



Weekly Update

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Additional Information on Disaster Relief for Farmers

Yesterday farmers and service providers came together in Greene County to discuss how to move forward with recovery efforts. If you missed the meeting, please see the notes below for more information, or plan to attend the meetings in **Schoharie County on September 15, 2011 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Best Western, 121 Bergen Drive in Cobleskill; or in Rensselaer County at the Brunswick Comm. Center on September 20th at 10 a.m.**

Please note, even if you didn't have crop insurance or haven't been paying into unemployment insurance, there may still be some benefits available to you and your workers.

Q: What is available for my home or my farm worker's housing?

For you (farm owner)

FEMA is providing assistance (grants) for anyone's primary residence **ONLY**. The house you live in is covered. Other structures are not. This includes your housing for farm workers. Your vehicle and your access roads may be eligible for assistance.

For your workers:

Farm workers can apply for assistance to replace their personal items that were damaged by the flood, including furniture, clothing, etc. **They can also apply for rental assistance for new housing.**

Contact FEMA at 800-621-3362 ASAP to apply for these benefits, or apply online.

Financial Assistance: An Overview

As we all know, there are many forms of financial distress associated with this disaster. We will try to break down the different sources of loan money available, and the benefits of each below.

Q: What do I do about my immediate bills?

1) Defer or adjust payments: First, speak with your current lender. Let them know that you suffered damage that will have an impact on your abilities to manage your current debt, and that you may have need for further infusions of cash into your business. Schedule an appointment with a financial advisor. Even if you do not think you have an immediate problem, just touch base with your loan officer. Blane Allen, Farm Credit East www.farmcrediteast.com delivered this message loud and clear. You may be able to defer payments or pay interest only.

Communicate your situation to other short term credit lines like seed or fertilizer suppliers. They may be able to offer some flexibility as well.

2) Seek additional credit: If you do not qualify for further loans with your commercial bank or Farm Credit, then you should visit with a USDA Emergency Loan Officer. They have a number of loan products that might make the difference. Operating loans are

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(Disaster relief, Continued from page 1)

available at 1.75% rate, they cover family living costs and immediate business operating needs. (1-7 years, up to 20 years at most depending upon what the collateral is). There are also physical loss loans and production loss loans that cover different aspects of farm businesses. *You must have been rejected by a commercial lender to be eligible for these loans.*

Finally, You can work with the Small Business Association (SBA) to secure an economic injury loan of up to 2 million dollars that will cover loss of sales due to many storm related causes. You need to submit application 60 days from the event. You can apply in person, centers are located around the region including Schenectady, Prattsville, Windham and Catskill. Call 1-800-659-2955 or visit www.sba.gov to apply online. Interest rates for the SBA loans are 4%, maximum term is 30 years.

Q: What money is available for my buildings and infrastructure?

There is not currently grant money available for business losses (including business structures like barns, worker housing, processing areas, etc.), but there are loans available to help you rebuild. The Small Business Association (SBA) takes over where FEMA leaves off with assistance rebuilding. Business loans are for disaster related problems with real estate, inventory, and equipment are available. You need to submit an application within 60 days of the event. You can apply in person, or centers are located around the region including Schenectady, Prattsville, Windham and Catskill. Call 1-800-659-2955 or visit www.sba.gov to apply online. Interest rates for the SBA loans are 4%, maximum term is 30 years.

There is a second component to NYS assistance money being administered through NYS Dept. of Ag and Markets. The remaining \$10 million available from the initial \$15 million designated to help farmers cover capital investment repairs – IE repairs to facilities, loss of income, loss of supplies for the entire next year etc. This money will most likely take the shape of grants with some matching funds required, but there are no specific details available yet. We will tell you as soon as information is available on these funds.

Q: What can I do for the workers I have to lay off early this year?

Even if you or your workers have not been paying into unemployment insurance, you may still be eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance, which will pay benefits from August 29th through March 4th. This includes self-employed farm owners. Please note that applications are due relatively soon (dates below, with counties). Please start this process now! Every county in the Capital District except Fulton and Rensselaer is eligible.

Farmers and farm workers in the following counties (below) are eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance. The Department of Labor will examine each claim individually to determine its validity. This is a Federally funded program.

In order to receive DUA, you must live or work in one of the following counties and apply for DUA benefits by the application end date noted:

- Application end date of **October 3, 2011** applies to: **Albany**, Clinton, Delaware, Dutchess, Essex, **Greene**, **Montgomery**, Nassau, Orange, Rensselaer, Rockland, **Saratoga**, **Schenectady**, **Schoharie**, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster, **Warren**, and Westchester Counties
- Application end date **October 6, 2011**: Otsego County
- Application end date **October 11, 2011**: **Columbia**, Putnam and **Washington Counties**

Application end date **October 12, 2011**: Bronx, Kings, Queens and Richmond Counties

Directions to apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance:

File for regular unemployment insurance by calling the NYS Department of Labor at 1-888-209-8124. **Answer the questions to indicate that you lost your job as a direct result of the effects of Hurricane Irene/flooding.** Have the following available when you call: Social Security Number, NYS Drivers' License or ID, mailing address and zip code, a telephone number where you can be reached, and, for migrant workers, an alien registration card number. Also have the names and addresses of all employers you worked for in the last 18 months.

Practical Considerations When Rebuilding

Have you thought about protecting yourself while cleaning up debris from the floods? Many areas are setting up clinics to make sure cleanup workers are up-to-date on shots—make sure you are either already up-to-date or that you get any needed shots. Also, protect yourself from contaminants that are in the mud and debris. NYC-AMH is offering to provide farmers with any personal protective equipment they might need free of charge, and will help with fitting to make sure you are reducing risk as much as possible. NYCAMH workers will also come to the farm and help identify hazards that could be avoided or mitigated during cleanup. Finally, they will carry water sample equipment to and from testing labs. If you think your well water is contaminated, you should have it tested immediately.

How are you cleaning up your mold? The USDA has guidelines for cleanup and containment of mold in commercial buildings. Of particular interest are the sections of PPE to use when cleaning up mold and the proper techniques/products to eliminate mold. The last thing you need to deal with is a regrowth of mold next season. For the complete reference on mold remediation, visit this website: <http://www.epa.gov/mold/table2.html>. We were also reminded to use a name-brand bleach for cleanup, since

off-brands may not have the correct percentage of active ingredient and consequently will not be as effective.

Have you completely thought through the rebuilding process? Yesterday Sandy Buxton, a Farm Business Management Educator with the CCE Capital District Regional Agriculture Team reminded participants that in some ways this disaster provides an opportunity to make positive changes to the farm. Before rebuilding structures or infrastructure exactly as it was, consider whether there are some changes you could make to improve your operation. If you would like help with this visioning process, please feel free to contact Crystal, Laura, or Chuck and we will work with you and other resource people in the area to weigh your options.

Your primary residence may be eligible for FEMA mitigation funds. FEMA will help pay for improvements that will reduce the probability of disastrous damage in the future. They will move outlets in basements up on the walls to avoid flooding, help you properly secure your oil tank so it can't float away, etc. They will also provide flood insurance if you can't afford it or cannot get it through a private insurance company. —CLS

Potato harvest and storage considerations

OK, some of you actually still have crops, right? Please see the following article from UMass Extension for tips to keep that potato crop in top shape.

Potato fields that have been saturated with water will be especially prone to post-harvest diseases. Bacterial soft rot (*Erwinia* species), Fusarium dry rot, pink rot (*Phytophthora erythroseptica*), and Pythium leak are four serious tuber rotting pathogens that cause the most significant losses in storage. These pathogens can be brought in on infected tubers or survive on storage debris. Many of them take only a few weeks to destroy a tuber and then spread through the storage pile. Growers may be aiming for short term or long term storage and sales, or some of each, and attention to the harvest, curing, and handling issues can help maintain quality.

Note that fields that were flooded by river water are considered contaminated and should not be harvested.

Two management practices that reduce post-harvest losses are: allowing tuber skins to mature in the field before harvesting and eliminating free moisture in storage areas. There are some risks from leaving tubers in the soil, however. Rhizoctonia black scurf and silver scurf (*Helminthosporium solani*) may be at high levels on the tubers and will increase in severity as long as tubers remain in the soil. Wireworms can also cause tuber damage. To avoid these diseases and pests, harvest should begin as soon as skins are set. If the weather remains wet during the harvest, soil may adhere to the tubers during harvest and promote soft rot.

Potatoes should be harvested at pulp temperatures that allow for successful storage. Allowable pulp temperatures vary based on storage ventilation systems, varieties, availability of cooling air, and timeliness. If potatoes are harvested during hot weather (above 80F) and cool off slowly the likelihood of storage rot is increased. Potatoes destined for storages with refrigeration could be harvested at 62 to 65°F pulp temperature. Storage areas with no refrigeration should not be loaded

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with potatoes with a pulp temperature above 60°F. Healing of cuts and bruises is most rapid at high relative humidity (95%) with a tuber temperature of 50°F to 60°F and adequate through the pile ventilation. This temperature should be provided for two to three weeks at the beginning of the storage period. This process is called suberization. Effective suberization will reduce evaporative weight loss and prevent rot organisms from entering damaged tubers. If pulp temperatures are higher than recommended it is more difficult to manage critical environmental conditions in storage. Time your harvest when cooling air is available to allow open outside doors and 3 to 6 hours of fresh air per day.

Questionable potato lots should be harvested closer to 55°F if they must be stored. For later harvests, avoid harvesting at temperatures lower than 45 degrees as this increases the occurrence of bruising. Below is a list of guidelines that can be used during harvesting and storage to help prevent the spread of the diseases mentioned above and to maintain high quality potatoes.

After suberization the temperature should be lowered gradually to 40°F for tablestock or seed or maintained at 50°F for chip stock varieties. When a rot potential such as field frost, late blight or ring rot is present, the curing period should be eliminated, the temperature dropped and the ventilation increased. The crop should be utilized as soon as possible.

Vine killing

- * Vine killing stops tuber growth at the desired maturity, stabilizes the tuber solids, and promotes skin set.
- * Mechanical or chemical methods or a combination of the two can be used to kill potato vines.
- * More than one application of a chemical desiccant may be required.
- * Vine killing permits easier digging and harvesting operations.

Disease management

- * Foliar diseases, especially late blight, are still a threat as vines begin to die or vine killing methods are implemented. These pathogens can spread to tubers and cause problems in storage if they are not controlled prior to harvest.
- * Application of a desiccant followed by a fungicide application a few days later is recommended rather than simultaneous applications to ensure thorough coverage of the remaining plant material.

Skin set

- * Most tuber diseases require a wound to infect potatoes. Good skin set greatly reduces the amount of wounding at harvest and increases the storability of tubers.

- * Allow 10-14 days for skin set on the tubers in the field before harvesting.

Wounding and bruising prevention

- * Check harvesting and transporting equipment to make sure it is working properly and does not bruise or wound tubers.
- * Harvest when the soil is moist but not too wet. Tuber pulp temperatures around 60-65°F make the potatoes less susceptible to bruising and wounds compared to lower temperatures.

Grading

- * Grade out diseased tubers as quickly as possible. The longer they are mixed with healthy tubers, the higher the chance of disease spread.

Healing period

- * The 'curing', 'suberization' or 'wound healing' period immediately after harvest is critical to successful storage.
- * Store tubers at about 50-60°F at high relative humidity (95%) for 10-14 days to allow wounds to heal before placing potatoes into colder storage. Lower RH results in poor suberization.
- * Airflow over and through the pile is important to supply oxygen and prevent condensation. However, do not overdry the potatoes during curing.

Storage

- * Before storing potatoes, facilities should be cleaned and thoroughly disinfected. Inspect to make sure to check the insulation, fans, humidifiers, and ventilation system are working. If any of these are in poor condition it could result in losses due to disease.
- * After the curing period, cool potatoes gradually and steadily to the holding temperature suited to your goals: 38-40 F for tablestock, and seed potatoes, 45-50F for chipping, and 50-55 F for French fry stock.

Diagnostics

[ed cls] In order to have diseases and disorders properly identified, call Chuck, Laura or Crystal.

- * A good online resource on tuber diseases can be found at http://vegetablemdonline.ppath.cornell.edu/factsheets/Potato_Detection.htm#Click2

* However, finding a photo online that looks like your problem is not the same as having a plant pathologist confirm what is on YOUR tubers!

-- R Hazzard, A. Cavanagh and M.B Dicklow; compiled from the following sources: Vegetable Crop Update, U of WI, 8/13/10, edited by C. MacNeil, CCE, CVP for Veg Edge, Cornell CES; New England Vegetable Management Guide; Potato Production in the Northeast: A Guide to Integrated Pest Management.

Downy Mildew of Crucifers

Downy mildew (DM) is commonly found in broccoli, collards and mustard greens but also occurs in cabbage and cauliflower. On older leaves, DM causes irregular, yellow to brown spots on the upper side of the leaves with a grayish, white mildew on the underside of the leaves during cool, moist conditions (Fig. 4). As soon as lesions are evident on older leaves, spores can spread to marketable portions of the crop. Late season infections can cause losses in cauliflower and broccoli by internal discoloration of the heads. It also leaves the heads more susceptible to soft rot bacteria and other storage rots, especially in cabbage and broccoli. In addition to Bravo, Quadris and Cabrio, which are also labeled for ALS, several other fungicides are labeled for DM including Ridomil Gold Bravo, Reason, Presidio (new), Phostrol/Prophyt, maneb, Acrobat/Forum, Alliette, copper compounds (several OMRI approved) and Actigard.

For cultural management of both ALS and DM: rotate out of crucifer crops including cruciferous weeds such as



wild radish, Shepherd's purse and wild mustard for a minimum of 3 years, avoid fields where crucifer plant waste has been dumped, and destroy crop debris as soon as possible to remove this source of disease for other plantings and to initiate decomposition. *By Christy Hoeping, Veg Edge Weekly August 31st Edition.*

Late blight continues to spread in New York

C. MacNeil, CVP edited by CLS: Late blight (LB) was confirmed this past week in Columbia Co. and in Otsego Co, both in eastern NY. If you have a mefenoxam sensitive isolate of LB on your farm, Meg McGrath, Cornell, suggests including mefenoxam (a Ridomil plus protectant formulation, OLF) in your spray program in alternation with other LB products. On sensitive LB isolates mefenoxam can be more effective than the newer "LB fungicides". Mefenoxam should not be used exclusively because there could be other LB isolates present. (It's still unclear what isolates we have in upstate NY.) Go to: <http://blogs.cce.cornell.edu/cvp/> to see the 2011 Potato or Tomato Fungicide Roster and Ratings charts.

LB has been confirmed in potatoes or tomatoes on farms or in gardens in NY, FL, VA, DE, WI, PA, WA, CA, ME, MN, CT, VT, ND, RI, NH and Canada (NB, ON, PEI). See the map from the website <http://www.usablight.org/>.

The weather was favorable for the development of LB last week in the CVP and CDVSFP areas. LB severity values (SV) are high in many locations (6+ indicates the need for

a 5 day spray interval; 3 – 5 indicates the need for a 7 day interval). Blight units and/or fungicide (loss) units from the new online LB Decision Support System (DSS) reached or were close to the action threshold, by 5 days from the last fungicide "spray" (8/24) on some "farms" while on other "farms" the threshold will be reached in 7 days.

If LB shows up on your farm, hot spots or fields need to be top-killed immediately if LB becomes serious (over 5% of foliage surface infected) and is thus not controllable. Kill or remove normal looking plants from a wide margin around the infected area before going into the hot spot. The plants can be physically removed and bagged, buried, or killed in place with a propane flamer or fastacting burn-down herbicide. This will reduce the threat to your other fields, and also those of your neighbors.

Some growers in our area are considering letting their tomatoes go very soon. If you do this, please kill/turn them under them so that any hightunnel growers in your area are not put at higher risk by your unprotected plants.

Websites of Interest

Diagnose pest and disease problems using color pictures: <http://vegetablemendonline.ppath.cornell.edu/>

Cornell *Guidelines* for fruit and vegetables: <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/recommends/>

Cucurbit Downy Mildew forecast: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/pp/cucurbit/>

USDA Fruit and Vegetable Market News: www.marketnews.usda.gov/portal/fv

Organic Prices: <http://rodaleinstitute.org/Organic-Price-Report> or <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/OrganicPrices/dd>

Sweet Corn Trapping Update

We were unable to check any traps this week. However, if you still have sweet corn, please be aware that there is still risk of damage. Upon our last checks, CEW numbers were still high and this is supported by numbers from WNY. Abby Seaman is still doing trapping further west, and this is her report from yesterday:

“European corn borer trap catches are up at a few locations this week; we may be seeing a partial third generation this year. Corn earworm are being caught at all locations this week, and numbers are high enough to indicate a 3-4 day spray schedule at three sites. Several others have numbers indicating the need for a 4-5 day schedule, depending on temperature (see the table below). Fall armyworm numbers are up at several locations, but the same locations are also catching CEW in high enough levels that the spray schedule should also take care of the FAW. The western bean cutworm flight has ended.”

Average corn earworm catch			
Per Day	Per Five Days	Per Week	Days Between Sprays
<0.2	<1.0	<1.4	No Spray(for CEW)
0.2-0.5	1.0-2.5	1.4-3.5	6 days
0.5-1.0	2.5-5.0	3.5-7.0	5 days
1-13	5-65	7-91	4 days
over 13	over 65	over 91	3 days
Add one day to the recommended spray interval if daily maximum temperatures are less than 80° F for the previous 2-3 days.			

Update on Use of Chilean Nitrate for Organic Growers

At the April 2011 meeting of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), they recommended removing the annotation on Chilean Nitrate (sodium nitrate), which currently allows restricted use of sodium nitrate for up to 20% of the crop’s total nitrogen requirement. The recommended removal of this annotation will completely prohibit the use of Chilean Nitrate in organic crop production. Many growers use it, and some blended fertilizers (ex. ProGro) have it as an ingredient. The NOP will decide whether or not they take the recommendation however, it looks as if the NOP intends to propose removing the annotation with an effective date of October 21, 2012. If the annotation was removed in the final rule, sodium nitrate could not be used as a fertilizer, an ingredient in a fertilizer, or a soil amendment in organic crop production as of October 21, 2012. *By Sandy Menasha, LI Fruit and Vegetable Update.*

Upcoming Meetings and Notices

Sept. 15th 3-5p.m., Cobleskill Best Western, Schoharie County: Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie County and Schoharie County Planning & Development will host an Agricultural Disaster Information Meeting on Thursday, Sept. 15, 2011 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Best Western, 121 Bergen Drive in Cobleskill. This meeting is targeted to farmers who have experienced flood related losses to their farm businesses or homes. On hand will be representatives from multiple agencies and agricultural service providers who will present an overview of assistance programs, resources, and will be available to answer questions.

Registration is NOT required; farmers from all surrounding counties are welcome. For more information, contact David Cox at 518-234-4303/518-296-8310.

Sept. 20th, 10a.m., Brunswick Community Center, Rensselaer County: Rensselaer County Disaster Meeting. This meeting is targeted to farmers who have experienced flood related losses to their farm businesses or homes. On hand will be representatives from multiple agencies and agricultural service providers who will present an overview of assistance programs, resources, and will be available to answer questions. For more information contact Kirk Schoen at 272-4210.

Want more information on disaster relief? Maire Ulrich of Ulster County had her meeting recorded in its entirety. You can access the recorded meeting here: <http://emergencypreparedness.cce.cornell.edu/disasters/Pages/FarmerDisasterRelief.aspx>. You can also access the comprehensive disaster packet from Sen. Gillibrand’s office here: <http://gillibrand.senate.gov/issues/issue/?id=e3c12c07-d054-41f2-b8be-fe981d0fa97c>, or visit her homepage for the link.

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