

VEGETABLE CROPS HOTLINE

A newsletter for commercial vegetable growers prepared by the
Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service

Chris Gunter, Editor
(812) 886-0198
gunter@hort.purdue.edu



No. 471
September 21, 2006

<<http://www.entm.purdue.edu/entomology/ext/targets/newslett.htm>>

IN THIS ISSUE

- LAST ISSUE OF THE SEASON
- ASHWORTH LEAVES PURDUE
- NEW NUTRITION LABELS APPROVED
- USDA FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PROGRAM
- STARTING A SPECIALTY FOOD BUSINESS WORKSHOP
- GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR NEW IDEAS
- TOMATO GRAFTING WEBSITE IS OPEN
- CURRENT EVENTS ARE A GOOD REMINDER TO REVIEW FARM FOOD SAFETY PLANS
- APHIDS ON PUMPKINS
- INDIANA ORGANIC RESOURCE GUIDE RELEASED

LAST ISSUE OF THE SEASON - (Chris Gunter) - I just wanted to let subscribers know that this will be the last issue of the Vegetable Crops Hotline for the regular season. I'm sure you are all used to receiving the Hotline every two weeks and I hope that you have found it beneficial throughout the season. We have certainly enjoyed bringing it to you. Our next regularly scheduled issue will come out in November. That will be the last issue of the year for 2006.

ASHWORTH LEAVES PURDUE - (Announcement) - After 19 years in the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture at Purdue, the last 8 as department head, Ed Ashworth is leaving. Ed and Sharon are moving to Maine where Ed will be the Dean of Natural Sciences, Forestry and Agriculture, at the University of Maine. Ed has been a very effective leader of the Horticulture Department for 8 years, and we are sad to see him leave, although we recognize this is a wonderful opportunity for him in Maine. He leaves with our very best wishes for the future. Dean Randy Woodson has named Dr. Bob Joly as interim department head. We will begin a national search for a new department head in the near future.

NEW NUTRITION LABELS APPROVED - (Announcement) - The FDA has published its final rule on new voluntary nutrition labels for fruits and vegetables. The new rule, published on July 25, covers the 20 most frequently consumed raw fruits, vegetables, and fish in the United States. The 20 most frequently consumed raw fruits are: apple, avocado (California), banana, cantaloupe, grapefruit, grapes, honeydew melon, kiwifruit, lemon,

lime, nectarine, orange, peach, pear, pineapple, plums, strawberries, sweet cherries, tangerine, and watermelon. The 20 most frequently consumed raw vegetables are: asparagus, bell pepper, broccoli, carrot, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, green (snap) beans, green cabbage, green onion, iceberg lettuce, leaf lettuce, mushrooms, onion, potato, radishes, summer squash, sweet corn, sweet potato, and tomato." If you are using a nutrition label for one of these products, you can use the new labels now, but you must switch to the new label by January 1, 2008. The new labels and regulations are posted on the fruit and vegetable connection website: <www.hort.purdue.edu/fruitveg/>.

USDA FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PROGRAM - (Announcement) - The USDA's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) provides all children in the 25 participating schools in Indiana a variety of free fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the school day. It is an effective and creative way of introducing fresh fruits and vegetables as healthy snack options. The FFVP also encourages community partnerships to support schools in offering the fresh fruits and vegetables.

Indiana has participated in the program since the pilot in 2002. The FFVP is now a permanent program with \$9 million each fiscal year in funding for the FFVP. There are currently 375 schools in 14 states and 3 Indian Tribal Organizations participating in the program.

Indiana will be hosting a Fruit and Veggie Success Training on Friday, October 6 at Warren Township Education and Community Center in Indianapolis for the FFVP Managers of the 25 selected Indiana schools (see list below for participating schools). As part of this training we would like to invite local growers in or around the counties of the participating schools for this year. The local growers would have the opportunity to share information about what products and services they have to offer that might benefit the schools in their area. Also, nutrition education and promotion is critical to the success of the FFVP. If you know of local growers that can provide a nutrition education opportunity, please invite them (ex. orchard field trip, visit classrooms and discuss how fruits and vegetables are grown, the importance of eating fruits and vegetables, etc.). This training would be a great networking opportunity for local growers and for schools.

It would be a way for schools to utilize local growers and for local growers to give back to the community.

Fruit and Veggie Success Training:

Date: Friday, October 6, 2006

Time: 9am-2pm CT/10am3pm ET

(Local growers are invited to stay for the entire training or just for the local growers segment of the training)

Location: Warren Township Education and Community Center, 975 N. Post Road, Indianapolis, IN 46219.

Local grower's role in the training: participate in a panel discussion (depending on number of growers ~30 minutes to 1 hour) to:

- 1) share nutrition education opportunities they are willing to offer (site visit to school, orchard tour, demonstration, etc.)
- 2) share information about products and services
- 3) network with schools

Please contact me by Friday, September 8th if you know of local growers that may be interested in participating in the training and if they prefer to be on the panel in the morning or afternoon. Contact Lisa Graves, Team Nutrition Consultant, School and Community Nutrition Programs, Indiana Department of Education, Room 229, State House, Indianapolis, IN 46204. Phone: (317) 232-0850. Fax: (317) 232-0855. Email: lgraves@doe.state.in.us.

Indiana Schools Selected for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, School Year 2006-2007

<u>County</u>	<u>Name of School</u>
Lake	Kahler Middle School
Franklin	Franklin County High School
Morgan	Martinsville West Middle School
Perry	Perry Central Elementary
Cass	Pioneer Jr. High & Sr. High School
Allen	Wayne High School
Allen	Blackhawk Middle School
Allen	Portage Middle School
Allen	Bloomindale Elementary
Washington	Salem High School
Washington	Salem Middle School
Washington	Bradie Shrum Lower Elementary
Washington	Bradie Shrum Upper Elementary
Union	Union County Middle School
Marion	Christian Park Elementary
Marion	Francis W. Parker Elementary
Shelby	Hendricks Elementary
Shelby	William Loper Elementary
St. Joseph	Walkerton Elementary
Lake	Lincoln Elementary
Lake	John Meister Elementary
Lake	River Forest Elementary
Lake	River Forest Jr. High & Sr. High School
Lake	Evans Elementary
Fulton	Riddle Elementary

STARTING A SPECIALTY FOOD BUSINESS WORKSHOP: The bi-annual workshop, "Introduction to Starting a Specialty Food Business in Indiana" will be held on Tuesday, October 24, 2006 in Fort Wayne, Indiana at the Allen

County Extension Office. Topics discussed in the workshop range from business planning and marketing food products to packaging and food safety. The registration deadline is October 18.

For more information and a registration form visit www.foodsci.purdue.edu/Outreach/feep/ or contact Marsha Pritchard at mpritch@purdue.edu or De Bush at djbush@purdue.edu.

GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR NEW IDEAS: Any farmer or rancher will tell you that there is always room to implement a new idea to improve their operation. The problem is that those ideas usually require money. Now there is a solution to help match funds with the most innovative ideas. The North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) Program is currently accepting applications for their 2006 Farmer Rancher grant program.

NCR-SARE awards grants to farmers and ranchers for on-farm research, demonstrations, and education projects. By providing funds ranging from \$6,000 per individual grant to up to \$18,000 for grants awarded to groups of three or more, NCR-SARE helps facilitate essential agricultural research and development.

Funded topics include pest and disease management, soil conservation, local marketing, public education, waste management, agri-tourism, crop diversity, aqua-culture, and many others.

NCR-SARE grants are awarded based on the applicants ability to describe how their project will be sustainable in terms of having long-term profitability, being good for the environment, producing healthy foods, being socially responsible and supporting their community.

Last year NCR-SARE funded 47 grants totaling \$414,489. This year farmers and ranchers throughout the North Central Region will once again have the opportunity to apply for roughly \$400,000 in grant assistance. The 12 states that comprise the North Central Region are Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The NCR-SARE program receives its funding through the United States Department of Agriculture.

Grant proposals are due in the NCR-SARE office by December 1, 2006. Interested applicants may contact NCR-SARE at 1-800-529-1342 or ncrsare@unl.edu. The current Farmer Rancher Grant Call for Proposals application can be found on the NCR-SARE web site at www.ncrsare.org/ncrsare.prod.htm. Previous project reports are made available through the national SARE web site at www.sare.org.

TOMATO GRAFTING WEBSITE IS OPEN - (Announcement) - Researchers at The Ohio State University are experimenting with the use of grafted plants to improve fruit yield and quality for sustainable and organic horticulture production systems. Grafting in horticultural plants is increasing as a means to improve plant growth, control

disease, impart tolerance to temperature and salt stress, and increase nutrient uptake. The practice is increasingly common in Asian vegetable production systems. Information related to production of grafted vegetables and behavior of rootstocks under field conditions is very limited. They have created a web site <www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/graftingtomato/> to help spread the concept of vegetable grafting. On this web site, there is a short survey where they hope growers will give them input on research directions relative to grafting for vegetable production. You should check it out.

CURRENT EVENTS ARE A GOOD REMINDER TO REVIEW FARM FOOD SAFETY PLANS - (Liz Maynard) - No doubt many growers are mentally writing winter 'to-do' lists as the days shorten, temperatures drop, and frost threatens in 'outlying areas'. The recent outbreak of illness caused by E. coli O157:H7 linked to spinach processed in California serves as a reminder of an important item for that list: the farm food safety plan. The off season is a good time to develop a plan if there isn't one; review and improve existing plans, and make sure everything is in place for the plan to become action next year.

There are some excellent resources available to help with these tasks. Mid American Ag and Hort Services, though the Ohio and Indiana Specialty Crop Food Safety Initiative, has Extension publications about GAPs available FREE for the asking to Indiana growers until SEPTEMBER 30. An order form is available on the web at Mid American Ag and Hort Services <[www.midamservices.org/maahs/maahswebengine.nsf/\\$LookupFileType/gaps_order.pdf/\\$File/gaps_order.pdf](http://www.midamservices.org/maahs/maahswebengine.nsf/$LookupFileType/gaps_order.pdf/$File/gaps_order.pdf)>, or may be requested from MAAHS by calling (614) 246-8286 or writing to maahs@ofbf.org. After Sept. 30 these materials may be ordered from the GAPs site at Cornell: <www.gaps.cornell.edu/ordering.html>. The MAAHS site also includes technical articles about GAPs <[www.midamservices.org/maahs/maahswebengine.nsf/\\$LookupPageID/JWAY-5FARGJ/?OpenDocument](http://www.midamservices.org/maahs/maahswebengine.nsf/$LookupPageID/JWAY-5FARGJ/?OpenDocument)>.

It's our responsibility to do what we can to minimize the chance that someone will get sick from eating what we grow. Why not put the farm food safety plan on the 'must-do' list for this winter.

APHIDS ON PUMPKINS - (Liz Maynard) - Harvesting pumpkins in research plots this week we noticed high aphid populations. Honeydew from the aphids created sticky spots on some pumpkins and sometimes a little sooty mold was visible growing on the honeydew. In a commercial field this could reduce market value of the pumpkins. The message - keep an eye on the pumpkin crop until it's sold and off the farm.

INDIANA ORGANIC RESOURCE GUIDE RELEASED - (Announcement) - **What is organic farming?** The National Organic Program (NOP) defines organic production as a "production system that is managed in accordance with the Act and regulations in this part to respond to site-specific conditions by integrating cultural, biological, and mechanical

practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity." The regulatory text of the NOP standards is available at <www.ams.usda.gov/nop/NOP/standards/FullRegTextOnly.html>.

I do not know much about organic farming, are there any resources that explain the transition process? USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) "Opportunities in Agriculture: Transitioning to Organic Production" lays out many promising conversion strategies, covering typical organic farming production practices, innovative marketing ideas and federal standards for certified organic crop production. The publication also includes special sections on livestock production and profiles of organic producers. The publication is available at <www.sare.org/publications/organic.htm>.

How do I find a certifier? The NOP maintains a comprehensive list of the USDA Accredited Certifying Agents (ACAs) organized alphabetically by state for domestic ACAs and by country for foreign ACAs. The list is available at <www.ams.usda.gov/nop/CertifyingAgents/Accredited.html>. Indiana Certified Organic (ICO) is the only Indiana based USDA accredited certifier of crops livestock and processed foods. ICO's web address and phone number are <<http://members.iquest.net/~cvof/ico/>> and (317) 539-4317.

Are there any technical assistance resources to assist me in transitioning to an organic farm operation? Your USDA Accredited Certifying Agent will be the best resource to answer questions about the NOP standards. Purdue Extension offers educational programs, workshops, and tours relating to production, marketing, and business planning. They also have access to research-based information from Land Grant Universities throughout the U.S. Contact information for the county extension offices is available at <www.ces.purdue.edu/counties.htm>.

Are there any financial resources to assist me in transitioning to an organic farm operation? The Indiana State Department of Agriculture administers a cost-share program for organic certification which reimburses 75% of the cost of the organic certification up to \$500. These grants are awarded on a first come, first serve basis. The application forms for this program are available at <www.in.gov/isda/pubs/organic/index.html>. Indiana's USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) administers the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). One of the eligible EQIP practices is conservation Cropping Rotations, with an incentive payment of \$50/acre per year for cropland that is being converted to organic farming. Organic farming must meet the established USDA definition of organic farming. The incentive is capped at \$5,000.00 per applicant per year. Organic producers may also be eligible for other EQIP incentives, such as Nutrient Management, Pest Management, No-Till, Cover Crops, etc. More information on EQIP in Indiana is available at <www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/2006eqip/eqip2006.html>. Interested parties can contact their NRCS district

conservationist. A county listing of contact information is available at www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/directory/dclist.html.

Are there any resources to assist in marketing my organic crops? Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative (MOFC): www.midwestorganic.com or (618) 783-4601 MOFC is a farmer-owned cooperative designed to assist producers in getting the best prices available for their organic products. The purpose of MOFC is to serve their members through promoting organic systems in agriculture, education, public policy, and the favorable marketing of organic products. Organic Farmer's Agency for Relationship Marketing, Inc. (OFARM): www.ofarm.org OFARM is a cooperative organization of producer groups whose mission is to coordinate the efforts of producer marketing groups to benefit and sustain organic producers. OFARM aims to strengthen marketing returns for members, tracks production inventories and exchanges pricing and marketing information. Cooperative Regions of Organic Producer Pools (CROPP) Cooperative: www.farmers.coop CROPP is the nation's largest organic farmer cooperative. The mission of CROPP and its brand Organic Valley is to create a marketing cooperative which promotes regional farm diversity and economic stability by means of organic agricultural methods and the sale of certified organic products. CROPP's farmer hotline is (888) 809-9297. Hoosier Organic Marketing and Education (HOME): HOME is an non-for-profit 501(c)3 dedicated to providing education on organic food and farming to members of the public. HOME also coordinates the organic sessions at the Indiana Horticultural Congress. For information on HOME or organic workshops, contact (317) 539-4317 or cvofof@iquest.net.

Important Organic links: ATTRA–National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service: www.attra.org/

[organic.html](http://www.attra.org/organic.html)> ATTRA provides information on organic certification and organic production options. Their resources offer guidance in preparing for certification, and in production methods for a range of organic crops and livestock. ATTRA's phone number is (800) 346-9140. The New Agriculture Network: www.new-ag.msu.edu.

The New Agriculture Network is a joint effort of Michigan State University, Purdue University, and the University of Illinois to combine resources to bring seasonal advice to field crop and vegetable growers interested in organic agriculture. They provide on-line newsletter features crop updates from organic growers and articles from university specialists about a variety of practices and new findings useful for organic growers. National Organic Program (NOP): www.ams.usda.gov/nop/indexIE.htm.

The NOP oversees the national organic rule (7 CFR Part 205). The NOP website provides contact information for certifying agents, answers to frequently asked questions, and consumer information. Organic Trade Association (OTA): www.ota.com/index.html.

OTA is a membership-based business association that focuses on the organic business community in North America. OTA's website provides information on upcoming organic agricultural events and directories of businesses involved in organic agriculture.

USDA-Economic Research Service (ERS): www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/Organic/ERS is a primary source of economic information and research in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The ERS Organic Agriculture Briefing Room provides features on organic market data, recommended reading, and recent research developments. For more information contact: Indiana State Department of Agriculture, 101 West Ohio Street, Suite 1200, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204, (317) 232-8770 www.in.gov/isda.

It is the policy of the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service, David C. Petritz, Director, that all persons shall have equal opportunity and access to the programs and facilities without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, or disability. Purdue University is an Affirmative Action employer. 1-888-EXT-INFO <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/marketing> Disclaimer: Reference to products in this publication is not intended to be an endorsement to the exclusion of others which may have similar uses. Any person using products listed in this publication assumes full responsibility for their use in accordance with current directions of the manufacturer.

Vegetable Crops Hotline
c/o Chris Gunter
Southwest Purdue Agricultural Program
4369 N Purdue Rd
Vincennes, IN 47591