

Squash School Agenda

Friday, Nov. 8, 2013

Registration: 8:45am

Morning Session: Pest Biology and Management 9:00 – 11:30am (Session = 2.5 DEC)

Seeking Skills to Produce Disease-free Squash in 2014 9:00 – 10:00am (60 min, 1 DEC)

Dr. Tom Zitter, Cornell University

Squash (*Cucurbita pepo*, *C. moschata* and *C. maxima*) consist of both summer and winter squash, and they are susceptible to many diseases found in NYS. Diseases to be discussed include bacterial, fungal, and viral pathogens. Cultivar selection will be addressed as it can limit disease progress. Spray products approved for conventional and organic production will be presented, as well as limitations placed on selection because of fungicide resistance.

Cucurbit Insect Pest Management 10:00 – 10:45am (45 min, .75 DEC)

Dr. Anders Huseeth, Dept. of Entom., Cornell University

Successful proactive management strategies are easily developed when key aspects of pest biology are known. This talk will cover squash bugs, squash borer, aphids and other pests of summer and winter squash.

Weed Management Options 10:45 – 11:30am (45 min, .75 DEC)

Chuck Bornt, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Capital District

Cultural and chemical control options for improved weed management will be discussed, including mulching, planting dates, and herbicide use.

Lunch 11:30am – 12:30pm (60 min)

Early Afternoon Session: Crop Production 12:30 – 2:30pm (Session = .5 DEC)

Supplemental Pollinators – Are They Necessary? 12:30 – 12:45pm (15 min, 0 DEC)

Dr. Steve Reiners, Dept. of Hort., Cornell University

Recent research has found that many native insects actively pollinate squash crops. Do they, along with new, self-pollinating varieties, make supplemental beehives obsolete?

Producing Premium Pumpkins 12:45 – 1:30pm (45 min, .5 DEC)

Chuck Bornt, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Capital District

Plant population, mulching, variety selection, irrigation: These are just a few of the cultural management practices recently examined for optimization in pumpkin production. Adoption of these cultural practices can lead to more vigorous growth and reduce the need to apply herbicides and other chemicals. Other aspects of quality pumpkin production will also be discussed.

Adopting Reduced Tillage 1:30 – 1:45pm (15 min, 0 DEC)
Joe Brightly, Brightly Farms

Joe Brightly will discuss his farm's transition to using reduced tillage for squash production.

Getting the Most from Your Fertilizer Dollar 1:45 – 2:30pm (45 min, 0 DEC)
Dr. Steve Reiners, Dept. of Hort., Cornell University

Steve will summarize the most recent squash fertility work and discuss how to develop an efficient, effective fertility management program that times nutrient availability to match the crop's most active stages of growth.

Break 2:30pm – 2:45pm (15 min)

Late Afternoon Session: Crop Production 2:45 – 4:30pm (Session = 1.25 DEC)

Curing and Storing Squash 2:45 – 3:15pm (30 min, .5 DEC)
Robert Hadad, Cornell Vegetable Program

By using the proper techniques and spending a little time, post-harvest diseases can be avoided. Techniques to prevent the loss of product while in storage will be discussed.

Strategies for Managing Phytophthora Blight 3:15 – 4:00pm (45 min, .75 DEC)
Dr. Chris Smart, Dept. Plant Pathology, Cornell University

Phytophthora blight is a devastating disease of all cucurbits, and has become much more severe and wide-spread in New York over the past ten years. The best control strategy is to keep the pathogen off a farm, as it can survive in the soil for many years. Cultural and chemical controls help reduce losses to the disease, and there is some hope that resistant varieties of winter and summer squash will be available in the future.

DEC credit pick up 4:00pm

Attendees eligible for DEC re-certification credits, who have sat through the entire course as determined by the course sponsor's monitor in accordance with DEC rules, will receive their credits.