



Properly curing and storing pumpkins and winter squash can prolong the post-harvest life

of the fruit. Tips to minimize rots are provided.

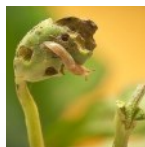
PAGE 1



Late season crops inside high tunnels are still susceptible to thrips. Foliar damage and

speckling of fruit is caused by thrips. Control options provided.

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While slugs are fresh in our minds, here are some longer-term slug management options that might

help decrease future slug challenges.

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The recent record-breaking hot temperatures and light winds were conditions that are favorable for black

mold in onions.

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Photo: Judson Reid

 **Cornell University**
Cooperative Extension
Cornell Vegetable Program

Harvesting and Curing Pumpkin and Winter Squash

Adapted from J.M. Kemble, E.J. Sikora, G.W. Zehnder, E. Bauske. 2005. *Guide to Commercial Pumpkin and Winter Squash Production*. Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Publication ANR-1041, and J. Schultheis and C. Averre. 1998. *Storing Winter Squash and Pumpkins*. NC Cooperative Extension. <http://content.ces.ncsu.edu/storing-winter-squash-and-pumpkins/>; edited by Darcy Telenko, CCE Cornell Vegetable Program

Many pumpkin and winter squash plantings are reaching maturity. The fruit of these crops are still alive even after they have matured and are removed from the vine. The objective of curing and storage is to prolong the post-harvest life of the fruit. Mature pumpkins and winter squash store better than immature fruit. When mature, winter squash have hard skins that resist puncture with your thumbnail. Skins of winter squash appear dull and dry compared to the fresh, bright sheen of the skin of immature fruit. Leave a long stem (handle) on pumpkins. On winter squash, such as the 'Hubbard' type, remove the stems completely. Keep in mind that dead vines do not indicate maturity in pumpkin and winter squash. When vines die



Leave long stems on pumpkins to prolong the post-harvest life of the fruit.

Photo: Elizabeth Buck, 9/21/14

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VegEdge newsletter is exclusively for enrollees in the Cornell Vegetable Program, a Cornell Cooperative Extension regional agriculture team, serving 13 counties in Western New York.

The newsletter is a service to our enrollees and is intended for educational purposes, strengthening the relationship between our enrollees, the Cornell Vegetable Program team, and Cornell University.

We're interested in your comments. Contact us at:
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Information provided is general and educational in nature. Employees and staff of the Cornell Vegetable Program, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Cornell University do not endorse or recommend any specific product or service.

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Help us serve you better by telling us what you think. Email us at cce-cvp@cornell.edu or write to us at Cornell Vegetable Program, 480 North Main Street, Canandaigua, NY 14424.



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Cornell Vegetable Program

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The next issue of VegEdge will be November 1, 2017.



Harvest of CVP on-farm onion research trials

well underway. During the 2017 growing season, CVP Specialist Christy Hoepting and her technicians, Amy Celentano and Audrey Klein conducted several research projects in onions throughout the CVP region including Orleans, Genesee, Oswego and Wayne counties, that investigated pesticide programs for improved management of weeds, leaf diseases, bacterial bulb decay and soilborne diseases. It will take until early December to complete all of the yield data.

prematurely from disease or drought, for example, the fruits are likely immature and will not store successfully. Curing involves elevating storage temperatures to 80° to 85°F with 75 to 80 percent relative humidity for approximately 10 days. Curing heals wounds, helps ripen immature fruit, enhances color, and insures a longer post-harvest life. After curing, reduce temperature and relative humidity as indicated in Table 1. Curing is beneficial in pumpkins and some winter squash, but ‘Butternut,’ ‘Hubbard,’ and ‘Quality’ squashes have not shown any added benefits from curing. Curing is detrimental in Acorn types, such as ‘Table Queen.’

Storage. All pumpkins and winter squash should be well matured and free from injury and decay when stored. They should be kept dry and provided with good air circulation. Control humidity because high humidity will promote decay and lower humidity will cause excessive weight loss. When winter squashes are taken out of storage, they should be marketed immediately.

Table 1. Storage Recommendations for Pumpkins and Winter Squash

| Type | Approximate length of storage | Temperature conditions | Relative humidity | Remarks |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Pumpkin | 2-3 months | 50-55 °F | 50-75% | Should be well-matured |
| Winter Squash | | | | |
| Hubbard | 5-6 months | 50-55 °F | 70-75% | Holds well in storage |
| Acorn | 5-8 weeks | 50 °F | 50-75% | Develops poor color at higher temperatures |
| Butternut, Turban, Buttercup | 2-3 months | 50 °F | 50-75% | |

Tips to minimize squash and pumpkin rots:

1. Maintain a good fungicide- and insecticide-spray program during the growing season to minimize foliar diseases
2. Avoid blossom-end rot of fruit by fertilizing and liming fields according to recommendations from soil test reports and by irrigating when needed.
3. Avoid injuring fruit while on the vine.
4. Harvest fruits when they are mature and the rind is hard, but before night temperatures are below 40°F and well before a frost or a hard freeze.
5. Do not harvest or handle wet fruit. Do not let harvested fruit get wet.
6. Harvest fruit by cutting the peduncle (stem) with pruning shears to leave a 3- to 4-inch handle for pumpkins and about a 1-inch stump for squash.
7. Harvest, pack, handle, and store fruit carefully to avoid injuries.
8. Discard all fruit that are immature, injured, or have rot or blemishes. These fruit should not be harvested or stored.
9. Do not pick up freshly harvested fruit by the peduncle, because it may separate from the fruit and provide easy access for rot organisms.
10. Do not stack the fruit higher than 3 feet.
11. Do not permit harvested or stored fruit to get wet.
12. Washing is usually not desirable, but if washing is necessary, be sure the water is chlorinated (at least 50 ppm, approximately one part 5.25% liquid bleach to 999 parts water). Prepare fresh wash solution when the water becomes cloudy and chlorine cannot be detected. Dry thoroughly.
13. For better keeping, some growers cure pumpkins for 10 to 20 days at 80 to 85°F with good ventilation (e.g. four air exchanges per day).
14. Harvested fruit should be stored with good ventilation (at least one air exchange per day) at 50 to 55°F and 50 to 75% relative humidity. Standard refrigeration temperatures (35 to 45°F) may cause chilling injuries and shorten shelf life. Storage at high temperature may result in excessive loss of weight, color, and culinary qualities, while high humidity may promote rots.
15. Storage life is typically 2 to 3 months without significant loss in quality. ●

Thrips in Fall Tomatoes

Judson Reid, CCE Cornell Vegetable Program

2017 has been an excellent year for wholesale tomato prices. This may have been the result of cool conditions slowing maturity (and restricting supply) as well as abundant foliar disease. With strong market demand more farms are growing late season crops inside high tunnels. These crops are still susceptible to thrips and high levels were observed this week in the Finger Lakes.



Container grown high tunnel tomatoes for fall crop in Yates County. Photo: J. Reid, CVP

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Damage includes foliar feeding as well as speckling of fruit. If these spaces are heated, thrips populations can be expected to continue into the Fall. Agri-Mek (7 D PHI) and Baythroid (0 D PHI) are conventional control options. CVP research demonstrated success with the organic material Mycotrol. Separating tomatoes from fall mum production space will also reduce the risk for cross-contamination.



Thrips feeding damage to tomato fruit.
Photo: J. Reid, CVP



Thrips feeding on high tunnel tomato foliage. Look closely and several thrips are visible (red circle).
Photo: J. Reid, CVP

Thinking About Preparing for Slugs for Next Year

John Tooker, Department of Entomology, The Pennsylvania State University

I hope you or your clients were not among those that suffered from slugs this season, but if you were I thought I would take the opportunity while slugs are fresh in our minds to discuss some longer-term slug-management options that might help decrease future slug challenges.

Check out our factsheet <http://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/slugs-as-pests-of-field-crops> that addresses slugs in no-till production and provides some good context for this discussion and details on biology and management options. And prior to getting into the main discussion, it is wise to acknowledge that most climate forecasts appear to be predicting that Pennsylvania will be getting wetter, not drier, over the coming decades. This means to me that springs like 2017 may become more common, making crop establishment and troubles from slugs even more likely and challenging.

One reliable approach to decreasing pest populations in the future is to di-

versify rotations as much as possible. This point has been reinforced for slug control by our work in Penn State's Sustainable Dairy Cropping Systems project, which is led by Heather Karsten in the Department of Plant Science. In this project, a large group of scientists is studying two diverse, six-year rotations that include cover crops and perennially hay (alfalfa or alfalfa/grass mix) and we are comparing these rotations to a two-year, corn-soybean rotation without cover crops. We have found that slug populations are significantly lower in the more diverse rotations than the two-year rotation. There are likely multiple causes for the larger populations in the two-year rotation and I will address two.

First, the rotation itself likely helps because it disrupts life cycles and generally makes pest populations (insect, slugs, pathogens, even weeds) less successful because each crop has its own timing and management practices that contribute to keeping the population in check. In continuous corn or a

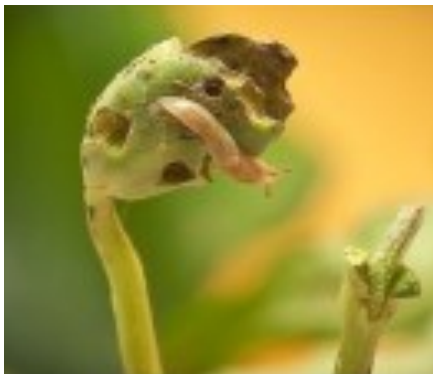
corn-soybean rotation, management is often more or less similar each year, allowing pests the opportunity to adapt and thrive despite management.

The bottom line is that for pest management, a three-year rotation is better than a two-year, four-year is better than three-year (and so on); pest control capacity increases with duration of the rotation. Second, aside from disrupting pest populations, diverse rotations also foster improved populations of beneficial arthropods that can assist with pest control. Simple two-year rotations (including ours) often include preventative insect management with insecticidal seed coatings and broadcast sprays of insecticides, either by themselves or tank mixed with herbicides and/or fungicides. These insecticides and the simple rotation, by not providing sufficient habitat, together limit populations of beneficial insects, spiders, and centipedes that can help with insect pest and slug control.

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Conversely, diverse rotations benefit these beneficial arthropod populations by providing more varied habitats, particularly when they include cover crops and/or perennially hay crops. The more you can grow these populations by diversifying and using insecticides only when necessary (even seed treatments), the more help you will get help against your slug populations. To be clear, I am not advocating for no insecticides, I would like folks to use them within the framework of Integrated Pest Management, which with its economic thresholds, can inform when insecticides will be useful. Believe it or not, using insecticides blindly can exacerbate pest problems, including slugs.

Many farmers believe that cover crops tend to be part of the problem when it comes to slugs, but our research indicates that cover crops can be helpful in the fight against slugs. As mentioned above, cover crops can help diversify rotations and will promote better populations of beneficial arthropods, which in turn can help control slugs if their populations are strong and not disrupted by insecticides. Some farmers have even gone as far as planting into standing green cover crops (i.e., "planting green") to help with their



Slug feeding on soybean cotyledons.

slug challenges. This approach involves establishing corn or soybean into standing cereal rye or other cover crop, and then spraying the cover crop with an herbicide (often glyphosate) one to seven days after planting, so the cover crops dies slowly. This planting strategy is not for the faint of heart and often requires some mentorship by an accomplished practitioner, but anecdotally during the spring 2017 season, those farmers that planted green appear to have had less of a challenge from slugs. Our research is continuing to look into how this works, but preliminarily it seems that planting green gives slugs an alternative food source (slugs prefer the dying cover crop, often cereal rye, over the growing cash

crop) while fostering improved, natural -enemy populations, particularly ground beetles can help suppress slug populations. These beetles are vital because they eat slugs, but importantly their populations can be suppressed by insecticide use, including seeds treated with neonicotinoid insecticides, so if you are interested in planting green, untreated seeds and IPM are the best companions for this approach. I would not advise growers to dive into planting green without discussing the practice with some farmers that have worked with the system for a while. But I am becoming more convinced that it is a viable approach to slug management, in addition to the other benefits it provides (e.g., erosion control, organic matter input, nutrient cycling, etc.).

So, there are a few ideas and principles to help you begin to develop a cropping system that stands up better against slugs. These approaches to farming are more management intensive, but in the long run appear to be more resilient in the face of pests and most any other challenges that may come along.

I welcome your feedback. ●



FARM FOOD SAFETY & PURCHASING LOCALLY GROWN FOOD
WHAT'S IT ALL MEAN?

OCTOBER 17
9:30 AM - 3:00 PM
NYS Agricultural Experiment Station
Geneva, New York

A training for every person that buys locally grown produce directly from farmers. Understand the food safety guidelines and practices that farmers follow to help ensure your produce is safe to consume.

FARM FOOD SAFETY & PURCHASING LOCALLY GROWN FOOD: What's It All Mean?

OCTOBER 17 | 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM
NYS Agricultural Experiment Station
630 W North St, Geneva, NY 14456

\$25/attendee, includes lunch.
Pre-registration required. Register online
<https://cwp.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=785>
or call Robert Hadad at 585-739-4065.

Attention locally grown food buyers, distributors, farm-to-school programs, chefs, and healthy eating program coordinators:

Ask your food safety questions and learn about the standards, regulatory requirements, and the practices followed by farmers to reduce microbial risk.

- What are GAPs, HGAPs, other third party audit schemes? FSMA?
- What does this mean for farmers and what are the financial impacts on them?
- What does this mean for buyers?
- Traceability and recall
- Farmer and buyer testimonials
- Locally processed foods regulations

For more information, contact Robert Hadad at 585-739-4065.



Record-Breaking Heat Favorable for Black Mold in Onion

Christy Hoepting, CCE Cornell Vegetable Program

Onion harvest this fall has been pretty exciting with record-breaking yields coming off of some fields. After Labor Day, the crop was running long and growers were anxious about fields stubbornly not wanting to go down and not having enough time to dry down the massive amounts of green foliage that were out there. The only thing that could really move the crop along was heat...and heat is exactly what we got! Coupled with excellent prices, onion growers are experiencing one of most joyous harvests ever! (Fig. 1)



Figure 1. Big yields, warm and dry weather and excellent prices have made for one of the most joyous onion harvests ever. Photo: J. Reid, CVP

However, **Monday, Sept 25 through Wednesday, Sept 27** saw record-breaking hot temperatures into the 90s with light wind and hot sun: conditions that are also favorable for black mold. Hopefully, most of the onions that were harvested on these days were adequately dried down, but keep these dates in mind when checking these onions coming out of storage this winter.


Black Mold

Black mold is caused by a soil-borne fungus that can survive on plant debris in the soil. It is generally endemic in areas where onions are grown regularly. Symptoms include black powdery spores arranged in splotches on the outer scales along the neck and shoulder area of the onion bulb or in streaks that typically follow along the veins of the bulb vertically (Fig. 2). Black mold looks like muck soil, but cannot be rubbed off. Infection of the bulb occurs through injured tissues, especially in the neck area as the top breaks over and/or are cut. Infection can spread from bulb to bulb by direct contact, through bruises or wounds, by mechanical means, or by airborne spores.

Harvesting during hot and humid weather is very favorable for the development and spread of black mold and can result in high incidence of unmarketable bulbs. Optimum temperatures for black mold infection, development and spread are 82 to 93°F; it is not active below 63°F or above 117°F. Infection is favored by high humidity (76 to 81%). Free moisture is required for 6-12 hours. When optimum temperature, humidity and free moisture occur, infection takes only 3 to 6 hours.

To avoid black mold, avoid harvesting immature onions, as topping will leave green neck tissue susceptible for infection to occur. Avoid harvesting when temps are greater than 82°F. Avoid bruising. Keep dryer temperatures less than 82°F and RH less than 76%, and use lots of air.



Figure 2. Black mold of onion looks like muck soil, but cannot be washed off. Black powdery spores can occur in splotches on the outer scales along the neck and shoulder area of the onion bulb (a) or in streaks that typically follow along the veins of the bulb vertically (b). Photos: a) New Mexico State University, b) Paul Kopsell. 

Vine Crop Trial Results for 2017

Chris Smart and Holly Lange; edited by Darcy Telenko, CCE Cornell Vegetable Program

Cucurbit downy mildew, caused by the water-mold pathogen *Pseudoperonospora cubensis*, continues to be a serious problem for cucurbit growers in New York. While all cucurbits are susceptible, cucumbers are highly susceptible and have been extremely hard hit by downy mildew this year. During this season and in 2015, the Smart Lab looked at fungicide sensitivity for conventional control product and efficacy of programs in the field.

For the fungicide sensitivity study, susceptible cucumber plants were grown in small pots in the greenhouse. Treatments (12 fungicides + water control) were applied to plants and they were placed in the field between rows of cucumbers with cucurbit downy mildew symptoms (four reps per treatment). The potted plants were left in the field for 48 hours, then brought into the greenhouse and rated for dis-

ease severity after five days. The results can be seen in Table 1. Revus and famoxadone (found in Tanos) showed little to no activity against downy mildew in 2017. The remaining products are still doing a good job, they are listed in order in the table based on the amount of disease that developed from high to low, Ranman and Orondis provided the best activity this season against downy mildew.

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In the downy mildew field trial sprays were applied seven times beginning on July 28 when cucurbit downy mildew was reported in the county at seven-day intervals through September 11. The drench was applied at the base of the plants one week after transplanting. The Previcur Flex was applied weekly, the other treatments had rotated products as indicated.

Disease was rated as the severity of downy mildew lesions on the entire plot six times at 4-7 day intervals beginning when disease was observed in the field on August 10 until September 11. By the third rating on August 17, one week after symptoms were first noted, the untreated control plots had downy mildew lesions on 80% of their leaves. Results of the different programs are presented in Table 2. The three programs that had rotated products 1) Bravo, Top, Opti, and Tanos, 2) Bravo, Top Ultra, Tanos, and 3) Bravo, Top, Opti significantly reduced downy mildew as compared to the untreated all-season long. The Previcur flex weekly spray had reduced disease through July 17, but then was no different from untreated control. The Orondis Gold drench only spray hung on a bit longer with good control through 21 July, but then seemed to run out.

As a side note for next year as the NYSDEC has finally approved Orondis. There will be three product mixtures available Orondis Ridomil Gold, Orondis Opti, and Orondis Ultra. Many growers here in NY have been anxiously awaiting its release. Unfortunately, these will not be useful in 2017, but looking ahead to 2018 it is a new mode of action to put into your fungicide program as Orondis has shown good activity in research trials against downy mildew. You will need to determine if and how it will best fit into your current fungicide programs and remember all the best use practices for resistance management.

Table 1. Downy mildew fungicide sensitivity assay, Geneva, NY 2017.

| Product | Active ingredient | FRAC code | Mean % Disease | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------------|
| Water | | | 99.0 a | Least-effective |
| Revus 2.08SC | mandipropamid 23.3% | 40 | 89.5 ab | |
| Famoxadone (in Tanos) | famoxadone | 11 | 80.8 b | |
| Manzate ProStik 75DG | mancozeb 75% | M3 | 23.8 c | Most-effective |
| Zoxamide (in Gavel) | zoxamide | 22 | 18.8 c | |
| Presidio 4SC | fluopicolide 39.5% | 43 | 14.3 c | |
| Bravo Weatherstik | chlorothalonil 54% | M5 | 13.8 cd | |
| Previcur Flex 6SL | propamocarb HCL 66.5% | 28 | 13.5 cd | |
| Gavel 75DF | zoxamide 8.3% mancozeb 66.7% | 22 | 13.0 cde | |
| Curzate 60DF | cymoxanil 60% | 27 | 3.0 def | |
| Tanos 50WG | cymoxanil 25% famoxadone 25% | 27 11 | 2.3 ef | |
| Orondis | oxathiopiprolin | U15 | 0.5 f | |
| Ranman 400SC | cyazofamid 23.3% | 21 | 0.3 f | |

Table 2: Downy mildew field trial evaluating fungicide programs in 2017.

| Treatment | %sev 8-10 | %sev 8-14 | %sev 8-17 | %sev 8-21 | %sev 8-28 | %sev 9-11 | AUDPC |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Control | 0.2 a | 8.0 a | 75.0 a | 86.3 a | 95.0 a | 97.3 a | 1249.9 a |
| Previcur flex (weekly application) | 0.1 ab | 2.8 b | 46.3 b | 73.8 a | 90.0 a | 93.8 a | 1194.7 a |
| Orondis Gold (drench only) | 0.0 b | 0.05 c | 5.0 c | 47.5 b | 70.0 b | 92.5 a | 1064.7 a |
| Bravo Top Opti Tanos (weekly) | 0.0 b | 1.5 bc | 4.0 c | 40.0 b | 56.3 c | 70.0 c | 861.9 b |
| Bravo Top Ultra Tanos (weekly) | 0.02 b | 0.63 bc | 9.3 c | 40.0 b | 56.3 c | 66.3 c | 820.9 b |
| Bravo Top Opti (weekly) | 0.03 b | 1.5 bc | 11.5 c | 47.5 b | 58.8 c | 76.3 b | 796.9 b |



Downy mildew symptoms on cucumber leaves, interveinal chlorosis and necrosis on top of leaf, underside of leaf with dark sporulation, and 10x view of sporulation on underside of leaf. ●

Photos: D. Telenko, CVP

UPCOMING EVENTS

view all Cornell Vegetable Program upcoming events at cvp.cce.cornell.edu



Season Extension - Stretching Tomato Season and Winter Greens

October 4, 2017 | 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Canticle Farm, 3835 S. Nine Mile Rd, Allegany, NY 14706

What do you need to do to stretch out your high tunnel tomato season or establish a profitable crop of winter greens? Meeting the full season's nutritional demands of tomatoes under organic management is challenging. Juggling diverse succession crops and keeping the tunnel profitable year round adds an extra level of difficulty. Mark Printz of [Canticle Farm](http://CanticleFarm.com) will share his experiences. NOFA-NY and the Cornell Vegetable Program will discuss what they are learning through the New York Farm Viability Institute funded initiative, "Best Management Practices for Long Term Profitable High Tunnel Soil Fertility and Health."

Registration: <https://www.nofanyc.org/events-news/events/2017-on-farm-field-days>. \$15/individual, \$25 for two or more people from the same farm. Pre-registration closes three days before the event. *This event is produced by NOFA-NY in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension with support from the [New York Farm Viability Institute](http://NewYorkFarmViabilityInstitute.org).*

Introduction to Precision Agriculture for Producers

Thursdays, October 5 - December 14, 2017 (10 sessions; 30 hours) | 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Genesee Community College Batavia Campus, 1 College Rd, Batavia, NY 14020 (or online via WebEx)

Looking to increase your yields? ROI? Sustainability? This course will provide thought-provoking content with a real-life look at current precision agriculture implementation and the impact it is currently having on farmers. You will also gain a better understanding of where your agronomy practices could be improved by implementing precision agriculture processes. Lastly, you will develop your own plan for improvement for your farm or operations.

Fee: \$199, [register at online](#) or call 585-345-6868. Attend session on campus or online via WebEx.

Farm Food Safety and Purchasing Locally Grown Produce: What's It All Mean?

October 17, 2017 | 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

NYS Agricultural Experiment Station, Jordan Hall, 630 W North St, Geneva, NY 14456

Attention locally-grown food buyers, purchasers, distributors, farm-to-school or -institution programs, chefs, and healthy eating programmers: Cornell Cooperative Extension through the Cornell Vegetable Program, the Lake Ontario Fruit Team, and NOFANY is presenting an educational session on farm food safety for all types of locally grown food buyers.

Every person that buys locally grown produce directly from farmers should have a basic understanding of the food safety guidelines and practices that the farmers follow. What is GAPs and why is it important to me? This training will allow you to ask your questions and you will leave having a clearer understanding of standards, regulatory requirements, and the practices followed by farmers to reduce microbial risk. The agenda will cover:

- What are GAPs, HGAPs, other third party audit schemes,
- FSMA federal regulations
- What does this mean for farmers and what are the financial impacts on farmers
- What does this mean for buyers
- Traceability and recall
- Farmer and buyer testimonials
- Locally processed foods regulation overview
- Action steps

Cost: \$25/attendee, includes lunch. Register online at <https://cvp.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=785> For more information, contact Robert Hadad at 585-739-4065 or rgh26@cornell.edu.

Controlled Environment Agriculture Conference

November 1-2, 2017 | 8:30 registration and refreshments, 9:00 - 4:45 program, 4:45+ refreshments and networking

401 Warren Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853

Have you been researching new ways to grow vegetables? Is your farm looking to diversify? Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) may be the answer – and this conference can help!

Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) enables year-round production of fresh vegetables through greenhouse environmental control (heating, lighting) combined with hydroponic/soilless production systems. While CEA is an increasingly popular method of meeting consumer demand for locally grown food, many factors must be considered when developing a business plan and assessing its viability.

This conference is intended to provide more detailed knowledge of CEA production systems, economics, marketing, and ways to access financing and state resources. It will also help guide new or transitioning operations through the process of developing a business plan for a CEA greenhouse vegetable business.

The group size will be limited to 30 businesses (each may send 1 or 2 representatives), and attendees must apply to be accepted into the program. More information is available at: <http://www.cornellcea.com/workshops/index.html>

Countdown to Census: What You Need to Know

USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, 9/25/17

Only eight weeks until producers start to receive the 2017 Census of Agriculture

In just a couple months, farmers and ranchers across the nation will start receiving the 2017 Census of Agriculture. Producers can mail in their completed census form, or respond online via the improved web questionnaire. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service has extensively revised the online questionnaire to make it more convenient for producers.

"The updated online questionnaire is very user-friendly – it can now be used on any electronic device, and can be saved and revisited as the producer's schedule allows," said NASS Census and Survey Division Director Barbara Rater. "Responding online saves time and protects data quality. That's our mission at NASS – to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture. Better data mean informed decisions, and that's why it is so important that every producer respond and be represented."

New time-saving features of the online questionnaire include automatically calculating totals, skipping sections that do not pertain to the operation, and providing drop-down menus of frequent responses. Producers still have one week to try the online questionnaire demo on the Census of Agriculture website, www.agcensus.usda.gov.

The census website will continue to be updated with new information through the census response deadline of February 5, 2018. One recently added feature is a new video from Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue reminding all producers to respond when they receive their 2017 Census of Agriculture in the mail later this year.

Revisions and additions to the 2017 Census of Agriculture aim to capture a more detailed account of the industry. Producers will see a new question about military veteran status, expanded questions about food marketing practices, and questions about on-farm decision-making to better capture the roles and contributions of beginning farmers, women farmers, and others involved in running the business.

Response to the census of agriculture is required by law under Title 7 USC 2204(g) Public Law 105-113. The same law requires NASS to keep all information confidential, to use the data only for statistical purposes, and only in aggregate form to prevent disclosing the identity of any producer. The time required to complete the questionnaire is estimated at 50 minutes. In October, NASS will make a census preparation checklist available on the census website to help producers gather necessary information in advance.

Conducted once every five years, the census of agriculture is a complete count of all U.S. farms, ranches, and those who operate them; it is the only source of uniform, comprehensive, and impartial agriculture data for every state and county in the country. Farmers and ranchers, trade associations, government, extension educators, researchers, and many others rely on census of agriculture data when making decisions that shape American agriculture – from creating and funding farm programs to boosting services for communities and the industry. The census of agriculture is a producer's voice, future, and opportunity.

For more information about the 2017 Census of Agriculture, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call (800) 727-9540. ●

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VegEdge is the award-winning newsletter produced by the Cornell Vegetable Program in Western New York. It provides readers with information on upcoming meetings, pesticide updates, pest management strategies, cultural practices, marketing ideas and research results from Cornell and Cornell Cooperative Extension. VegEdge is produced every few weeks, with frequency increasing leading up to and during the growing season.



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