



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, weinzier@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.

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More on Changes in Newsletter Management

As I noted last month, this is the last issue of the *Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News* that I will produce, edit, and send out. I will retire from the University of Illinois in May of 2016, and Nathan Johannning and Bronwyn Aly, both University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educators, will take over the management of this newsletter in January. I will continue to contribute articles until I retire (and maybe even after that), but Nathan and Bronwyn will be in charge of the editing and distribution processes. Here are a few details that you should know ...

- The *Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News* will continue to be posted online for free access at <https://ipm.illinois.edu/ifvn/>.
- Everyone who receives direct email notifications when a new issue is posted will continue to receive those email messages with a link to the home page and the current issue. We will establish a website for new subscriptions and provide an easy way to unsubscribe for those who do not want to receive those emails.
- We will continue to send notifications to the newillinoisfarmers list-serve and the Great Lakes Vegetable Workers Group list-serve.
- We will no longer send email notifications to the applecrop list-serve (perhaps a little too specialized for our increasingly general newsletter), but I will send a note or two to the applecrop list-serve to provide information on how to subscribe for those who want to do so.
- Nathan and Bronwyn will provide information on US Mail subscription rates for those who wish to receive printed copies. Current subscribers will receive one or two in January before you need to re-subscribe.

Cheers to all. I'll not be disappearing, just retiring (and not until May). I plan to continue some apple and peach insect management research at the University of Illinois Fruit Research Farm at Urbana, and in a few months I'll be planting a couple of acres of apple and peach trees a few miles away as well – probably more a retirement hobby than a second career, but it should keep me involved. And without using this forum as an advertisement, I'll also do some consulting if there's any demand.

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

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>.

- **Illiana Vegetable Growers Conference, January 5, 2016.** Schererville, Indiana. 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. CST. Teibel's Restaurant, Schererville, IN. Registration and program available in early December; watch for announcement at <https://ag.purdue.edu/hla/Extension/Pages/Events.aspx>. Contact Liz Maynard, 219-531-4200 or veg crops@purdue.edu.
- **Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism, and Organics Conference, January 6-8, 2016.** At the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, Springfield, IL. For program and registration information, see <http://jhawkins54.typepad.com/files/educational-program-final.pdf> or call Charlene Blary at 309-557-2107.
- **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.
- **Also save the dates for several regional programs ...**
 - January 28, 2016: Horseradish Conference at Collinsville, IL. Contact Elizabeth Wahle at wahle@illinois.edu or 618-344-4230.
 - January 14 through March 31: Small Farm Webinar Series. Thursdays, noon to 1:00 p.m. See details below. To register online, see <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=13379>. For more information, contact Andy Larson, Extension Educator in Local Food Systems and Small Farms, Boone/DeKalb/Ogle Counties, at (815) 732-2191 or andy@illinois.edu.
 - February 2 and 3, 2016: Tree Fruit Schools at Mt. Vernon and Hardin, IL, respectively. Contact Laurie George at ljgeorge@illinois.edu or 618-548-1446.
 - February 9-10, 2016: Gateway Small Fruit and Vegetable Conference, O'Fallon, IL. Contact Elizabeth Wahle at wahle@illinois.edu or 618-344-4230.
 - February 25, 2016: Stateline (IL-WI) Fruit and Vegetable Conference, Rockford, IL. Contact Grant McCarty at gmccarty@illinois.edu or 815-235-4125.
- **North American Raspberry and Blackberry Conference, March 1-4, 2016.** Williamsburg, Virginia. For more information, see www.raspberrylblackberry.com, email info@raspberrylblackberry.com, or call 919-542-4037.

Regional Reports

From southern Illinois ... Moderate temperatures have continued across southern Illinois. Our coldest morning so far has been in the lower to mid-20s, but it has been much warmer most of the last month, with a high a few days ago in the 70s. Even though temps have dropped, forecast has highs for next week are back in the 50s and 60s. Rainfall Sunday night into Monday morning helped to replenish our dry soils from almost two months without rain this fall. As a result of the mild conditions, many fall vegetable plantings that were protected for a night or two are still productive. My fall broccoli is still producing side shoots, and other growers still have lettuce and greens outside that are doing well. The weather also has been good for cover crops. Many of our winter-killed cover crops such as oilseed radish and oats are still alive and continuing to grow. This is quite a contrast to last year when mid-November temps dropped into the teens and ended the growth of these cover crops.

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

From western Illinois ... We received another 1.5 inches of rain December 14-15. It came over a long period, which allowed almost all to soak into the soil. Needless to say, the soils are now saturated, and there will be no field work until frost occurs to allow travel over fields. Warmer than usual temperatures have not allowed triggered dormancy in crops such as wheat, plasticulture strawberries, etc. There is concern among growers as to when these plants will enter

dormancy and if we enter a very cold spell prior to plants acclimating whether we may lose buds/growing points. There really isn't much we can do about it though.

Cool-loving cover crops have not yet succumbed either. We had a low of 16 degrees a couple weeks back, but it wasn't enough to kill off radish or turnip cover crops. Nor was it low enough to kill cool loving vegetable crops such as radish, turnip, kale, spinach, etc. Plasticulture strawberry growers have yet to pull row covers, but I do know several matted-row growers who have applied straw. The matted-row plants, being more mature, have turned the customary reddish color indicating dormancy, so applying straw seems a prudent task. This was our final year for our matted-row strawberry variety trial. Results for the past 3 years can be found at: http://web.extension.illinois.edu/smallfarm/cat132_4077.html.

High tunnel winter production almost always will encounter aphids at some point in time. It's best to stay ahead by being proactive before infestations become serious. See the note below under the *Vegetable Production and Pest Management* heading for more information.

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

Fruit Production and Pest Management

Fall 2015 Edition of the Midwest Apple Improvement Association Newsletter

David Doud recently sent a post to the applecrop news group (list-serve) with the following note ...

An autumn 2015 edition of the Midwest Apple Improvement Association newsletter has been published and is available online at http://midwestapple.com/PDF/Newsletters/MAIA_Autumn2015Newsletter.pdf.

(For those of you not familiar with the MAIA, it is a consortium of growers (primarily) and university researchers and extension personnel who have worked on developing new apple varieties for the Midwestern US. Their first release is 'EverCrisp' ... I have some in my order for my small orchard.)

David notes that, "6000 consumer evaluations were carried out this past fall with standard varieties and MAIA elite selections - direct marketers should find the report interesting reading."

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

Vegetable Production and Pest Management

Aphid Management in High Tunnels through Winter Months



Green peach aphid on baby spinach

<http://www.plantmanagementnetwork.org/elements/view.aspx?ID=5354>

As Mike Roegge mentioned in his regional report, one of the more common pest problems in winter greens in high tunnels is aphids. If present in tunnels in the fall, they continue to feed and reproduce (or at least survive) at pretty much any temperature that allows crop survival and growth, especially where row covers are used for additional heat retention. Green peach aphid is among the most common culprits, but other species may also cause plant damage or be contaminants at harvest in spinach, lettuce, Swiss chard, kale, and various Asian greens. As we move into late December and January, the time for some earlier preventive steps has passed, so management now consists of practices that reduce existing infestations. Some guidelines ...

- Scout (examine plants) at least weekly, and look very closely for aphids, cast skins (the body covering shed with each molt or growth stage as aphids grow), and mummies (bloated, discolored “shells” of aphids killed by parasites or fungal diseases). A common threshold for aphid control in high tunnels at this time is an average of one aphid per leaf.
- Although parasitic wasps are sometimes used for aphid control in high tunnels, they are not very active at the low temps that occur most of the time in winter months in high tunnels. Lady beetles generally are more effective at this time of year, especially where row covers used to provide heat retention. Two reputable suppliers of biocontrol agents for use in high tunnels are
 - Koppert Biological Systems, Inc. – USA, 28465 Beverly Road, Romulus, MI 48174. Tel: +1 800 928 8827; fax: +1 734 641 3799. See: www.koppert.com.
 - Biobest, 28795 Goddard Road, Romulus, MI. Contact Veronica Cervantes at 248-912-4774; veronica@biobest-usa.com; see www.biobest-usa.com.
- Conventional insecticides that are effective against aphids and labeled for use on greens in high tunnels include Actara, Admire, Assail, Fulfill, and Movento; preharvest intervals for these insecticides range from 3 to 7 days ... see product labels.
- OMRI-approved insecticides that are approved for use in high tunnels include Botanigard and Mycotrol O (both contain the fungal pathogen *Beauveria bassiana* strain GHA), used alone or in combination with diatomaceous earth. Applications of insecticidal soaps and oils also provide some control. Although these products generally are not as effective as the conventional insecticides listed above, they are more effective in the winter high tunnel environment than they are in outdoor use during the summer and fall growing season.

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

Local Foods Issues

Small Farms Winter Webinar Series

University of Illinois Extension will present a weekly educational series for the small farm community to provide practical information on emerging topics that advance local food production in Illinois. These online presentations will give small farmers a look at how leading practices in production, management, and marketing enable operations to improve profitability and sustainability. This year's series includes new topics such as farm pond ecology, producing Shiitake mushrooms, the emerging local grain economy in Illinois, raising meat birds on pasture, and growing great blackberries. Webinars will be held from noon -1:00 pm on Thursdays and are free.

Choose **any number** of the following webinars to attend when you register. Topics include:

Jan. 14 - Lean Farming: Cutting Waste and Maximizing Efficiency on Small Farms, Zack Grant, *University of Illinois Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator*

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*

The webinars can be accessed on-line from your personal computer. In case you cannot attend these dates, register anyway to view an archived, recorded version. Information will be provided via email (the Monday after airing) for viewing at your convenience. They can also be accessed on our website at:

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/smallfarm/webinar.html>. Contact your local Extension office for more information about live viewing sites. For more information, contact: Andy Larson, University of Illinois Extension, Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator at 815-732-2191 or andylars@illinois.edu. When you register, **PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IS CORRECT.**

Andy Larson (815-732-2191; andylars@illinois.edu)

Less seriously

Alright, my last chance to replay a few good snippets from 20 years' of newsletter humor and wisdom (or lack of it) ...

- What's another word for thesaurus?
- I used to be indecisive ... now I'm not sure.
- It may be that our sole purpose in life is to serve as bad examples.
- It is far more impressive when others discover your good qualities without you pointing them out.
- Never miss a good chance to shut up.
- We are born naked, wet, and hungry ... and then things get worse.
- When I was a kid, we had a quicksand box in the backyard. I was an only child ... eventually.
- Friends may come and go, but enemies tend to accumulate.
- Do not meddle in the affairs of cats, for they are subtle and will whiz on your computer.
- Never knock on Death's door ... ring the doorbell and run. He hates that.
- Everyone has a right to be stupid; some just abuse the privilege.
- Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.
- Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain ... and most fools do.
- I have not yet begun to procrastinate (a retirement prediction?).
- Tonight's weather prediction ... dark, with continued darkness until dawn.
- If she won't live forever, why give her a diamond.
- Percussive maintenance: The fine art of whacking the s**t out of an electronic device to get it to work again.
- Adminisphere: The rarified organizational layers that begin just above the rank and file. Decisions that fall from the adminisphere are often profoundly inappropriate or irrelevant to the problems they were designed to solve.
- On employee performance evaluations ...
 - Since my last report, this employee has reached rock bottom and shows signs of starting to dig.
 - On his leadership ... His staff will follow him anywhere, but only out of morbid curiosity.
 - Works well when under constant supervision and cornered like a rat in a trap.
 - He would be out of his depth in a parking lot puddle.
 - He sets low personal standards and consistently fails to meet them.
 - This employee is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot.
- And finally recommendations for life. Wellness tips we can learn from dogs ...
 - Never pass up the opportunity to go for a joy ride.
 - Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.
 - Take naps and stretch before rising.
 - Run, romp, and play daily.
 - Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.
 - Eat with gusto and enthusiasm.
 - Be loyal.
 - Never pretend to be something you're not.
 - If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.
 - When someone close is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by, and nuzzle them gently.
 - Thrive on attention and let people touch you.
 - On hot days, drink lots of water and lie under a shady tree.
 - When you're happy, dance around and waive your entire body.
 - No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout. Instead, run right back and make friends.
 - When it's in your best interests, practice obedience.
 - Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.

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

Extension Educators – Local Food Systems and Small Farms		
BRONWYN ALY , Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Pope, Saline, Wayne, and White counties	618-382-2662	baly@illinois.edu
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