



# UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION

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](mailto:weinzierl@illinois.edu). The *Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News* is available on the web at: <http://www.ipm.illinois.edu/ifvn/index.html>. To receive email notification of new postings of this newsletter, call or write Rick Weinzierl at the number or email address above.

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**University of Illinois Extension Specialists in Fruit & Vegetable Production & Pest Management**

### ***Upcoming Programs***

- **Illiana Vegetable Growers School, January 4, 2011.** Teibels' Restaurant in Schererville, IN. Contact Liz Maynard ([emaynard@purdue.edu](mailto:emaynard@purdue.edu)) or Maurice Ogutu ([ogutu@illinois.edu](mailto:ogutu@illinois.edu)) for more information.
- **2011 Illinois Specialty Crops Conference, January 5-7, 2011.** Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield, IL. Details will be included in future issues of this newsletter. See [www.specialtygrowers.org](http://www.specialtygrowers.org) or contact Diane Handley at 309-557-3662 or [dhandley@ilfb.org](mailto:dhandley@ilfb.org).
- **2011 Indiana Hort Congress, January 18-20, 2011.** Wyndham Indianapolis West, Indianapolis, IN. Details at [www.inhortcongress.org](http://www.inhortcongress.org) or contact Tammy Goodale at 765-494-1296 or [tgoodale@purdue.edu](mailto:tgoodale@purdue.edu).
- **Managing Legal Risks in the Direct Farm Business Webinars. January 25, 2011, and March 3, 2011.** Webinars will be hosted at 20 locations throughout Illinois. Visit <https://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/registration/default.cfm?RegistrationID=516> for a complete list of locations and to register. For complete information about locations and to register, visit the website or contact Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant at [cvnghgrm@illinois.edu](mailto:cvnghgrm@illinois.edu) or 217-968-5583. The webinars are sponsored by the Illinois Council on Food and Agricultural Research (CFAR), North Central Risk Management Center, and University of Illinois Extension.
- **2011 Horseradish Growers Convention, January 27, 2011.** Gateway Conference Center, Collinsville, IL. For more information, contact Elizabeth Wahle, 618-692-9434; [wahle@illinois.edu](mailto:wahle@illinois.edu).
- **Southern Illinois Commercial Tree Fruit School, February 1, 2011.** Mt Vernon Holiday Inn, Mt. Vernon, IL. For more information, contact Elizabeth Wahle, 618-692-9434; [wahle@illinois.edu](mailto:wahle@illinois.edu).
- **Southwestern Illinois Commercial Tree Fruit School, February 2, 2011.** First Presbyterian Church, Hardin, IL. For more information, contact Elizabeth Wahle, 618-692-9434; [wahle@illinois.edu](mailto:wahle@illinois.edu).
- **Southern Illinois Commercial Vegetable School, February 9, 2011.** Mt Vernon Holiday Inn, Mt. Vernon, IL. For more information, contact Elizabeth Wahle, 618-692-9434; [wahle@illinois.edu](mailto:wahle@illinois.edu).

## *Regional Updates*

**At the Dixon Springs Ag Center**, we are currently working with lettuce and strawberries in several hydroponic systems. We recently purchased some hydroponic equipment and constructed some additional systems. We have also equipped the greenhouse at DSAC with HID lights which were donated to the University of Illinois by ADM. The work with lettuce is aimed at learning how quickly various systems can turn a lettuce crop in southern Illinois. The strawberry work is more complex and from it we hope to learn aspects of practicality and profitability. We also hope to examine the potential for stretching the strawberry season into June which is currently not possible for southern Illinois growers.



Top left: Planting strawberries in the greenhouse. Top right: Hydroponic lettuce at DSAC. Bottom left: Strawberries in Verti-Gro pots in the greenhouse at DSAC. Bottom right: Hydroponic strawberries in a bag culture system.

Jeff Kindhart (618-692-9434; [jkindhar@illinois.edu](mailto:jkindhar@illinois.edu))

## *Notes on the 2011 Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism, and Organics Conference, January 5-7*

A brief reminder to everyone to register in advance for the 2011 Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism, and Organics Conference ... the **advance registration deadline is December 28, 2010**. The program will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield, IL.

The program for January 5 (registration for this date is separate from January 6-7) is comprised of four workshops on (1) pumpkin production and pest management; (2) high tunnel production systems; (3) GAP plans and certification; and (4) expanding farmers market opportunities.

Programming on Thursday and Friday, January 6-7, begins with an opening session at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, followed by concurrent programming 5 to 6 tracks: fruits, vegetables, herbs, Agritourism, organic production, irrigation, and business management and marketing. Again, participants are free to pick and choose from presentations in any of these program tracks.

A number of notable out-of-state speakers will complement the programming offered by speakers from the University of Illinois, Southern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University. Among the visiting speakers are Mike Parker from North Carolina State University, talking on apples and peaches, Rick Foster of Purdue University, talking on insect management, and Tim Coolong of the University of Kentucky, talking on irrigation management and early-season transplanting of sweet corn. James Simon of Rutgers University and Sal Gilbertie from Connecticut will speak in the Herbs sessions, and Lisa Kivirist from Brownstown, Wisconsin, and Deirdre Birmingham of Mineral Point, Wisconsin, will speak in the Organics track.

The conference includes a trade show with numerous suppliers, and it's to be open Wednesday evening, all day Thursday, and until 1:30 on Friday, January 7. Additional highlights include the annual apple cider contest and the herb display contest. Speakers for the Thursday evening banquet are Ken and Barb Hall of Edwards Orchard in northern Illinois. Their title is "The Heart and Soul of Farm Marketing."

For conference information, check <http://www.specialtygrowers.org> or contact Diane Handley at 309/557-2107 or [handley@ilfb.org](mailto:handley@ilfb.org).

### *Notes from Chris Doll*

There are a few more days to go before the first day of the calendar winter, but it feels like it is already here. Growth has stopped and most trees are defoliated. With the amount of cold already experienced this fall, the trees should be in the endodormancy stage which means the buds and wood are resting. This is because of the physiological blocks that prevent growth even under ideal external conditions for growth. Once chilling hours have been accumulated to break this rest or dormancy period, you have to worry about warm temperatures that might stimulate early growth. Once endodormancy ends, the plants move onto an ecodormancy, which means buds are dormant as a result of external conditions unfavorable to growth, like continued low temperatures.

Locally, the minimums last week were just above zero. I would hope that the trees and their buds were into dormancy enough to avoid injury. Since everything is covered with ice here on the 16th, I'm not going out to get samples.

A van-load of folks from this area traveled to the Michigan Expo last week for visiting, studying and looking at lots of machinery. I was not a customer to most of the exhibits, but did note some booths that might attract attention. Some of the names were Dr. Shrink, Healthy Gourmet, Liquid Fence, Growing Memories, High Mowing Organic, Skunk Works, Wish Farms, Barnyard Supply, Gods Helping Hand, and Stand and Plant. It appeared that the attendees were interested in the educational programs as well as the displays, as the exhibit floor was almost empty during the education sessions. The fruit room was surrounded by apple variety displays put up by Bill Shane and Phil Schwallier of MSU. Notable was the fact that only 3 plates of Delicious were shown, in contrast to 28 plates of Fuji and its sports. In the Fuji group were Myra and BC 2, which were among the least attractive. These two were rated best in color in a nursery collection that I evaluated 14 years ago. The Gala exhibit included 21 plates of several sports, also with lots of improvement in color in recent years. Only Honeycrisp was present from the current list of "crispy" varieties. Snappy Mac was not snappy in this display. Single plates of SweetTango and Snow Sweet were too far from harvest to be good. Of course, the nursery exhibitors had many beautiful specimens for show.

A couple of presentations were on dying apple trees or shoots which I've been reading about this year. One of the problems is apparently from the use of glyphosate herbicides, that according to Dr. Mathers from Ohio State University, can be a problem in both nursery stock and older trees. Improper or overdose can cause wounds which split and become infected with fungi which can kill either a whole tree or individual scaffolds. Prevention is by using proper dosage rates, avoid herbicide contact with wood that is still green or use protector items, and avoid drift onto foliage. In bearing orchards, she suggested early July as a cut-off date, whereas Dr. Mitchem from North Carolina said that mid-June was the latest usage date without all precautions for absorption and injury.

As for apple scab, Dr. Sundin of MSU, talked about resistance, but advised growers to stay ahead of a disease that has become more prevalent. Fireblight resistance has not spread much in Michigan recently, but their studies on the disease continue. Streptomycin continues to be the most effective material if resistance is not present. They have Katsumin, an antibiotic, that has a Section 18 registration in Michigan but not in Illinois. Botanicals continue to be weak, but 3 applications of Apogee at the right time helps a lot.

I had the opportunity to visit with Paul Larsen, a retired extension specialist of MSU, who was a classmate of mine 60 years ago. He reviewed the 140 year history of the Michigan Horticulture Society and the Extension Service. He repeated an old saying that "it is a tragedy when a grower and his trees grow old together". He recollected when Dr. John Carew, his department head wrote the treatise "In Balance With Nature" as a rebuttal to the book "Silent Spring" and went on to call the formation of the EPA and OSHA as onerous and dangerous. He was pessimistic about the current status of the Extension service as "agriculture became subordinated to social programs". But it was not all that depressing, as he talked about the new programs available, along with the new varieties, cultural systems, and even the climate control structures.

I hope that the Illinois meeting in Springfield on January 6 and 7 will be as good or better than Michigan's. It won't be as big, but a good program is scheduled. Dr. Mike Parker of North Carolina will be there to talk about both peaches and apples and should have first-class information for us. The rest of the program looks like it fits into the LOCAL theme with Illini Ken and Barb Hall, Pat and Tom Range, and Lori Murray on the production side and the Illini Extension team with their up-dates. And for you horseradish buffs, Chuck Voigt, a former co-worker, will have a presentation on horseradish. I hope to be there after missing last year's program for the first time in 44 years.

*Chris Doll*

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