



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Cornell Vegetable Program

*Serving Allegany, Cattaraugus,
Erie, Genesee, Monroe, Niagara,
Ontario, Orleans, Seneca,
Wayne & Yates Counties*

CORNELL VEGETABLE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY – MARCH 2013

The Advantages of Grafting Promoted at CVP Workshop

On March 14, the Cornell Vegetable Program hosted a vegetable grafting workshop in Belmont, NY (Allegany County). In this workshop 12 participants learned about the advantages of grafting, a cutting-edge technology to increase yield and manage soil-borne diseases. Using this technique, the top shoot of a highly desirable variety is spliced onto the stem and root portion of a more disease tolerant plant to take advantage of the best traits in each variety. In 2012, the Cornell Vegetable Program successfully demonstrated an increase of nearly 5 lbs of fruit per grafted tomato plant, which would increase revenue by \$1.50/sq ft of greenhouse space; or \$62,500 per acre for adopting growers. Participants in this workshop grafted their own tomatoes to take with them and compare with non-grafted plants.



Judson Reid demonstrates how to graft a tomato. *Photo: E. Buck, Cornell Vegetable Program*

Small-Scale Onion and Garlic Growers Learn Best Production Practices at Allium School

Small-scale production (e.g. <2 acres per grower) of onion and garlic, has increased in New York over the past 5 years. Consequently, there are many new and previously under-served growers seeking to learn best production practices for this potentially lucrative crop.

In response, the Cornell Vegetable Program took a leading role in the organization of an Allium School at the Empire State Producers Expo in January 2013. Geared towards small-scale growers, topics included Allium physiology, fertility and pest management, as well as planting and harvesting considerations for onions, garlic, leeks and shallots. Sixty-two participants enjoyed presentations given by five Cornell Allium specialists (Hoepting, Stewart, Ullrich, Reid and Wien) and experiences shared by four successful onion and garlic growers (Hoover, Stoltzfus, Fraser and Forsburg). By the end of the all-day Allium School, many participants indicated that they would alter their onion spacing and try an alternative to black plastic mulch as they learned that such modifications can increase yield and bulb size, and improve bulb quality, while reducing pest pressure from onion thrips and bacterial disease. Additionally, garlic growers indicated that they would modify their seed selection and harvest and post-harvest practices in manners demonstrated to improve bulb quality and storability.



Garlic can be dried in a single layer in a high tunnel with fans to provide adequate air movement for excellent post-harvest curing. (left) *Photo: C. Stewart, Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program*

Reflective silver mulch yields a bumper crop of onions. (below) *Photo: C. Hoepting, Cornell Vegetable Program*



Cornell Vegetable Program Facilitates New Reduced Tillage Grower Discussion Group

A new Reduced Tillage (RT) Grower Discussion Group was formed in Western New York this past winter, with CVP and NWNYS Teams facilitating. All interested growers, experienced and new, were invited to participate, through CCE newsletters and media releases. Thirty-four vegetable and field crop growers, consultants, ag agency staff and CCE met for three hours on February 25 in Batavia. Donn Branton, experienced RT grower, opened the round-table discussion, and a lively exchange of information on equipment, fertilizer, planting and cover crops followed. Participants then gathered in small groups to share RT experiences or to ask/answer questions. Agency and CCE/Cornell staff informed the group about cost-share opportunities for RT practices. Contact info for the attendees is being shared so they can continue communicating. The group plans to meet for a field day in late July to observe demonstration of different types of equipment.

Snap Bean Industry Engages in National Grant for Sustainable Crop Production and Processing

The Cornell Vegetable Program along with two Cornell faculty members has been awarded \$429,435 as part of a USDA Specialty Crops Research Initiative (SCRI) grant. The project entitled *"Building Market Foundations for Sustainable Vegetable Production and Processing"* includes researchers, farmers and processors from five states. Project Director, Dr. Paul Mitchell from the University of Wisconsin met with 15 members of the snap bean industry in Canandaigua, NY on March 28th to kick-off the project. New York growers and processors will test sustainable practices for weed, insect and disease control in commercial snap bean fields over the next 3 years. The group will also work to develop assessment tools which will help individual farms and the industry document adoption of more sustainable production practices and their economic and environmental impacts. In 2012, there were 19,700 acres of snap beans planted in NY with a value of \$18.8 million. These beans are packaged into canned or frozen products for the national market. Western New York beans are processed at Seneca Foods in Geneva, NY (Ontario Co.) or Bonduelle, Inc. in Oakfield, NY (Genesee Co.).



Photo: J. Kikkert, CVP

Culinary Connections Networking Event Connects Growers and Chefs

The Cornell Vegetable Program, together with Jim Ochterski of CCE Ontario County, ran a farm-to-restaurant educational program called Culinary Connections. This networking workshop brought together 35 farmers and chefs to discuss needs, hurdles, and opportunities for moving forward in getting locally grown food into regional restaurants. Farmers brought tabletop displays highlighting their farms and products. Chefs had the opportunity to visit each farm display and talk with the farmer to learn more about what their farm offers. There were short panel discussions with chefs, then farmers, to provide them with the chance to talk about their experiences in getting food from farm to restaurant. In between the panels, there were breaks where chefs and farmers could network. To date, 8 farmers have made contact with chefs and 4 have started to sell products into restaurants.



Farmers and chefs networking at Culinary Connections workshop. Every thirty minutes, panel discussions adjourned for "speed dating" style network sessions before returning for further panel discussions.

Photo: E. Buck, Cornell Vegetable Program

Newly Funded Grants

Each year, the Cornell Vegetable Program is tasked with generating a certain percentage of our operating funds, or Program Generated Income (PGI), through research grants, sponsorships, and meeting registration revenue. This quarter, we are pleased to have received the following grant funds:

- **Determining the Magnitude and Distribution of Western Bean Cutworm, and the Risk to Dry Beans, in the Major Production Area in NY.** NYS Dry Bean Industry - \$2,997 (Waldron and MacNeil)
- **Potato Variety and Breeding Line Evaluations.** Empire State Potato Growers - \$500 (Halseth and MacNeil)
- **Problem Weed Management in Onions.** Onion Research and Development Program - \$4,000. (Hoepting)
- **Evaluating Novel Insecticides and Delivery Systems for Onion Insect Pest Management.** Onion Research and Development Program - \$12,000 (Nault and Hoepting)

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- **Together, over 375 farm visits and phone/email consultations were made by our Vegetable Specialists**
 - **21 DEC pesticide recertification credits were offered at events organized by the Cornell Vegetable Program**
 - **17.5 Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) continuing education credits were offered at Cornell Vegetable Program meetings**
 - **Over 775 people attended meetings hosted by the team**
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For more information about our program, contact Julie Kikkert at jrk2@cornell.edu or 585.394.3977 x404 or visit our website <http://cvp.cce.cornell.edu>

