symptoms as this virus exhibits different symptoms in different cultivars. The most common visual symptom is unusual blue or green markings on a light colored leaf. The markings usually follow the leaf vein and seem to bleed out into the surrounding tissue. The overall effect is a mottled look to the leaf. Some tissue appears to have a different texture, sometimes thickened, lumpy or puckered. The appearance of twisted and deformed leaves and brown spots are less common. Green leaved cultivars will show lighter markings along the veins, but this is more difficult to detect. It gets worse. Plants not showing any symptoms have also tested positive for the HVX Virus! It may take up to 2 years before any symptoms are expressed in some plants and certain cultivars are believed to be able to carry the virus without ever expressing symptoms!

The HVX virus is spread primarily through vegetative propagation, flower scape removal and any other procedure that can transfer sap from an infected plant to a healthy one. Tools need to be disinfected between each use. As with most other viruses, it is also possible to spread the disease through insect vectors and wildlife browsing.

Some cultivars, such as ‘Gold Standard’, ‘Striptease’, and ‘Sum and Substance’ are commonly affected by the HVX Virus with easily recognizable symptoms. At this point, it is recommended to avoid hostas with an irregular color pattern regardless of the variety. The only remedy for a virus infected plant is to remove and destroy it in an attempt to halt the spread of the virus.



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Blue Cadet' showing lighter "inkbleed" areas along veins.,



better
Hosta Virus X in 'Striptease', Note green lines in center of leaf.

'Gold Edger' with HVX. Note sunken glaucous green areas



HVX-infected 'So Sweet' held to light to see mottling

For more information visit www.hostalibrary.org. All material in the Hosta Virus X section of the Hosta Library, including photographs, is intended for free use as a public service. Please feel free to copy and use to help contain the spread of this disease.

Turf: Lots of problems related to hot humid weather, but also complicated by lack of soil moisture and poor management. Grass that has been maintained at a very short height has really suffered. We have seen **Summer patch** and **Brown Patch** along with **Fairy Ring** and **Dollar Spot**. Remember to mow high, don't fertilize until early September and water infrequently but deeply.

Sincerely,

Aaron D. Gabriel
Extension Resource Educator
Crops and Soils