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College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences

Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News

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A newsletter for commercial growers of fruit and vegetable crops

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." Aristotle

Address any questions or comments regarding this newsletter to the individual authors listed after each article or to its editor, Rick Weinzierl, 217-244-2126, weinzierl@illinois.edu. The *Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News* is available on the web at: <http://ipm.illinois.edu/ifvn/>. To receive email notification of new postings of this newsletter, call or write Rick Weinzierl at the number or email address above.

In this issue ...

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- **Regional Reports** (from southern and western Illinois)
- **Fruit Production and Pest Management** (survey on small fruit and tree fruit spray guides)
- **Local Foods Issues** (USDA NASS Vegetable Chemical Use Survey, NRCS EQIP cut-off date of January 16, 2015)
- **University of Illinois Extension Educators and Specialists in Fruit and Vegetable Production and Pest Management**

Upcoming Programs

Check the Illinois SARE calendar for a full list of programs and links for registration.

<http://illinoissare.org/> and <http://illinoissare.org/calendar.php>

Also see the University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Team's web site at:

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/smallfarm/> and their calendar of events at

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/units/calendar.cfm?UnitID=629>.

Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism, and Organics Conference, January 7-9, 2015, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Convention Center, Springfield, IL. See <http://www.specialtygrowers.org/iscaoc-conference.html> for the program ... scroll down to and click on the link that reads, "[Download 2015 Pre-Conference Program and Registration Form](#)."

- **Illiana Vegetable Growers Symposium, January 6, 2015**. 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. CST, Teibel's Restaurant, 1775 US 41, US 30 & US 41, Schererville, Indiana. For information, contact Liz Maynard at 219-531-4200 ext 4206 or emaynard@purdue.edu. To register, contact Phyllis Jones-Graham at 219-755-3240 or pjonesgr@purdue.edu.
- **Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism, and Organics Conference, January 7-9, 2015**, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Convention Center, Springfield, IL. See <http://www.specialtygrowers.org/iscaoc-conference.html> for the program ... scroll down to and click on the link "[Download 2015 Pre-Conference Program and Registration Form](#)."
 - Workshops on January 7 include Pollination and Pollinators in Specialty Crop Production, High Tunnel and Greenhouse Production, Wholesale Marketing, and Root and Tuber Crops. Concurrent sessions on fruits, vegetables, herbs, agritourism and marketing, organic production, and emerging issues are held on January 8-9.
- **2015 Horseradish Growers Conference, January 22, 2015**. Madison-Monroe-St Clair Extension Unit Branch Office, Collinsville, IL. Contact Elizabeth Wahle at wahle@illinois.edu.

- **Putting Small Acres to Work, January 22, 2014.** Doors open at 8:00 a.m.; program runs from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Franklin County Extension Office, 1212 Route 14 West, Benton, IL 62812. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, see <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/units/event.cfm?UnitID=629&EventID=67373> or contact Nathan Johanning at njohann@illinois.edu or 618-687-1727.
- **Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Association Annual Conference and Tradeshow, January 29-31, 2015.** Crowne Plaza, Springfield, IL. IGGVA contact: Bradley Beam, bradleybeam@gmail.com. University of Illinois I Extension contact: Elizabeth Wahle, wahle@illinois.edu.
- **Commercial Tree Fruit Schools, February 3 and 4, 2015.** February 3 at the Holiday Inn in Mt. Vernon Illinois; 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. February 4 at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Hardin, Illinois; 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. For Mount Vernon, contact Laurie George at 618-242-0780 or ljgeorge@illinois.edu. For Hardin, contact Ken Johnson at kjohnso@illinois.edu.
- **Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference, February 5, 2015.** Midway Village, Rockford, IL, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Contact Grant McCarty at gmccarty@illinois.edu or 815-235-4125.
- **2015 Gateway Small Fruit and Vegetable Conference, February 10-11, 2015.** (New name and location! Formerly the Illinois Small Fruit & Strawberry Schools and Southern Illinois Commercial Vegetable School previously held in Mt Vernon, now serving commercial growers throughout southern Illinois and Missouri.) Regency Conference Center, O’Fallon, IL. Contact: Elizabeth Wahle at wahle@illinois.edu.
- **Kankakee Fruit and Vegetable Growers Symposium, February 18, 2015.** 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the University of Illinois Kankakee County Extension Office, 1650 Commerce Drive, Bourbonnais, IL. For more information, call James Theuri at 815/933-8337 or jtheu50@illinois.edu. A pre-registration fee of \$30 which includes lunch, handout materials and the 2015 Midwest Vegetable Production Guide is required by February 10, 2015.

Small Farm Webinar Series: A weekly educational series for the small farm community on important topics to advance local food production in Illinois. This series is aimed at providing small farm producers with a look at how leading practices in production, management, and marketing enable operations to improve profitability and sustainability. Webinars air live each Thursday at 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. and include a question and answer session. If you cannot attend, a link to the recorded webinars will be available to view at your convenience for all those who register. To register, see <http://go.illinois.edu/2015winterwebinars> or contact: Miki White, University of Illinois Extension, Small Farms/Local Foods Program Coordinator, Knox County; 309-342-5108 or miki7047@illinois.edu.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
Jan. 15, 2015	No-till culture for Peppers & Tomatoes
Jan. 22, 2015	Growing Hops for Market
Jan. 29, 2015	Potato Production
Feb. 5, 2015	Sweet Corn Production
Feb. 12, 2015	Perennial Crops for Small Farms
Feb. 19, 2015	Understanding Insecticides
Feb. 26, 2015	Blueberry Production
Mar. 5, 2015	Hydroponics
Mar. 12, 2015	Effective Farmers Market Displays
Mar. 19, 2015	Veggie Compass Record-Keeping Software
Mar. 26, 2015	Variety Selection & Rootstocks for Establishing Apple Orchards

Kyle Cecil (309-342-5108; cecil@illinois.edu)

Regional Reports

From Southern Illinois ... November was cool and damp to say the least, with even southern Illinois seeing its first snowfall back in Mid-November. The cold slowed down the growth of many fall crops both outside and in tunnels as well. My fall broccoli crop (outside) was very good through early to mid-November, but it too quickly went down without protection. Also many cover crops slowed or ended their growth as well. Winter-killed covers such as oats have almost all but completely given up with temperatures down to around 12 degrees earlier in November in Murphysboro. Some of the oilseed radishes I looked at today were still trying to hang on but they too won’t be alive much longer. Most of the winter hardy covers are looking good if they were established timely, however, some of the late planted cover crop will probably be tested with this early cold we have had this fall.



Despite the cold temperatures things are still looking good in our demonstration high tunnel at the Jackson County Extension Office. We currently have lettuce, spinach and carrots in the ground still growing. Pictured above are the carrots we planted in on October 16th in the high tunnel. These are a part of a demonstration trial looking at 6 different carrot varieties, including some red and purple varieties.

Nathan Johannning (618-687-1727; njohann@illinois.edu)

From western Illinois ... The growing season ended quite a while back for most vegetables, but there are still greens being produced in high tunnels here. We're picking spinach and buttercrunch and romaine lettuce and plan on doing so for a while yet. We're using floating row covers over the lettuce when temperatures are expected to get into the mid 20's or lower. When temperatures are predicted to get into the mid-teens or lower, we'll place a clear plastic cover over that. We're suspending the row cover above the crop, giving a little air space for heat to gather. We're also giving an air space between the row cover and the plastic sheet for insulation purposes.

Row covers on plasticulture berries have been in place for over a month. We're being guided by Bill and Andy McNitt on timing of covers in an attempt to improve our branch crown development. In the 8-plus years we've been growing plasticulture berries, there has only been one time when we could get a good number of branch crowns formed in the fall to allow good yields. We've tried various planting dates (this year was the earliest ever at Aug. 23), pre-plant nitrogen rates, and fall row cover timing. We're still attempting to find the correct procedure. Perhaps we're just too far north to get adequate heat and sunlight to allow for adequate branch crown development for an annual plasticulture system.

Voles continue to persist. We baited the berries before placing covers, and it was evident that there was vole activity prior to that. I've talk to more people each year who have indicated vole populations have been increasing and thus their damage more concerning. We have voles in the high tunnels, feasting on spinach. We're using bait blocks placed under the plastic in the strawberries and sticky traps as well as spring traps in the tunnels. We're also bringing in some cats that friends are only too happy to provide.

Now is a good time to review notes you made over the summer on crop performance, yield, etc. My memory gets a little fuzzy the longer I'm away from the crop. And since I'll be scanning the catalogues which are arriving and making decisions soon, using past seasons' notes sure helps. Which varieties performed best? Which need to be replaced? How was the timing on succession plantings? Which new varieties offer better disease resistance? Did your trellis system perform as well as you had hoped? Do you need to consider automation of trickle irrigation? How about your injection system? Lots of things to consider these evenings when dark falls early and the easy chair calls you.

Mike Roegge (217-223-8380; roeggem@illinois.edu)

Fruit Production and Pest Management

Midwest Tree Fruit Spray Guide and Midwest Small Fruit and Grape Spray Guide Survey of Usage and Value (repeated from issue 12)

Fruit growers in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, West Virginia, and Wisconsin are asked to participate in an online survey to determine the usage and value of the ***Midwest Tree Fruit Spray Guide*** and the ***Midwest Small Fruit and Grape Spray Guide***. Please use this link to access and complete the survey: https://jfe.qualtrics.com/form/SV_b7Nenj3QQE4aqZ7. This survey is completely voluntary and anonymous and should take about 15 minutes. You may skip questions you are not comfortable answering. Your responses will not be linked to you by name; all data will be combined and used in summary form only. Results of the survey will be used to quantify the value of the spray guides and determine the best way to deliver this information in the future. If you have questions, please contact Nicole Ward Gauthier, a plant pathologist who contributes content to these publications every year, at the University of Kentucky ... 859-323-1961 or nicole.ward@uky.

I strongly encourage Illinois fruit growers to complete this survey ... continued publication of these spray guides depends on information about their use by growers.

Rick Weinzierl (217-244-2126; weinzier@illinois.edu)

Local Foods Issues

USDA Collecting Chemical Use Data (repeated from issue 12)

Throughout the fall and early winter, corn and vegetable growers in the United States will be asked to provide first-hand information on their production practices by participating in the Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) and the Vegetable Chemical Use Survey, conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). These surveys will give corn and vegetable producers the opportunity to explain how they use fertilizers, agricultural chemicals, and manage pests. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) periodically conducts a review of tolerance levels for re-registration of pesticide products, and part of the review includes evaluating USDA's estimates on agricultural chemical use. Growers' responses help ensure that data used to determine environmental policies accurately reflect pesticide and fertilizer usage. In Illinois, data will be collected for field corn, fresh market sweet corn, pumpkins, and snap beans for processing. Between October 1 and January 10, NASS representatives will be conducting in-person interviews with growers to gather information on their fertilizer and chemical use and pest management practices. As with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. NASS safeguards the confidentiality of all responses and publishes only state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual producer or operation is identified. The results of the Vegetable Chemical Use Survey will be released on NASS's website at www.nass.usda.gov/results on August 5, 2015. The results of the ARMS will be released on NASS's website on May 13, 2015. Please participate in these surveys if you are contacted.

Mark Schleusener, Illinois State Statistician, USDA- NASS (217-524-9606; Mark.Schleusener@nass.usda.gov)

January 16 Deadline NRCS EQIP Applications (for high tunnel and other assistance)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers through contracts. These contracts provide financial assistance for producers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on private agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. In addition, a purpose of EQIP is to help producers meet Federal, State, Tribal and local environmental regulations. Throughout Illinois, producers have received assistance to implement conservation practices that include, but are not limited to, nutrient management, cover crops, terraces, grassed waterways, manure management facilities, and pasture management. For fruit and vegetable growers, high tunnel programs and pollinator habitat programs may be especially relevant. Applications for EQIP are accepted on a continuous basis; however Illinois NRCS has just one cutoff date remaining for the 2015 season: **January 16, 2015**. See http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/il/programs/financial/eqip/?cid=nrcs141p2_030467.

Mary Hosier (217-333-7512; mhosier@illinois.edu)

University of Illinois Extension Educators and Specialists in Fruit and Vegetable Production and Pest Management

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STEPHEN AYERS , Champaign, Ford, Iroquois, & Vermilion counties	217-333-7672	srayers@illinois.edu
DEBORAH CAVANAUGH-GRANT , Logan, Menard & Sangamon counties	217-782-4617	cvnghgrn@illinois.edu
KYLE CECIL , Henderson, Knox, McDonough, & Warren counties	309-342-5108	cecil@illinois.edu
BILL DAVISON , Livingston, McLean, and Woodford counties	309-663-8306	wdavison@illinois.edu
CONNIE ECHAIZ , Lake and McHenry counties	847-223-8627	cechaiz@illinois.edu
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NATHAN JOHANNING , Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph, & Williamson counties	618-687-1727	njohann@illinois.edu
ANDY LARSON , Boone, Dekalb, and Ogle counties	815-732-2191	andylars@illinois.edu
GRANT MCCARTY , Jo Daviess, Stephenson, and Winnebago counties	815-235-4125	gmccarty@illinois.edu
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Horticulture Research-Extension Specialists at our Research Stations		
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