

# Tomato School Agenda

Thursday, Nov. 7, 2013

Registration: 7:45 – 8:00 am

**Morning Session: Pest/Disease Management** 8:00 – 11:30am

Tomatoes: Seed to Sauce, How and Why it is Our Favorite Crop 8:05 – 8:45am

*Jud Reid, Cornell Vegetable Program*

In this session we'll take a broad view of tomatoes; market demand and potential, economics and the common attributes of successful growers. Understanding and implementing effective management will increase profits with higher yields, quality and decreased disease and insect losses.

Insect and Mite Pests of Tomatoes 8:45 – 9:45am

*Dan Gilrein, Suffolk County Cooperative Extension*

Growing tomatoes in the Northeast presents some challenges, not the least of which are insect and mite pests. This presentation will discuss the more important pest problems in tomatoes in our region, covering recognition, monitoring, and management. Knowing early signs of infestation, using tools like pheromone traps, and anticipating where some pests are first likely to be seen in fields or greenhouses, can prevent control problems. We'll review cultural, biological, organic and conventional control options and discuss these uses in different tomato production situations.

**Break** 9:45 – 10:00am

Tomato Diseases and their Management 10:00 – 11:00am

*Dr. Tom Zitter, Dept. Plant Pathology, Cornell University*

The best crop production practices for managing and controlling tomato diseases caused by bacteria, oomycetes, fungi, and viruses will be covered. If resistant tomato varieties exist, they will be presented. The talk will provide necessary information for both conventional and organic growers, and discussions will be appropriate for all levels of expertise.

Late Blight Forecasting Overview – Carol MacNeil 11:00 – 11:30am

*Carol MacNeil, Cornell Vegetable Program*

Growers will learn how to use a farm-specific late blight forecast system, the Late Blight Decision Support System (DSS). They will receive a DSS account to set up their location and crop-specific info into the online program so they can practice using the DSS. The following will be covered: research-based late blight development and fungicide weathering info from the past (weather station data) and from farm-forecast (National Weather Service) weather parameters, thresholds for fungicide application, a text/email alert option, and a smart phone link option.

**Lunch** 11:30 – 12:15pm

**Early Afternoon Session: Plant Production** 12:15 – 2:10pm

Hot Water Treatment of Seeds 12:15 – 12:45pm

*Robert Hadad, Cornell Vegetable Program*

Tomato seeds can carry certain diseases that will cause major problems during the growing season. Heat is one

method of killing bacterial and fungal pathogens. This presentation will cover the basics of hot water treatment for tomato seeds with emphasis on the steps involved and tools we have available.

#### Quality Transplant Production

12:45 – 1:05pm

*Jeff Hurtgam, Hurtgam Farms*

Jeff Hurtgam has years of experience raising transplants for several WNY farms. He will share tips for success in raising transplants, including topics like cell size selection, fertility management, and timing.

#### A Field Grower's Experience

1:05 – 1:35pm

*Tim Kirby, Kirby's Farm Market*

Tim Kirby raises 2 acres of tomatoes for his farm market and CSA. He will share what he has learned over the years regarding cultural practices and more.

#### What is the Perfect Tomato?

1:35 – 2:10pm

*Chef Mary Bartolotta, Mooseberry Café; Chef Arthur Rogers, Lento Restaurant*

Direct marketers know the importance of selecting varieties that capture the end user's interest. Variety selection also matters when selling to restaurants or groceries. In this panel discussion, tomato buyers will talk about what they want in a tomato, variety selection, and working with growers.

#### **Networking Break**

**2:10 – 2:30pm**

#### **Late Afternoon Session: Advanced Topics**

**2:30 – 4:40pm**

##### Tomato Nutrition from Germination to Harvest

2:30 – 3:30pm

*Steve Bogash, Penn State Extension*

Just like people, tomatoes have different nutritional requirements at different ages. Feeding for the specific needs at a given crop stage will increase yield and improve health and vigor, which lessens susceptibility to pressures like disease.

##### Putting it All Together: Designing an IPM Program that Works for Your Farm

*Abby Seaman, NYS IPM Program*

3:30 – 4:15pm

IPM is an approach to managing pests that strives to reduce environmental, health, and economic risks. We'll discuss the decisions and actions that are part of an IPM approach in tomatoes, and how you might implement them on your farm.

##### Is There Light at the End of the Tunnel?

4:15 – 4:35pm

*Jud Reid, Cornell Vegetable Program*

The use of unheated greenhouses (high tunnels) for tomatoes has grown exponentially in the Northeast. Disease reduction, season extension and increased fruit quality are the noted benefits. However, a number of challenges require heightened management for tunnels to make sense on any farm. Is this the right choice for you?

#### **DEC credit pick-up**

**4:40 pm**