Vine Killing Options for Potatoes

Margie Lund, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Cornell Vegetable Program

With potato harvest just around the corner, growers have started to vine kill early harvested potatoes. Chemical vine kill 10-14 days prior to harvest helps thicken skins of tubers, leading to less bruising and skinning during harvest and handling. It can also help control tuber size in fields where tubers have grown large during the season, and decreases disease incidence including hollow heart, late blight, and infection by bacterial diseases. Vine kill should mimic natural plant decay, and too rapid of plant death can lead to vascular decay or sunken tubers. To avoid rapid kill when applying chemicals, use low rates on hot, dry days, and higher rates on cooler days. Vines can also be killed mechanically via flail mowing or rolling. If using mechanical methods, mow or roll 14-21 days before harvest to provide tubers time to mature. Be careful to not overly disturb the soil because exposed tubers may become sunburned or damaged. Rolling can also be used in combination with chemical methods to increase rate of natural desiccation. There are several different chemical options for vine kill available to use in New York (read and follow all pesticide label instructions before using any listed chemicals):

Carfentrazone-ethyl (Group 14)
Trade name: Aim EC
Rate/A: 3.2-5.8 fl. oz. (alone) or 2-5.8 fl. oz. (tank mix); PHI 7 days; REI 12 hrs.
Apply in later stages of senescence. Adequate desiccation will occur within 14 days after initial treatment. Will also desiccate late season susceptible broadleaf weeds. Two applications may be required if potatoes are in active vegetative growth when first application is applied.

Diquat dibromide (Group 22)
Trade name: Reglone 2L
Rate/A: 1-2 pts.; PHI 7 days; REI 24 hrs.
Two applications may be needed if potatoes are in active vegetative growth when first is application is applied. A second application can be made 5 days after the first if vine growth is dense. Do not exceed a total of 4 pt/A. Drought at the time of application will decrease desiccation effectiveness.

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The next issue of VegEdge newsletter will be produced on September 1, 2021.

Accumulated Growing Degree Days, 8/23/21
Emma van der Heide, CCE Cornell Vegetable Program

Accumulated Growing Degree Days (AGDD)
Base 50°F: April 1 - August 23, 2021

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<th>Location**</th>
<th>2021</th>
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<td>Williamson</td>
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<td>1981</td>
<td>1707</td>
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</table>

* Airport stations  
** For other locations: [http://newa.cornell.edu](http://newa.cornell.edu)

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.
**European Corn Borer in Peppers**

*Elizabeth Buck, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Cornell Vegetable Program*

While European corn borer is primarily a sweet corn pest, it does attack peppers every year. There seems to be higher corn borer pressure in peppers this year, with a round of problems earlier and a second round of damage now.

**WHAT DOES THE DAMAGE LOOK LIKE?**

European corn borer larvae are caterpillars that make their way down to the fruit almost immediately after hatching. Young fruit are most susceptible, with a pest preference for walnut sized and smaller peppers. The caterpillars will drill the pepper fruit around the shoulders, including under the calyx. The entry hole is not always obvious because it can be located under the calyx of a mature pepper. The entry hole may also be in the stem of the pepper.

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**NY Sweet Corn Trap Network Report, 8/24/2021**

Marion Zuefle, NYS IPM Program; from [http://sweetcorn.nysipm.cornell.edu](http://sweetcorn.nysipm.cornell.edu)

Statewide, 27 sites reported this week. European corn borer (ECB)- E was caught at 9 sites and ECB-Z was caught at 10 sites. Both ECB-E and -Z showed a slight increase from last week. The hybrid ECB was caught at 4 of the 5 sites trapping for it: Bellona (14), Seneca Castle (3), Penn Yan (10) and Hurley (3). Corn earworm (CEW) was caught at all 27 sites with 25 sites high enough to be on a 3, 4, 5 or 6 day spray schedule (see table below). Fall armyworm (FAW) was caught at 25 sites this week. Both FAW and CEW continued to increase this week. The high CEW count was 177 in Florida, NY (Orange Co.) and the high FAW count was 502 in Williamson (Wayne Co.). Western bean cutworm (WBC) continues to decrease with only 12 sites reporting trap catches.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Corn Earworm Catch</th>
<th>Days Between Sprays</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per Day</td>
<td>Per Five Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.2-0.5</td>
<td>1.0-2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5-1.0</td>
<td>2.5-5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-13</td>
<td>5-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 13</td>
<td>over 65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add one day to the recommended spray interval if daily maximum temperatures are less than 80F for the previous 2-3 days.

**Local Food System Survey**

Do you care about markets and the robustness of the local food system? Please take this online survey!

The WNY Food Systems Initiative is striving to build a food system that works better for farmers, consumers and rural communities. One critical piece of this will be understanding, in detail, what is working for farmers, what is not, and what needs to be done to make things better. This survey, which will only take 12 - 15 minutes, was designed by farmers, for farmers. Results will be shared with growers later this year. Thanks! [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FRQM2BH](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FRQM2BH)
LATE BLIGHT
Late blight is present in Ontario, Canada, close enough to NY to have me feeling very uneasy. The reported case was in tomatoes; they estimated the first symptoms began 2 weeks ago. It would not take much of a storm coming from due West to move it into Buffalo and Niagara or from the Northwest to move it into Chautauqua, NW Cattaraugus, and Southern Erie. The wetter weather pattern expected Friday is projected to come from that direction.

It has been a late blight free year so far – a really nice change. It would be a shame to have late blight start now. All growers should keep protectants on your tomatoes and potatoes and scout weekly for late blight. Growers in Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Erie, and Niagara Counties should scout twice a week for late blight. It would be a good idea to include a late blight material in the spray tank, especially given the risky forecast for the end of the week. Please, please, please for the love of clean produce CALL US if you suspect you have late blight. Zero shame, we won’t share that anyone specific has it, we want to know so we can help everyone in the area and downwind prepare. Seriously, reporting is important and makes a massive management difference! –EB

CARROTS
Seeing some foliar diseases, primarily Alternaria. A couple cases of aster yellows, which is spread by the aster leaf hopper. It takes roughly 3 weeks after infection for symptoms to appear, and the plant cannot be cured. Symptoms in carrot include yellowing of foliage but more commonly reddening around the edges of leaves, stunting, and characteristically bitter, narrow, and excessively hairy roots. Aster yellows is controlled by scouting for and treating leaf hoppers in the canopy. –EB

COLE CROPS
Alternaria is beginning to pick up. We’re looking for samples of Alternaria so we can screen them for resistance and figure out which fungicides are worth spraying and develop economical and practical management recommendations. Give us a call if you have some – we’ll talk through management approaches and come take samples. Starting to see more swede midge damage; not much in the way of cabbage aphids yet. –EB

DRY BEANS
Mexican bean beetles are still present in some dry bean fields. If left unchecked they will quickly defoliate plants and cause damage to bean pods, so be sure to monitor fields. Management is suggested at 1 larva per plant or 15% defoliation during pod-set and podfill. Potato leafhopper nymphs are also present in dry beans, and management should be considered at 0.5 nymphs per plant (50 nymphs per 100 plants). Western Bean Cutworm trap counts are dying down at all locations. The highest count was in Wayland with 22 moths caught. Continue to scout dry bean pods for damage as larvae may still be in the field, especially where WBC has been found in bean pods/seeds in recent years. –ML

ONIONS
Rain events of the last week followed by heat and humidity have taken their toll on the onion crop. Onion thrips and foliar symptoms of bacterial disease increased, severity of Stemphylium leaf blight increased with spores on target lesions and necrotic leaf tips becoming black (Fig. 1), and green leaf tissue is drying/dying rapidly with many fields or patches in fields of plants not having enough foliage weight to lodge properly causing them to “die standing up”. Consequently, actual percent lodging can be deceiving. Growers should check their onions with excessive leaf dieback to see if they have soft necks and can easily be knocked over. If so, they can be considered as lodged. Sprout inhibitor maleic hydrazide (MH) requires a minimum of 3 green leaves to be absorbed properly. Keep in mind that plants with 5 green leaves with 40% leaf dieback equals 3 green leaves in total. Be aware that high temperatures (i.e. >80-85°F) and rain within 24 hours of application can reduce uptake of MH.

In a past study of side-by-side comparisons of 1200 bulbs total, we found that onions that died standing up had 2x more bacterial bulb rot than those that lodged properly. Last year, Hoepting et. al. trialed whether rolling onions that died standing up resulted in reduced bacterial bulb rot compared to leaving them standing up (Fig. 2), but we did not find any differences. However, at the time of rolling, the onions had no green tissue left and the time between rolling and undercutting was only a week. This year, we are going to trial the effect of rolling on bulb quality on onions that are dying standing up that have 30-40% leaf dieback (as opposed to no green leaf tissue). The practice of rolling onions should not damage any leaf tissue, especially in the neck area.

![Figure 1. Recent rainy and humid weather with heavy night dews has been favorable for Stemphylium leaf blight (SLB), which increased in severity over the past week with spores on target lesions and necrotic tips now being black. Photo by C. Hoepting, CCE](https://example.com/figure1.jpg)
In Elba, Exirel 16-20.5 fl oz/A has been working great on keeping thrips populations under control. Radiant 8-10 fl oz/A is also working very well to control high thrips pressure. Despite best efforts to apply fungicides that are effective at keeping onion foliage green such as Viathon 3 pt + Tilt 8 fl oz or Luna Tranquility 16 fl oz + Rovral 1-1.5 pt, leaf dieback has continued to increase. Although this is disappointing, in seeing how much leaf dieback there is in my fungicide trials in treatments that are not good at keeping onion plants green, I can only imagine that some of these fields may not have any green foliage left without such fungicide applications. Last week’s rain and the high humidity causing heavy dews has made for favorable conditions for SLB. Alternatively, downy mildew is favored by nighttime temperatures in the 50s, so at least this uncomfortable weather has not favored this disease –CH

**Muck Donut Hour in Elba is closed for the season** – Thank you to all the growers, Cornell researchers and industry representatives who participated in this outstanding outreach activity!

**POTATOES**

Many potatoes are starting to die back but continue to be on top of fungicide applications in fields where vines won’t be killed for a few weeks. Storm systems that have moved through the area this week could bring late season disease problems. Simcast forecasting indicates that almost all stations have surpassed the 30 blight units (BU) needed to trigger a spray for late blight. Most other sites are expected to surpass 30 BU by the end of the week. Late blight has been reported in Tennessee on tomato (genotype US-23) in the last week in addition to past reports in GA, ME, NC, Ontario, and WI. –ML

**ROOT CROPS**

Voles and mice can be a problem for late season root crops like carrots, celeriac, parsnips, and beets. It is difficult to deal with these pests, especially on a large scale. They can hide under the dense canopy of the root crops or under plastic mulch of nearby vegetable rows. Rodents prefer to keep to the shadows even when coming out at night. Clear out weeds as much as possible to open up space. In August, females often make nests close to a late season food source and have young that will feed on roots that are close by. Some luck has been had by setting up traps to catch these females before they can have young which decreases that later season population. Removing weeds from edges of root crop plantings and even removing plastic mulch from adjacent rows on other crops can discourage these pests. Work is being done trying to use outdoor ultrasonic “repellents” to keep rodents from entering areas. How effective these are is still not thoroughly measured in the field but may be worth trying if pest pressure is high. Scout root crops often to look for damage. –RH

**SQUASH**

Bacterial infections that targeted foliage earlier this year are now progressing in fruit and in some cases leading to secondary decay of large vine crops. Black rot seems to be common this year, and is especially a concern in butternuts and spaghetti destined for storage. It will impact most vine crops, more commonly in the gummy stem blight form taking out melons and watermelons. –EB

**SWEET CORN**

In addition to starting to see feeding damage from fall armyworm and western bean cutworm, there are pockets of rust and smut. –EB

**TOMATOES**

Beware of late blight moving across Lake Erie & the Niagara!!!! All the tomato diseases can be found: early blight, Septoria, bacterial spot/speck, bacterial canker, and with the onset of dewy nights we now add anthracnose to that list. –EB
After entering the fruit, the caterpillar will feed internally for a period of time of more than a week. The actual length of time depends on ambient temperature during the feeding period. Mature larvae will exit the pepper, often through leaving low on the side wall or through the bottom. Immature caterpillars may be present in the fruit and can sometimes be heard rattling if you shake a shoulder drilled fruit.

Unfortunately, having a caterpillar in your pepper is not the most unsavory part of a corn borer infestation. These peppers often rot.

Bacterial soft rots enter the pepper through the entry wound. The area around the wound becomes softened and mushy. As the rot progresses, it starts to become soupy and quickly spreads throughout the pepper. There can be a nasty bacterial soup inside the fruit and eventually fruit with bacterial soft rot will slough off the plant. In dense canopies and under favorable weather conditions the bacterial soft rot can take off all on its own and start attacking unwounded fruit. It is easily spread: your hands get covered in bacterial funk, falling dripping fruit spread bacteria, and splashing water spreads the bacterial soft rot. As an added bonus, the caterpillars don’t like living in a soupy pepper and they’ll seek out a new, drier home inside another fruit.

**MANAGEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN CORN BORER**

European corn borers are fairly easy to scout for in peppers. Their eggs look like pale patches of fish scales and are laid on the bottom of pepper leaves near the central vein. Eggs take 4-9 days to hatch, depending on the ambient temperature. Because eggs can take as little as 4 days to hatch, once a week scouting is insufficient to prevent damage. Eggs that have a dark spot in them are going to hatch within the next day. Mark plants with egg masses while scouting.

European Corn Borer damage to pepper. Photo by J. Reid, CCE

In all cases, you want to time your sprays for just after hatch. Sprays are ineffective once the caterpillars enter the pepper. Again, the caterpillars are most attracted to the younger, walnut sized and smaller fruit. Since the undersides of leaves are an exceedingly difficult spray target, try your best to get coverage of smaller fruit.

In pepper, European corn borer can be treated with a number of pyrethroids (Hero, Gladiator, Leverage, Mustang Maxx, Warrior, etc), Group 28 materials (Coragen, Exirel, Minecto Pro), spinosyn materials from Group 5 (Radiant & Entrust), and the Group 22A material Avaunt eVo. Pyrethroids require a spray license and generally have a 7 day pre-harvest interval (PHI). The Group 28s have a shorter 1 day PHI but also require a spray license in NY and some growers feel these chemistries have a high price point. Avaunt eVo has a 3 day PHI and does not require a license, but can only be used in bell pepper. That leaves the spinosyn class Group 5 materials Entrust (organic) and Radiant. Both materials have a 1 day PHI, do not require a license, and both can be used on wide variety of peppers.

Organic growers may try using Bt products in addition or rotation with Entrust. There will be some suppression from natural enemies and generalist predators like lady beetle larvae, lacewings, minute pirate bugs, and parasitoids. I think it is risky to solely rely upon generalists to provide control if you are finding multiple egg masses while scouting.

**But what about the bacterial soft rot?**

The bacterial soft rot that often comes in secondary to a European corn borer problem can become the primary cause of loss within the field. Some fruit that seem alright at picking may develop soft rot after harvest. Unfortunately, there is little that can be done to manage the problem by spraying. Copper is the go-to material for bacteria, but it cannot stop an already active infection and it cannot touch a problem on the inside of the fruit. Copper isn’t going to save the day.

Cultural controls provide better odds of success. First off, scout for ECB egg masses and manage those well to prevent wounding. Next, make sure there is good airflow in your canopy to allow the dew and rainfall to dry out quickly. Remove weeds and consider whether your plant spacing might be too tight. Stake plants that insist on falling over on one another.

The best thing to do is to remove any ECB damaged fruit and any fruit with any softness early and often. Peppers will continue to invest in a damaged fruit until it falls off from the plant on its own. The energetic investment in damaged fruit is a waste. Removing damaged fruit allows the crop to focus all its resources on maturing marketable fruit. Early and frequent removal limits the amount of wasted energy and also reduces the amount of time that bacterial soup that can develop and spread within the canopy which should limit the overall quantity of nastiness. Be suspicious of fruit that seem to be ripening too early or unevenly, they are often damaged. Because the bacteria will splash back up onto the plants in the rain, it is better to remove the soft rot fruit from the field, if possible. It is also a good practice for workers to carry Clorox wipes or rubbing alcohol to frequently wipe down their hands when they are working through a canopy with a bacterial soft rot problem.

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Upcoming Events
Events are listed at CVP.CCE.CORNELL.EDU

Dry Bean Twilight Meeting
September 8, 2021 (Wednesday) | 4:30pm - 6:00pm
Duyssen Farms shop, 6861 E Bethany Rd, LeRoy, NY 14482
CCE Cornell Vegetable Program, NYS IPM, and Cornell Faculty will be attending this twilight meeting to share updates on Western bean cutworm trapping, white mold management, soybean cyst nematodes and field mapping, and pigweed identification and resistance screening. 1.5 DEC recertification credits (categories 10, 1a, 21, and 23) and CCA credits will be available. See the full meeting agenda at CVP.CCE.CORNELL.EDU
After the meeting, stick around to enjoy dinner and network with other dry bean growers and industry members. Thank you to New York Bean and Genesee Valley Bean for sponsoring the meal and meeting!
COST AND REGISTRATION: $5. Pre-registration is required for dinner. Register and pay online at CVP.CCE.CORNELL.EDU or call Margie at 607-377-9109 and pay cash at the door. If you do not pre-register, you are still more than welcome to attend, but dinner is not guaranteed.

Virtual Twilight Workshop Series from SCRUB:
Bubblers/Aerators for Greens Washing
October 6, 2021 (Wednesday) | 6:30pm - 8:30pm
Online
Sanitizing and Cleaning Resources for Your Business (SCRUB) is a multistate/organization collaboration of food safety educators and specialists working to assist fresh produce farmers with successfully implementing farm food safety practices. Participating in developing and assisting farmers are Extension people from Cornell, U. Vermont, Michigan St. Univ, and the National Farmers Union. To see the complete workshop topic listing: https://go.uvm.edu/scrubevents
October 6 is with a panel of NY growers (but don’t hesitate to sign up for any of the other programs in this series and hear what growers from other states are doing!) This meeting is for growers wanting to install or improve a greens bubbler/aerator. Get feedback from growers who built/improved their own systems. Examine designs and DIY resources, as well as perceived quality and efficiency gains from bubblers as compared to other washing methods.
At the workshop, all participating growers will share their knowledge and discuss challenges, successes, plans, resources or just ask questions on operation and cleaning of bubbler/aerators. Participating farms will then be eligible for individual technical assistance with related projects. The workshop will be recorded and posted later.
Space is limited! To register, complete this form by Friday, October 1: https://forms.gle/JYVeJvdfUKsGh3dz9 Contact Robert Hadad for more details, rgh26@cornell.edu
VegEdge is the highly regarded newsletter produced by the Cornell Vegetable Program. It provides readers with information on upcoming meetings, pesticide updates, pest management strategies, cultural practices, marketing ideas and research results from Cornell University 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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