



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION

College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences

Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News

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Editors: Nathan Johannig & Bronwyn Aly

A newsletter to provide timely, research-based information that commercial fruit & vegetable growers can apply to benefit their farming operations.

Address any questions or comments regarding this newsletter to the individual authors listed after each article or to its editors, Nathan Johannig, 618-687-1727, njohann@illinois.edu or Bronwyn Aly 618-382-2662, baly@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, contact Nathan Johannig at the phone number or email address above.

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Welcome New IFVN Editors

As you all have probably heard Bronwyn Aly and Nathan Johannig are taking over as the new editors of the Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News starting with this first issue (22:1) of 2016. We are both Local Food Systems and Small Farms Extension Educators, located in southern Illinois (Nathan - southwestern; Bronwyn - southeastern). We each have many years of experience in the field as both growers and researchers of specialty crops in southern Illinois and hope to continually use that knowledge and experience to enhance this newsletter.

We would like to thank to Rick Weinzierl for his many years of dedicated service to the IFVN as editor. What most readers never see is the diligence Rick has shown in keeping all of the contributors in line, which is always a challenge. Again, thank you Rick, and we hope that we can continue to provide a newsletter of such high quality and caliber for the growers of Illinois and the Midwest.

Bronwyn & Nathan

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 website** at:

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

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

- **Beginning Farmer Training Program, Jackson County. Mondays, January 25 through March 28, 2016.** 6:00 p.m., University of Illinois Extension Office, 402 Ava Rd. Murphysboro, IL 62966. This is a 10-week short course covering the basics of commercial fruit and vegetable production for beginning growers. Pre-registration is required. For more details, program agenda, and registration, visit <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?registrationid=13491http%3A%2F%2F> or contact Nathan Johanning at njohann@illinois.edu or 618-687-1727.
- **Horseradish Growers Conference, January 28, 2016,** Collinsville, IL. Contact Elizabeth Wahle at wahle@illinois.edu or 618-344-4230.
- **Small Farm Webinar Series, January 14 through March 31. Thursdays, noon to 1:00 p.m.** For more details or to register online, see <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=13379>. For more information, contact Andy Larson at 815-732-2191 or andy Larson@illinois.edu.
 - **Jan. 28** - Farm Pond Ecology: Managing for Desirable Plants and Fish, David Shiley, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*
 - **Feb. 4** - Producing Shiitake Mushrooms, Grant McCarty, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*
 - **Feb. 11** - Managing Horse Pastures on Small Farms and Acreages, Jamie Washburn, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*
 - **Feb. 18** - The Emerging Local Grain Economy in Illinois, Bill Davison, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*
 - **Feb. 25** - Food Safety Modernization Act: Changes for Small Scale Producers, Laurie George, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*
 - **Mar. 3** - Getting Your Beehives Ready for Spring, Doug Gucker, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*
 - **Mar. 10** - Raising Meat Birds on Pasture, Andy Larson, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*
 - **Mar. 17** - Using Cover Crops on Small Farms, Nathan Johanning, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*
 - **Mar. 24** - Growing Great Blackberries, Bronwyn Aly, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*
 - **Mar. 31** Setting Up a Grazing System on a Small Farm, Jay Solomon, *University of Illinois Extension Energy and Environmental Stewardship Educator*
- **Commercial Tree Fruit Schools, February 2 and 3, 2016.** Mt. Vernon and Hardin, IL, respectively. Advance registration is required for both schools by January 25, 2016. Contact Laurie George at ljgeorge@illinois.edu or 618-548-1446 or visit <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/units/event.cfm?UnitID=629&EventID=70200>.
- **Gateway Small Fruit and Vegetable Conference, February 9-10, 2016.** Regency Conference Center 400 Regency Park Drive, O'Fallon, IL. For more information visit: <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=13659> or contact Elizabeth Wahle at wahle@illinois.edu or 618-344-4230.
- **Tri State Local Food Summit. Saturday, February 20, 2016** at John Wood Community College in Quincy. Registration at 8 a.m.; program starts at 9 a.m. Dr. John Ikerd will be a keynote speaker. Separate producer and consumer tracks, locally grown lunch and refreshments, opportunities to network with local growers from IL, IA and MO. Pre-registration cost is \$20 per adult, lower for students. Register at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/abhpps> A locally grown Farm to Table dinner will be offered Friday evening. For more information contact Mike Roegge at 217-223-8380 or roeggem@illinois.edu.
- **Stateline (IL-WI) Fruit and Vegetable Conference, February 25, 2016, Rockford, IL.** For more information visit <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=13143> or contact Grant McCarty at gmccarty@illinois.edu or 815-235-4125.
- **Kankakee County Fruit & Vegetable Growers Symposium, Friday, February 26, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** University of Illinois Extension Office, 1650 Commerce Dr., **Bourbonnais, IL.** Topics include disease and insect management, no-till production, irrigation, variety selection and food safety. Cost is \$20 (includes lunch). To register, visit <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=13500>. For more information, call James Theuri at 815-933-8337.
- **North American Raspberry and Blackberry Conference, March 1-4, 2016.** Williamsburg, Virginia. For more information, see www.raspberryblackberry.com, email info@raspberryblackberry.com, or call 919-542-4037.
- **26th Annual Greenhouse Tomato Short Course, March 1 & 2, 2016.** Eagle Ridge Conference Center, **Raymond, Mississippi** (close to Jackson and the airport [JAN]). For more details visit <http://greenhousetomatosc.com> or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GreenhouseTomatoShortCourse>

Regional Reports

From northern Illinois... In Northern Illinois, it's cold weather as usual this time of year. While we haven't seen very cold temperatures as we saw the last two years, we are staying around the average air temperature and snowfall for the month. Yesterday was one of the first days with wind chill factor dipping into the negatives. There is snow on the ground in some places, but overall, precipitation has been light for the month. In 2015, one of the largest snowfalls occurred around the first week of February so we aren't in the clear just yet.

Growers I've spoken to are spending these winter months getting updates on disease and insect pests, and new production practices. For the most part, folks are taking a break from production. With the proximity to Wisconsin and Iowa, it's common for some northern Illinois growers to visit trade shows and conferences in these two states along with those in Illinois. In our office, we're offering a new course on berry production for those just getting started with growing berries and brambles. Towards the end of winter, we'll be offering a pruning course for berries, brambles, and fruit trees.

Grant McCarty (815-235-4125; gmcarty@illinois.edu)

From western Illinois... We're still harvesting lettuce and spinach from our tunnel. The low over this past weekend (neg 3 degrees) was the coldest of the year thus far, but utilizing several layers of 1.0 ounce covers protected the head lettuce. The spinach and radish were left uncovered. Kale left outside survived all winter until now. Our previous low was 16 degrees which occurred in December.

It was great to see so many in attendance at the IL Specialty Crop, Agritourism and Organic Conference in Springfield. Diane Handley, who helps organize the conference, stated that attendance at the preconference workshops was the highest on record. It was great to catch up with everyone you don't get to see during the year and learn from the many great speakers. I was visiting at a booth when I bumped into Chris Doll. Many will remember Chris as the long time Horticulture Educator from Edwardsville. As we were talking I was trying to remember when Chris retired. When he told me it was 1994, I could hardly believe it. Chris really didn't look much different than he did back then.

The day after Christmas we had the help and the opportunity to cover our plasticulture strawberries. This was the latest we've ever covered them, but we really didn't have the cold weather necessary to provide protection. The plants looked great. They are Chandler, which is kind of hard to determine branch crowns at this time of year. Just a little bit of desiccation could be found, but nothing serious. The open and warm fall and early winter sure didn't hurt to advance maturity and hopefully increase branch crowns.

Now is the time when many are pouring through the catalogues to determine varieties for this year and talking to the salesmen about what's new. The Illinois Specialty Crops Conference was a great opportunity for that. Taking the time to make notes during the growing season sure makes variety selection much easier. It seems like there isn't much time during the growing season to make notes on how different varieties: yield; disease resistance; size/appearance; time to maturity; grew most rapidly, etc., but those notes sure come in handy when ordering new seed.

It's just amazing to me all the variety choices available to growers today. There are literally pages and pages of some crop varieties to choose from. 10-15 years ago there was just a fraction of what we have available. Each year we can get more selections from which to choose from, which means we all need to be experimenting with new varieties each year to see how they fit into the mix. Talk to your friends and neighbors and consult with University trials. The Midwest Vegetable Variety Trial reports are available at: <https://ag.purdue.edu/hla/fruitveg/Pages/MVVTRB.aspx>

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



Current conditions of plasticulture strawberries in west central IL.

From southern Illinois ... We have finally reached some more winter-like conditions, and temperatures have been below freezing since Saturday evening. Monday morning I had 6 degrees here in Murphysboro. We have at least somewhat drained off and “dried out” since the massive amount of precipitation we had in the days following Christmas. Locally, we had 5 to 6” of rain in those two to three days; however, I have heard reports of as much as 9 or more inches. Since then, we have had about an inch of rain the first week of January, and now snow predicted for Tuesday night into Wednesday morning so we will see what this system brings us.

Temperatures in the teens and most recently single digits have put the end to most winter-killed cover crops and most unprotected vegetable crops, like my fall broccoli. We still picked the last of the broccoli side shoots the first weekend in January and I certainly cannot complain about that.

Apple pruning has begun in many of the larger orchards. For strawberries, the big question had been to cover or not to cover. Before Christmas, many growers had not pulled, or had taken back row covers due to warm temperatures. By shortly after that, most had pulled the covers and left them on with the onset of colder temperatures.

In our high tunnel at the office we are still harvesting lettuce, spinach and kale. We have just taken out a specialty lettuce variety trial and hopefully I can share the information in the next issue. With the little heat built up before our very cold Monday morning, temperatures were the same both inside and outside the tunnel. We have had row covers over all of the beds any time temperatures have been predicted much below the upper 20s and have had good protection thus far. Row covers are crucial to help gain that edge on protection in these temperatures.

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

Highlights from the Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism & Organic Conference, Springfield, IL

The 2016 Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism & Organic Conference was a great event again this year, (January 6-8, 2016). This year boasted the largest attendance on record with almost 700 participants and 71 tradeshow booths. Many thanks to all that made this program a success especially, Diane Handley and Charlene Blary from the Illinois Specialty Growers Association, and Rick Weinzierl, who coordinates the educational tracts with the help of many other Extension staff. To review the program or for more information visit: <http://www.specialtygrowers.org/iscaoc-conference.html>. The presentations from the 2016 conference are not online yet but will also be posted online in the near future. Save the date now! **The 2017 Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism & Organic Conference will be held January 11-13, 2017.**

Awards & Recognitions

At the Thursday evening banquet various members of the fruit and vegetable industry were acknowledged with recognition for their outstanding work and contributions. We congratulate them on their well-deserved awards!

Illinois Vegetable Growers Association Member Achievement Award –

- **Matt Klein**, Klein’s Farm Market, Burlington, IL (Presented by Brad Paulson, IVGA President)



Illinois State Horticulture Society Hall of Fame Award and Chris Doll Industry Recognition Award

- **Rick Weinzierl** (Presented by Chris Doll)



Illinois Specialty Growers Association Award of Excellence

- **Jeff Kindhart** (Presented by Craig Tanner, ISGA Chairman) and **Chuck Voigt** (Presented by Diane Handley)



Also... Best Wishes go out to **Diane Handley**, who will be retiring from the Illinois Specialty Growers Association in May of this year. We appreciate all of her work and support of ISGA and fruit and vegetable production in Illinois!

Nathan Johanning (618-687-1727; njohann@illinois.edu) with photos and information courtesy of Diane Handley.

2016 Illinois Sweet & Hard Cider Contests

The Illinois State Horticulture Society sponsored its 27th annual Illinois and National Sweet Cider Contests and the 14th annual National Hard Cider Contest, held in conjunction with the Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism and Organic Conference on January 7th in Springfield, Illinois.

Judges evaluated the cider entries using a 25- point rating scale for cider quality characteristics. The judges conducted “blind” evaluations where only a randomly chosen sample number identified each cider entry. The sweet cider contest presents awards in three different categories: National, Illinois and Midwest Cider of Merit. National awards are open to all US producers, and Illinois awards are open to all Illinois producers. The Midwest Cider of Merit awards are open to Illinois producers, plus producers from other adjoining states that do not place in the National or Illinois categories. Hard cider entries were each individually awarded points based on characteristics like clarity, color, bouquet, balance of alcohol, acidity, sweetness, sugar/acid balance, body, flavor, astringency and bitterness, any off-flavors, and the overall quality.

The ISHS gratefully acknowledges the dedication and hard work of our judging team. Thank you! Most importantly, thanks are extended to all who entered the contest this year. Start planning now for the next contest in 2017.

Congratulations to all of the winners listed below!

<i>National Awards</i>	<i>Firm</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Cultivar Blend</i>
First Place	Tom Schwartz Orchard	Centralia, IL	Jonathan and Fuji,
Second Place	Joe Ringhausen Orchards	Fieldon, IL	Jonathan, Golden Delicious, Red Delicious and Firm Gold
Third Place	Tuttle Orchards	Greenfield, IN	Golden Delicious, Cameo, Red Delicious, Enterprise, GoldRush, Jonathan and Idared
<i>Illinois Awards</i>			
First Place	Tom Schwartz Orchard	Centralia, IL	see above
Second Place	Joe Ringhausen Orchards	Fieldon, IL	see above
Third Place	Grissom's Lost Creek Orchard	Greenup, IL	Gala, Golden Delicious, Melrose, Jonathan, Idared and Jonagold
<i>Midwest Cider of Merit</i>			
First Runner-up	Valley Orchard	Winnebago, IL	Cameo, SunCrisp, Jonathan, Braeburn, Golden Delicious and Winesap
Second Runner-up	Curran's Orchard	Rockford, IL	Jonathan, Golden Delicious, Red Delicious, Empire, Northern Spy and Honeycrisp
Third Runner-up	Tanners Orchard	Speer, IL	Golden Delicious, Red Delicious, Jonathan and Corail
<i>Hard Cider</i>			
Champion	Grissom's Lost Creek Orchard	Greenup, IL	GoldRush, Golden Delicious, Gala and Jonagold

Elizabeth Wahle, Cider Contest Coordinator (618-344-4230; wahle@illinois.edu)

Vegetable Production & Pest Management

Winter Vole Management

It has been a relatively mild winter so far with little snowfall, but there is a lot of winter yet to come. When a layer of snow covers vegetation, voles often times turn to woody plants as a source of food. Apple and peach trees are susceptible to bark removal and even girdling, resulting in the death of trees. So, now is the time to monitor for voles in your orchard and under mulch in vegetable production areas on your farm. It is important to know what species of vole is on the farm, so that the most effective rodenticide can be used in bait stations to reduce populations. Set 15 to 20 traps in each orchard near active runs or trails. Voles with tails shorter than the hind leg are likely pine voles, and tails about the length of the hind foot are meadow or prairie voles. Research has shown that zinc phosphide can be more effective against meadow and prairie vole, while Chlorophacinone and Diphacinone have been shown to be more effective against pine vole. For more detailed information, visit the U of I Extension "[Living with Wildlife in Illinois](#)" website, go to the fact sheet on voles and follow the "[control of voles in Illinois' commercial apple orchards](#)" link to the publication.

Dave Shiley, (217-543-3755, dshiley@illinois.edu)

2015 High-Tunnel Heirloom Tomato and Specialty Hot Pepper Trial Results from the St. Charles Horticulture Research Center

In 2015, twenty-two tomato and specialty hot pepper cultivars were evaluated for high-tunnel yield performance at the University of Illinois St. Charles Horticulture Research Center (SCHRC).

Tomatoes were grown from seed that was started on March 18 and were potted into 4-inch peat pots filled with Pro Mix on April 9. Hot peppers were grown from seed that was started on February 2 and were potted into 4-inch peat pots filled with Pro Mix on March 30. Both tomato and bell pepper transplants were planted randomly into single-layer black plastic beds 3 feet on center in the high tunnel on May 9. Tomatoes were set at a spacing of 18 inches.

Determinate cultivars were grown using a trellis weave system and pruned up to but not including the first sucker below the first cluster. No additional thinning or pruning was done on the determinate cultivars. Indeterminate cultivars were pruned to a single leader and affixed to a single polyethylene twine suspended from a permanent overhead trellis made from treated lumber and high tensile fence wire. Peppers were set in single rows, 18 in. apart.

The planting was monitored for pest problems and treated as required. Insects that presented significant problems were limited to tomato hornworm.

Yield data are given in Tables 1 and 2. The data represent the mean of 8 and 3 plants for tomato and hot pepper, respectively. Unless noted, tomato varieties are indeterminate.

This research and the resulting report was accomplished with the assistance of Guanying (Bianca) Xu and Jaqueline Nadolny. For more information on these results, contact Shelby Henning at (630) 584-7254 or shenning@illinois.edu

Table 1. Total season (7/30-9/9) harvest results from SCHRC high-tunnel tomato cultivar evaluation.

Variety	No. of Fruit*	Weight (Oz.)	1's	2's	U.M.	Avg. wt. (Oz.)	Percent Marketable
Amish gold slicer	154	1238.9	127	17	10	8.5	93.5
Arkansas Traveler	214	1077.3	176	31	7	5.0	96.7
Aunt Ruby's German green	103	1259.1	68	19	16	14.0	84.5
Big beef	238	2066.4	214	22	2	9.8	99.2
Black krim	112	1361.5	69	28	15	12.0	86.6
Brandywine	90	928.2	52	25	13	13.5	85.6
Cherokee purple	106	1032.8	57	30	19	10.3	82.1
Favorita	1191	771.2	1186	4	1	0.6	99.9
German Pink	100	1582.8	74	16	10	16.3	90.0
Gold Medal	82	1299.6	57	18	7	18.1	91.5
Green Zebra	122	2438.0	99	14	9	2.9	92.6
Health Kick (determinate)	1087	3100.1	1075	5	7	2.8	99.4
Hillbilly Potato Leaf	103	1349.1	48	31	24	15.7	76.7
Japanese black trifele	226	1255.6	205	17	4	5.6	98.2
Kellog's Breakfast	103	1691.5	64	24	15	18.0	85.4
Mortgage Lifter	111	1218.9	78	20	13	15.0	88.3
Nyagous	276	1258.6	238	27	11	4.6	96.0
Pareso	1144	739.7	1119	2	23	0.6	98.0
Ponderosa Red	126	1249.6	70	30	26	10.4	79.4
Sakura	1156	877.8	1152	4	0	0.7	100.0
Stupice	570	764.9	554	6	10	1.2	98.2
Tasti-Lee (determinate)	465	1954.1	453	3	9	5.4	98.1

* = Data shown are for 8 replications

Table 2. Total season (8/7-9/9) harvest results from SCHRC high-tunnel hot pepper cultivar evaluation.

Name	#*	WEIGHT	AVERAGE FRUIT WEIGHT (Oz.)
		(Oz.)	
7 pot	57	16.7	0.3
Brain strain	125	52.8	0.4
Carolina reaper	138	40.9	0.3
Chocolate habanero	431	160.4	0.4
Fatali	516	148.5	0.3
Garden bird	836	47.9	0.1
Giant ghost	30	10.1	0.3
Giant jalapeno	169	252.9	1.5
Mayan habanero	533	138.1	0.3
Mustard habanero	91	307.4	3.4
Naga viper	369	128.4	0.3
Orange habanero	150	49.3	0.3
Peach habanero	203	111.7	0.5
Red habanero	200	78.7	0.4
Red moruga scorpion	176	54.2	0.3
Starfish	279	91.6	0.3
Tasmanian habanero	292	113.3	0.4
Tobago	488	119.8	0.2
Trinidad scorpion	42	13.8	0.3
White habanero	121	8.6	0.1
Yatusufa	892	76.2	0.1

* = Data shown are for three replications

Shelby Henning, (630-584-7254; shenning@illinois.edu)

Small Fruit Production & Pest Management

Monitoring for Winter Injury in Brambles

Typically, winter injury in brambles occurs in mid to late winter thru early spring as fluctuating temperatures cause the plants to begin to de-acclimate and become less cold hardy. In general, brambles have reached their chilling requirement and are the most cold tolerant or least susceptible to winter injury by the end of December to the first of January. Keep in mind that this past December has been relatively mild and we are just now feeling some of the colder temperatures of the season. Within bramble crops, summer-bearing red raspberries and purple raspberries tend to be the most cold-hardy while blackberries tend to be the least cold hardy. Winter injury on brambles is seen as tip dieback or bud-kill in the spring.

One way for growers to assess winter injury is to take some cane cuttings in mid to late January (after chilling requirement has been met) and monitor how many buds develop into shoots. Canes should be cut at the base and placed in water in warm conditions (room temperature) and change the water every couple of days to keep bacterial growth from starting. After two weeks, buds should begin to grow and those that develop into shoots would likely have produced fruit while those that don't grow are dead. Growers can then estimate the percentage of bud loss due to winter injury. It is important to remember that cane cuttings should not be taken too early in the winter, before the chilling requirement has been reached, as plants would be in the "rest" phase of dormancy and could give growers an inaccurate winter injury estimate. Growers should keep in mind that cold hardiness differs between varieties and locations, so each variety may need to be sampled depending on location and circumstances. By monitoring the amount of winter injury on a crop, growers may decide to delay pruning and/or leave a few extra canes.

Bronwyn Aly, (618-382-2662; baly@illinois.edu)

Food Safety Updates

Produce Safety Rule: Farm Definitions – article 1 of 7

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) was signed into law on January 2, 2011, and is intended to allow FDA to better protect public health by helping to ensure the safety and security of the food supply. FSMA focuses more on preventing food safety problems rather than relying primarily on reacting to problems after they occur. The Produce Safety Rule comes into effect on January 26, 2016 and is one of seven proposed foundational rules developed by FDA that provides a framework for food safety. The key provisions of the Produce Safety Rule that will be discussed will cover: “Farm” definitions, basic and qualified exemptions, agricultural water quality, agricultural water testing, biological soil amendments, domesticated and wild animals, worker training and health & hygiene, equipment, tools and buildings, growing, harvesting, packing, and holding activities, sprout production, and compliance dates. The Produce Safety Rule distinguishes between Primary Production Farms and Secondary Activities Farms.

Primary Production Farm - “an operation under one management in one general (but not necessarily contiguous) physical location devoted to the growing of crops, harvesting of crops, raising of animals (including seafood), or any combination of these activities”. These production farms can include cooperatives, on-farm packing houses, food hubs, management of multiple farms, etc. These operations may also pack or hold raw agricultural commodities (RACs), so long as all such food is consumed on that farm or another farm under the same management

OR

The manufacturing/processing falls into limited categories such as:

- drying/dehydrating RACs to create a distinct commodity (ie: drying grapes to produce raisins)
- treatment to manipulate the ripening of RACs (ie: treating produce with ethylene gas)
- packaging and labeling RACs

Secondary Activities Farm - “an operation, not located on a primary production farm, devoted to harvesting, packing, and/or holding RACs”. The primary production farm(s) that grow, harvest, and/or raise the majority of those RACs must own or jointly own a majority interest in the secondary activities farm. This addition to the definition of a farm enables farmers in some packing operations that were formerly considered “off-farm” to benefit from inclusion in the farm definition and may gain exemption from some of the FSMA rules. The definition of a secondary activities farm also allows certain, limited additional manufacturing/processing, packing, and holding, so long as all such food is consumed on that farm or another farm under the same management

OR

The manufacturing/processing falls into limited categories such as:

- drying/dehydrating RACs to create a distinct commodity (ie: drying grapes to produce raisins)
- treatment to manipulate the ripening of RACs (ie: treating produce with ethylene gas)
- packaging and labeling RACs

Activities that do not fall under the farm definition – and may be subject to the FDA Final Rule for Preventative Controls for Human Food:

Manufacturing/processing that goes beyond activities as discussed above. Examples can include (but are not limited to):

Pitting dried plums, chopping herbs; Making snack chips from legumes; Roasting peanuts or tree nuts

As you read through the information on the Produce Safety Rule, you may have questions/concerns on issues that affect your specific farm. Please contact your local Extension Educator or the FDA FSMA Food Safety Technical Assistance Network <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA/ucm459719.htm>

Laurie George, (618-548-1446; ljgeorge@illinois.edu)

Less seriously...

A spry, elderly asparagus/small fruit grower went to the local nursing home to visit his cousin. Upon arriving in the common area, he ran into an old friend, who was also a resident. He gave his friend a big hug and a warm smile and asked how she was doing. His friend said she was doing great but he could tell she didn't quite remember him. The grower asked his friend, “Do you know who I am?” She smiled and said, “No, honey, but if you go ask that nice lady over at the nurses station, she can tell you what your name is.”

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

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