



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Cornell Vegetable Program

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

CORNELL VEGETABLE PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY – MARCH 2012

Quick Action Helps Save NY Beet Industry

At the CVP-organized Processing Beet Advisory meeting last December in Batavia, growers wondered if they would be able to continue growing red beets in New York because of the loss of available weed control products. The CVP along with Cornell faculty organized local growers and processors to write letters in support of new herbicide registrations. The critical nature of this issue was heard by two chemical companies and the DEC, resulting in Special Local Needs Labels for 2 new herbicides for beets in time for the 2012 growing season. The CVP dispersed timely information on the use of these new herbicides. A chart of the relative effectiveness of table beet herbicides in NY against different weed species was developed. ***“This was a good example of everyone working together to solve a problem”*** said a local processor. The New York table beet industry, focused in Western, NY is valued at more than \$2 million and is ranked second in the nation for production.



Quick action by the Cornell Vegetable Program led to the approval of 2 new herbicides for use in beets in 2012, saving the \$2 million table beet industry in NYS.

Internal Funding of Grafting Research is Beginning to Show Exciting Results

Although grafting of greenhouse cucumbers for high tunnel production is still in research phase, current work by the Cornell Vegetable Program has demonstrated several steps towards commercialization

- Earlier yields in cold soils.
- Improved stem diameter match with multiple scion seeding dates.
- Increased graft survival rate.

Our vision is to combine grafting for cold tolerance with high tunnels to increase the local cucumber season by over 4 weeks, creating more market opportunities for New York vegetable farmers.

In the 1st quarter of 2012, we made 3 successive grafting trials.

Our final trial had our highest success rate ever; nearly 100% on some varieties. Key collaborators on this project include faculty from the New York State Ag Experiment Station, cooperating farmers and seed companies. Our industry relationships on this theme have strengthened such that we now have outside funding for the work as well. We are evaluating 3 tomato rootstocks with 2 scions and 1 cucumber rootstock with 3 scions in 2012.



Cornell Vegetable Program Field Technician, Katie Klotzbach, grafting greenhouse cucumbers.

Farm Market Merchandising Workshop - February 22, Geneva

Organized by the Cornell Vegetable Program and CCE Ontario County, this workshop aimed to teach farm market vendors, CSA farmers, and roadside market owners how they can see higher profits by merchandising like the pros. Presentations were made by a professional merchandising specialist from the food retail industry as well as a marketing specialist from Ohio State University. More than 60 farms were represented, each leaving with many pages of notes and tips on how to display produce to build sales and leave an impression on customers. In the post-workshop survey, an Ontario County grower said, ***“I felt the seminar was excellent and I am confident that if I use 10% of the info and expertise presented, I will certainly increase sales.”***

CVP Contributes to Success of the 2012 Empire State Fruit & Vegetable Expo

Nearly 1,000 growers and industry representatives convened on Syracuse the last week of January to attend the Empire State Fruit & Vegetable Expo. Attendees could choose from dozens of sessions held over three days, a large trade show and networking opportunities. The Cornell Vegetable Program organized, facilitated and in many cases spoke at sessions including the following:

- Processing Vegetables – Julie Kikkert
- Cover Crops & Soil Health – Carol MacNeil
- Cabbage & Cole Crops – Christy Hoepting
- Onions – Christy Hoepting
- Winter Storage – Robert Hadad
- Food Safety/GAPs – Robert Hadad
- Greenhouse/Tunnel Vegetables – Judson Reid



Cover Crop Session at the 2012 Empire State Fruit & Vegetable Expo - January 24, Syracuse

In a continuing effort to promote good soil management to improve soil health and thus crop yields, the Cornell Vegetable Program organized this session, which attracted 92 people - one of the best attended sessions of the Expo. The featured NRCS-USDA speaker discussed the new approach of using diverse cover crop mixes (including grasses, legumes, crucifers, and other cover crops) to more fully fill the soil/time/space niche that was available, and crowd out weeds and to provide the greatest possible benefit to the soil and subsequent cash crop. Management of traditional cover crops, or two-way mixes, to maximize the nitrogen:carbon ratio and/or pest suppression, without risking unmanageable, excess growth, soil drying or unwanted seed set, was also covered. Grower panelists shared the experiences on their farms with both new and older cover crops. Half of those responding to the session evaluation said they planned to increase their acres in cover crops and/or try a new cover crop in 2012. Benefits observed by respondents who had been using cover crops regularly for 3 – 5 years included better drainage of excess rainfall and/or better soil water-holding capacity.



Medium red clover cover crop, fixing nitrogen for subsequent cash crop.

Western NY Winter Vegetable Meeting - February 27, Lockport

This annual meeting attracts farmers from across the Erie, Niagara, and Orleans County region. This year, the Cornell Vegetable Program lead a vegetable session in the morning and the Lake Ontario Fruit Team conducted a small fruit and berry session in the afternoon. The joint effort between the two teams gave growers the opportunity to participate in a full day of programming covering a wide variety of topics. There were 40 growers present for the vegetable session. Of interest was that more than 2/3 of the morning session vegetable growers stayed on for the afternoon fruit program. A survey indicated many growers raised vegetables and berries or were interested in starting to diversify into small fruit or berries. Evaluations from the growers suggested that this combined meeting format really met their needs. 90% of the audience stated they were going to be trying new practices on their farm.

First Annual Garlic School Addresses Needs of Expanding Industry in NY

The New York garlic industry is estimated to yield \$19.6M to \$24.5M in gross sales annually. New York's greater than 300 acres of production on 10% of all vegetable farms make it rank 5th in the nation. Production has increased 30-fold over the past 20 years. Several new garlic growers in this quickly expanding industry were looking for Cornell to assist them with general production practices, and especially with management of a newly discovered and potentially devastating pest, the garlic bloat nematode.

Cornell Vegetable Program Extension Specialists, teamed up with Capital District Vegetable Specialist, Crystal Stewart, Cornell Plant Pathologist, George Abawi, and leader in the garlic industry, David Stern from the Garlic Seed Foundation, to conduct garlic schools across the state.

Locally, one was held in Geneva on March 27th which had 30 participants. In addition to an out-of-state guest speaker and presentations by the garlic school team, the educational format largely consisted of grower discussion and sharing of harvest and curing practices, weed, insect and disease control strategies, and fertility management.

Feedback from the garlic school in Geneva was very favorable: ***"The Garlic School was clearly the most important class I attended this year! Great topics, good speakers, pertinent information, just the right amount of time!"*** – Fred Forsburg, Honeyhill Organic Farm, Livonia, NY. In a post-school evaluation: 1) 86% of the participants indicated that they would conduct soil testing to guide their fertilization practices; 2) participants scored 21% higher on their ability to identify disease and insect problems, and; 3) 27% of the participants indicated that they would trial new harvest and storage techniques on their farms to improve the quality of their garlic. It was unanimously decided to continue garlic schools in 2013. Also, Cornell University has received two major grants to improve garlic production practices in New York to support this expanding industry and ensure its sustainability.



Veg Edge Newsletter Reaches Over 900 Readers Statewide

The Cornell Vegetable Program produced 3 more issues of Veg Edge monthly newsletter, a joint publication between our team and the Capital District Vegetable & Small Fruit Program. Over 900 readers from 23 New York counties receive Veg Edge each month.

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- **Together, over 365 farm visits and phone/email consultations were made by our Vegetable Specialists**
 - **Over 1,175 people attended meetings hosted by the Cornell Vegetable Program**
 - **19 DEC credits were offered to attendees at events organized by the Cornell Vegetable Program**
 - **17 CCA credits were offered at Cornell Vegetable Program meetings**
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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>

