

Celebrate National Ag Day by Visiting Your Legislator

Tuesday, March 21, is National Ag Day, a day set aside by the Agricultural Council of America to highlight to the public the vital role agriculture plays in our society. PVGA is urging its members to celebrate Ag Day by making plans to visit their state and federal legislator's office to discuss the Association's priorities for 2017. Copies of the Association's state and federal priorities are in the center of this newsletter.

The Pennsylvania General Assembly is in session March 20 to 22, so state legislators will be in Harrisburg those days. They may be in their local offices on March 23 or 24. It isn't so important to make the visit exactly on March 21st, but make it a point to schedule an appointment with your legislator this spring (before you get any busier!) to go over the priorities with him or her.

If you want to team up with some neighboring growers to go as group, that is even better. If one of your farms has a market, greenhouse or high tunnel in operation now, you might want to invite the legislator to come visit your market or farm. If you visit your legislator in his office, you might also consider inviting him to your farm or market later in the year like July or August when the General Assembly recesses for the summer.

You as a grower taking the time to visit your legislator gives him or her the opportunity to personally meet you and understand how government decisions can hurt or help your business. If they have met growers in person and are familiar with their businesses, they are more likely to be conscious of how their decisions can affect your business when they are deciding how to vote on different issues.

While personal visits are the ideal, if you can't find time to

visit, at least mail a copy of the Associations' state or federal legislative priorities to your state and federal legislators. Just a short handwritten note explaining that you are a PVGA member and asking that your legislator keep PVGA's priorities in mind would be a big help in making our legislators aware of the industry's needs. If a legislator gets one copy of the Association's priorities from a voter in his or her district, it will have more impact than the same set of priorities mailed from the PVGA office. If they get copies of the priorities from several growers in their district, it will have an even greater impact.

When you are calling to make an appointment, if your legislator is not available but a staff person is available, go ahead and take the time to meet with the staff person. Staff people are often the ones who brief the legislators on what their constituents are saying to them on a particular issue, so getting PVGA's priorities and your farm's story before a legislative staff person is equally important. This is particularly true for federal representatives and senators who have more constituents and also larger staffs.

Remember to visit at least one of your five legislators: your state representative, your state senator, your federal representative and/or Senator Robert Casey or Senator Pat Toomey. To find your local legislators and their offices, consult your local telephone directory's blue or government pages, go to <http://www.legis.state.pa.us/> or call PVGA at 717-694-3596.

We would greatly appreciate if you could let PVGA which legislators you have contacted. Please send us an email at pvga@pvga.org, call us at 717-694-3596.

Bill Lamont Receives 2017 PVGA Annual Award

PVGA President David Miller presented the Association's 2017 Annual Award to Dr. William Lamont, Jr., during the Annual Fruit and Vegetable Growers Banquet at the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention in Hershey on January 31, 2017.

The PVGA Annual Award is presented each year to someone who has demonstrated a longstanding record of service to the Association and/or the vegetable, potato, or berry industry in Pennsylvania.

Lamont, who is Professor of Horticulture and Extension Vegetable Crops Specialist at Penn State University, will be retiring in 2017. He was born and raised in rural Pennsylvania and obtained an undergraduate degree in



PVGA President Dave Miller presents the 2017 PVGA Annual Award to Bill Lamont.

Economics and Business from Lebanon Valley College. He then served in United States Navy on active duty from 1967 to 1971 and in the reserves from 1975 to 2005, retiring as a Commander in Specialty-Naval Intelligence. After his active duty, he went on to obtain a second undergraduate degree in Horticulture from Delaware Valley College. He received his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Vegetable Crops with minors in Soils and Entomology from Cornell University.

Prior to moving back to Pennsylvania he was an Extension Vegetable Specialist at North Carolina State University working with both field and greenhouse vegetable produc-

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NEWS



**Pennsylvania
Vegetable Growers
Association**

*An association of
commercial vegetable,
potato and berry growers.*

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Strasburg

John Shenk '20
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Wapwalopen

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Three Springs

Mark Troyer '18
Waterford

Timothy Weiser '19
York Springs

Executive Secretary
William Troxell
Richfield

PVGA Loses Life Member Bob Trax

Robert C. Trax, PVGA Life Member and former Director and President, passed away at his home on February 10 at the age of 87. A fourth generation member of the Trax family which operated Trax Farms in Library, Washington County, Trax reluctantly retired from active work just three years ago. He was diagnosed with cancer two weeks before his death and was not on any medications until his diagnosis.

He was the son of the late George C. and Elizabeth Hast Trax and a graduate of Snowden High School. In 1950 he married Doris Mae Leech who passed away just a few years ago.

Bob worked in the family farm business all his life and was one of nine family members that own the farm. He was actively involved in the field production of both fruits and vegetables as well as the development of the family's large, modern retail farm market that is a well-known landmark in the South Hills area of suburban Pittsburgh. He cooperated with Penn State Extension for many variety trials and other experimental plots on the family's farm.

He was elected to the Association's Board of Directors in 1989 where he served for 21 years, including two years as President of the Association. He also served for many years on the Board of the Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program.

Trax Farms hosted the PVGA Field Tour in 1985 as well as numerous Penn State Extension field trials and local grower meetings through the years. They also hosted several "Simply Delicious" produce promotional events during the tenure of Secretary of Agriculture Samuel Hayes.

Bob was awarded the Mid-Atlantic Master Farmer award in 1999 and the PVGA Annual Award in 2008.

Besides his passion for the farm, Bob also enjoyed fishing, hunting and skiing. He was member as well as a former deacon and trustee of Peters Creek Baptist Church. He is survived by his four children Bonnie Spoto, Judy Ross, Peggy Coffield and Robert Trax as well as 11 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

Information from the Pittsburgh Post Gazette, February 12, 2017, and Association records.



Bob Trax, right, with former PA Secretary of Agriculture Samuel Hayes at a "Simply Delicious" produce promotion event at Trax Farms.

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers News is the official monthly publication of the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association, Inc., 815 Middle Road, Richfield, PA 17086-9205 phone and fax - 717-694-3596, email - pvga@pvga.org website - www.pvga.org

Our Mission:

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association serves Pennsylvania's commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers through education, research, advocacy and promotion.

Our Vision:

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association will be the driving force in ensuring the future viability of the commercial vegetable, potato and berry industries in Pennsylvania.

Inquiries about membership, this publication or advertising rates should be directed to William Troxell, Executive Secretary, at the above addresses.

PVGA Members Elect Directors, Amend Constitution and Adopt Policies

The General Membership of the Association held their Annual Meeting on February 1, 2017, at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center during the 2017 Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention. The results of the mail balloting for the election of six Association Directors were announced. The members voted to amend the Constitution as recommended by the Board of Directors. They also adopted additions to the Association's Policy Resolutions besides receiving reports on the Association's activities for the year.

One New Director Elected to Board

Christopher Powell of Strasburg was elected to his first term on the Board of Directors. Incumbent Directors Christopher Harner, Kenneth Martin, David Miller, John Shenk and Jeffrey Stoltzfus were also elected to three-year terms on the Board. Mr. Powell replaces Fred Dymond III of Dallas, who had served on the Board since 2008 and decided not to seek re-election.



The PVGA Board of Directors (left to right) David King, Christopher Harner, Jeffrey Stoltzfus, Kenneth Martin, Jonathan Strite, Robert Shenot, Michael Orzolek, Thomas Strzelecki, Eric Oesterling, William Reynolds, Brian Campbell, Barron Hetherington, Mark Troyer, David Miller and Randy Treichler. Not pictured are Christopher Powell, John Shenk and Timothy Weiser.

Alan Kemmerer, Peter Flynn and Rita Resick had also been nominated as Directors but were not elected.

Until 2012, members of the Board of Directors were elected by the members attending the Annual Meeting. In 2011, the

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Robert Black Receives Life Membership

From time to time PVGA is pleased to honor individuals who have been longtime members of the Association and who made a special contribution to the Association and its members in some way. In the past we have honored past presidents, long-time Board members, University researchers, extension educators, Association volunteers and so on. This year the Leadership and Recognition Committee felt it was appropriate to recognize with a life membership a long-time member of Association who has never served in an official capacity in the Association and doesn't even live in Pennsylvania.

Robert Black of Thurmont, Maryland, is second generation farmer who always wanted to be a farmer and currently farms in partnership with his sister as Catoctin Mountain Orchard. They have the third and fourth generation of their family working with them on their family's 100-acre fruit and vegetable farm. They grow a wide variety of vegetables, including tomatoes, kale, cabbage, squash, cucumbers, peppers, spinach, cantaloupes, and eggplant. At a quarter acre, they are the largest rhubarb grower in their state. They also have two greenhouses to grow tomatoes and a large variety of leafy greens for their large successful farm market and bakery. Oh, they also grow a few apples, peaches, plums, apricots, pears and berries.



PVGA President Dave Miller presents Bob Black with a PVGA Life Membership.

Besides farming, he has been and is currently on numerous boards in the fruit/vegetable industry. Black has served for many years as the treasurer of the Maryland State Horticultural Society. We've been told that if he can get his name in the paper or his face on TV, he'll do it at the drop of a dime. His nickname is Johnny PR.

The Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention has become one of the premier grower meetings in the nation. The Convention is one of major ways that our Association is able to fulfill one of our key missions of providing educational opportunities for our members. This PVGA member has served on the Convention Joint Committee for many, many years as a representative of the Maryland State Horticultural

Society and has traveled hundreds of miles to attend scores of meetings to help make this Convention the success it is and thus, indirectly, serving his fellow PVGA members. In addition, he been a leader in helping both the fruit and vegetable industries deal with the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug.

In recognition of this service to the Association and its members, the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association is pleased to present Robert Black with a life membership in the Association.

NEWS

PVGA Members Elect... *(continued from page 3)*

members approved changes to the Association's constitution that allowed the Board of Directors to set guidelines to have the Directors elected by mail ballots prior to the Annual Meeting. Since only about 30 to 50 members typically attend the Annual Meeting, it was hoped the mail ballot would encourage greater participation in the election process, which it has. In 2013, a total of 136 valid ballots were returned while in 2014 at total of 179 valid ballots were returned and in 2015 193 ballots were postmarked by the January 15 deadline. For 2016 there 157 valid ballots. This year's ballots were counted by election judges Robert Shenot, Kathy Demchak and Beth Gugino.

Brief biographies of the newly elected Directors are as follows:

Chris Harner from Harner Farm in State College is a third generation fruit and vegetable grower. He has been working full

Bill Lamont Receives... *(continued from page 1)*

tion from 1980 to 1987. He then was a consultant with US Quality Plastics for a year before moving on to Kansas State University where he taught both undergraduate and graduate level courses and conducted applied research in the Department of Horticulture, Forestry and Recreation Resources. In 1997 he began his tenure at Penn State.

Lamont has an extensive background in applied research, extension, teaching and service. In his current extension position he is responsible statewide for the culture and management of vegetable crops. He is a recognized leader nationally and internationally in the field of plasticulture and is the author of numerous research and extension publications on vegetable crops, drip/plastic mulches, row covers, high tunnels and greenhouse vegetable production. He is a frequent contributor to trade publications such as American Vegetable Grower, Productores Hortalizas, Irrigation Journal, Grower, The Vegetable Growers News, and Spudman.

He was Program Chair for the first and succeeding educational seminars/workshops on "Using Plasticulture Technology for Intensive Production of Vegetable Crops" sponsored by the American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS) of which he was selected a Fellow in 2006 and has served as Extension Division Vice President, President, and Chairman of the Board of Directors. He has also organized other short courses on "Plasticulture" both within and outside the United States, not to mention helping to organize the vegetable, potato and high tunnel sessions here at the Mid-Atlantic Convention for many years. He is a Past-President of the American Society for Plasticulture, from which he received the Distinguished Service Award in 1999 and the Pioneer Award in 2009.

Most recently his interest has been in helping to establish high tunnels in the city of Philadelphia to promote the production of nutritious vegetables and winter production of greens and other crops for the population of the city. This project involves a wide array of partners from the city government, schools, and a host of non-profit organizations. In addition, he and another colleague are teaching a new course targeted for the general student population of the university called "Gardening for Fun and Profit".

If all this sounds somewhat familiar, it should because last year PVGA honored him with a life membership. For all these accomplishments, as well as his service to the vegetable and potato growers of Pennsylvania and the Association itself, the Association is pleased to present its 2017 Annual Award to Dr. William Lamont.

time on the farm since graduating from Penn State with a B.S. in Ag Business Management in 1994. Currently the farm is composed of a mix of about 40 acres tree fruit, 30 acres of vegetables, and the rest is a mix of Christmas trees, blueberries, grapes, greenhouses, high-tunnels, corn maze etc. They have own retail location and wholesale to local restaurants, grocery stores and other farms. They have been making the transition to pick-your-own over the years, to provide on-the-farm activities for the families in the area. Currently Chris is a member of the State Horticultural Association of Pennsylvania, Appalachian Fruit Growers (Past Pres.), Penn State Ag Council, and Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.

Chris Powell has been the owner of Good Harvest Farm in Strasburg for the past 28 years. The farm consists of high tunnel tomatoes, hydroponic lettuce, a wide variety of mixed outdoor vegetable production, a retail garden center and a small CSA plus a year-round farmers' market stand at the Lancaster County Farmers Market in Wayne, suburban Philadelphia. He has served on the Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program Board for the past 15 years and is currently chairman of the Program Board.

Jeff Stoltzfus has been working as the Farm Food Safety educator for Penn State Extension in Lancaster County for the last year. Prior to that he was the adult farmer educator working for the Eastern Lancaster County School District working primarily with vegetable farmers in Eastern Lancaster County for 23 years. He assisted farmers in starting an onion growing cooperative and worked with them in areas of production and food safety. He lives on a small farm where he and his family grow strawberries, pumpkins, and beef cattle.

Dave Miller is the principal owner and president of Miller Plant Farm, Inc. which is a greenhouse and farming operation in York County. Miller Plant Farm produces a wide variety of vegetable transplants for many growers in Pennsylvania and other states. The company also grows about 55 acres of vegetables both for wholesale sales to chain stores and their own retail market which includes a 700 member CSA. A Director since 2002, he currently serves as President of the Association. He also serves on the Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program Board and was chairman of that Board for many years.

John Shenk did not grow up on a farm, but developed an interest in berry and vegetable growing through the 4-H program. He was able to get a start in farming by growing and direct marketing vegetables and berries in Philadelphia. He and his wife Linda have farmed with their family for 36 years. They eventually began to concentrate on growing strawberries for pick-your-own and direct sales. More recently, the focus on strawberries led to developing a strawberry cultivator and beginning Hillside Cultivator Co.

Kenneth Martin is currently employed at Furmano Foods Inc. He started there in 1989 as a fieldman and now is the Director of Ag. Operations. Ken started out growing vegetables and greenhouse bedding plants in the early 80's and in 1986 managed the Buffalo Valley Produce Auction until going to Furmano's. He has served on the Vegetable Planning Committee for the Mid-Atlantic Convention for at least 26 years and as a director for 15 years including two years as president. Ken is also on the PVGA Capacity Building Task Force. He is on the board of the Penn State Ag Council and on the Northeast IPM Center's advisory board.

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PVGA Members Elect... (continued from page 4)**Constitution Amended**

The election of Directors by a mail ballot with more nominees than seats available has resulted in greater participation of the membership in election of Directors as intended. One drawback, however, is that certain geographic areas of the state or different segments of the industry or membership may not be represented on the Board. Therefore, the Board recommended that it be allowed to appoint two additional "at large" members to the Board to help insure a desired diversity on the Board. Accordingly, the Members of the Association voted to amend Article IV, Sections 2 and 3 of the Constitution as follows: (Underlined text is to be added.)

Section 2 The number of member-elected Directors shall not be less than 15. Their terms shall be staggered with one-third being elected by ballot by the members each year to serve terms of three years. The Board may appoint up to two additional "at large" voting Directors to serve terms of three years. Election procedures and term limits are to be determined and approved by the Directors and stated in the Association's By-Laws. Terms shall begin and end on the dates of the annual meeting. Mid-term vacancies shall be filled by the Directors either at the next meeting of the Directors following the vacancy or by balloting through email, post or telecom, with the person elected serving the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 3 Two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors shall be vegetable or small fruit growers. The Directors should reasonably represent the different geographic regions and the different segments of the industry. The Board shall use its "at large" appointments to add diversity to the Board membership.

Twelve Policy Resolutions Adopted

The Association's members unanimously approved the following Policy Resolutions that will be added to the Association's existing resolutions. These resolutions set forth the Association's positions on various current issues. (Underlined text is to be added.)

State Issues**Surplus Food**

1. Supporting an increase in the State Food Purchase Program budget of \$5 million to allow food banks to purchase and process more Pennsylvania surplus food products through the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS) Program.

Wildlife Crop Damage

2. Opposing hunting on Sundays with the exception of hunting crow, coyote and fox, as well as woodchuck in cultivated fields with express written permission of the landowner.

Labor

3. Supporting a requirement that all employees for whom unemployment compensation contributions are made be eligible to receive compensation only from the at-fault employer within the base year.

Right to Farm

4. Opposing the ability of municipalities to require permits for the harvesting of any agricultural commodity.

Transportation

5. Supporting the inclusion of questions in the Pennsylvania driver's test about safe driving practices in the presence of farm equipment, dump trucks, tractor trailers and other large machinery encountered on public roads, including a question on wide turns by large vehicles.

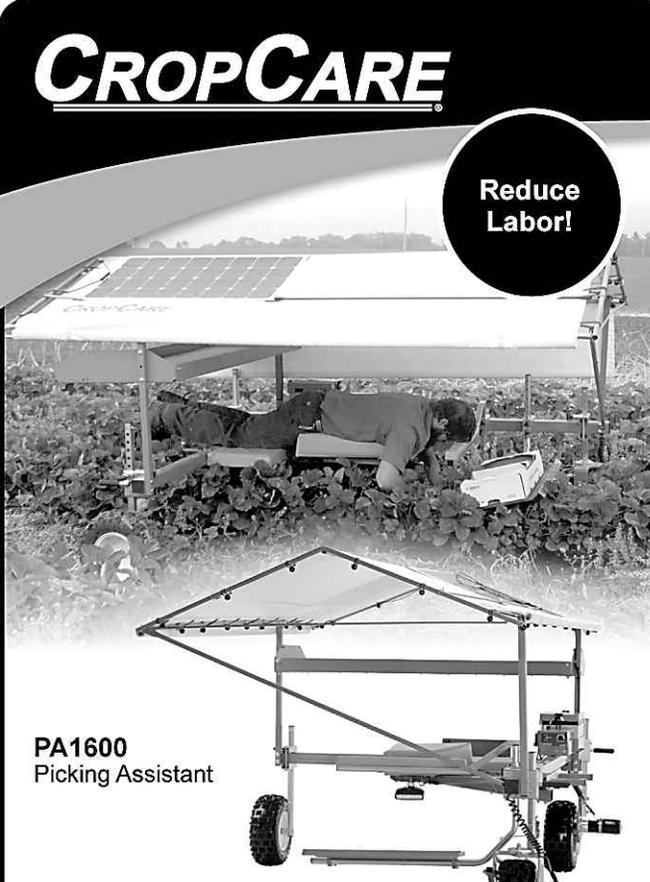
Solid Waste Management

6. Supporting the regulation of food waste used in agricultural facilities for digesters or composting as agricultural waste rather than as municipal waste under the Solid Waste Management Act.

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PVGA Members Elect... (continued from page 6)

Public Utilities

- 7. Supporting requirements for the control of noxious weeds along roads and other right-of-ways while minimizing drift and off-target movement to adjacent croplands.

State and Federal Issues

Food Safety and Pesticides

- 8. Supporting the participation of the state Department of Agriculture in the DriftWatch program to mitigate the potential problems as a result of the registration of dicamba and 2,4,D products for use on genetically modified soybeans.

Wetlands

- 9. Supporting a uniform standard for wetland determination by USDA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and EPA.

Flood Insurance

- 10. Supporting the exemption of agricultural buildings from FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program insurance surcharge.

Biotechnology

- 11. Opposing registration requirements for farmers utilizing GMO technology.

Farm Equipment

- 12. Supporting legislation requiring that all farm equipment manufacturers make diagnostic, service and technical information/software available to machinery owners and independent service technicians.

Before approving the resolutions, a member suggested the Association reconsider its blanket opposition to Sunday hunting. It was agreed the Association should consider supporting Sunday hunting in areas of the state where deer pressure is extremely high. This will likely be a question in next year's member survey.

Reports Given

The members also received the year-end financial reports which showed a balance of \$242,308 in the General Fund, \$136,775 in the Keystone Fund and \$21,693 in the Onion Committee Fund. Robert Amsterdam reported on the work of the Capacity Building Task Force which is looking at how the

Association can add additional staff capacity. One of the issues being discussed is whether the Association should become a 501(c)3 organization rather than a 501(c)5 which it is presently. Past President Robert Shenot noted that two Rudolph Grob Memorial scholarships were awarded to Lake Miller and Carville Mace. Branden Christener was introduced as the recipient of the first PVGA Young Grower Award

Secretary-Treasurer William Reynolds reviewed the budget adopted by the Board of Directors which anticipates \$489,800 in income and \$521,200 in expenses in the General Fund. He noted that membership was 861 after the second day of the convention, a new record exceeding last year's second day membership of 822. Last year's membership at the end of the year was 1,008, a new record in recent history. Sales at the Farm Show Food Booth were \$207,331, about \$5,000 short of last year's record sales. He gave special thanks to Jack, Jackie and Nancy Grace and Boots Hetherington who volunteered for the entire week of the Farm Show. Executive Secretary William Troxell thanked Brian Campbell, Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Shenot for taking over the management duties for two days each.

Educational Committee chairman Jonathan Strite reported that convention attendance was the highest ever for the second day at 1,151. Regional educational events are being planned for the summer along with continuation of the newsletter, website and email updates as the Association's communications to members. Government Affairs Committee chairman Jeffrey Stoltzfus reported that legislative visits are being planned for March 15. Marketing and Research Committee chairman Thomas Strzelecki reported that the Board had approved \$14,000 in funding for small fruit research (although currently only \$8,000 is expected to be used) and \$60,000 for vegetable research projects to be selected by the Vegetable Marketing and Research Board that evening. The Association will also be providing \$10,000 to fund a tomato breeding research technician. Jeff Stoltzfus reported the Simply Sweet Onion Committee has now been operating for 10 years and continues to grow.

The members observed a moment of silence in memory of the following members and friends of the Association who had passed away: Donald Hollabaugh (2016), Donald Kaelin (2015) and Burton Hetherington (2015).



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Miller Re-elected PVGA President



PVGA Officers for 2017 (left to right) Rob Shenot – Past President, Jon Strite - First Vice President, Brian Campbell – Second Vice President, Dave Miller – President, Bill Reynolds – Secretary-Treasurer.

The Association’s Board of Directors re-elected David Miller of York as the President of the Association at a special meeting held immediately after the Annual Meeting of the General Membership on February 1, 2017. Also re-elected were Jonathan Strite of Harrisburg as First Vice President and William Reynolds of Waynesboro as Secretary-Treasurer. Brian Campbell of Berwick was elected as Second Vice President to replace Jeffrey Stoltzfus who decided not to seek re-election. At their regular meeting on January 30, 2017, in Hershey, they also

adopted the 2017 budget that anticipates \$489,800 in income and \$521,200 in spending.

Officers are elected by the Board of Directors each year to one-year terms. By tradition, the President and Vice Presidents are elected to two one-year terms with the Vice Presidents moving up to the next higher office after two years. Robert Shenot, who served as President in 2014 and 2015, continues in the office of Past President. The Past President sits on the Executive Committee with the other four officers and is chairman of the Leadership and Recognition Committee which nominates candidates for Directors and officers.

The budget adopted by the Directors has a projected deficit of \$31,400 and allocates a potential total of \$84,000 for research - \$60,000 for vegetable research, \$10,000 for a tomato breeding technician and \$14,000 for small fruit research – although not all the small fruit research funds are expected to be used.

The budget also includes \$25,000 to provide a portion of the start-up funding to be offered to the faculty member that will be hired to replace Dr. William Lamont who plans to retire in

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NEWS

Two PVGA Scholarships to be Offered for 2017

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association is pleased to be able to offer two Rudolph Grob Memorial Scholarships each year to a child or grandchild of a PVGA member who is pursuing higher education with the goal of working in production agriculture. While previously only one scholarship was awarded each year, the Board of Directors has approved awarding two scholarships beginning with 2015.

The Association gives the annual scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 in memory of Rudolph Grob of Millersville who served the Association for 50 years as a Director, 20 years as Secretary Treasurer and for over 20 years as manager of the Association's Farm Show Booth. Mr. Grob was a horticulture graduate of Penn State University who was employed for many years at Funks Farm Market in Millersville. The funds for the scholarships are generated by a portion of the interest earned by the Association's Keystone Fund, an endowment-type fund created by the voluntary extra dues paid the Keystone Members of the Association.

The purpose of the scholarships is to assist children and grandchildren of Association members in obtaining a degree that will enable them to pursue a career in the vegetable, potato or berry production industries. Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- be the child or grandchild of an Association member who has been a member in good standing for at least one year
- be enrolled in a two-year or four-year degree program;
- be in good academic standing; and

Miller Re-elected... *(continued from page 9)*

mid-2017. The Board of Directors voted to offer these funds to the College of Agricultural Sciences to show the importance of this extension and research position to the vegetable industry. The University had offered early retirement to qualifying staff members and many took advantage of the offer. With so much competition for which positions would be refilled, the Board wanted to make sure the College and University administration realized the importance of this position – one of only two practical vegetable research and extension positions remaining in the Department of Plant Science. This funding may not be needed, however, until 2018, since the hiring process typically takes some time.

Even with the projected deficit, the budget leaves a projected General Fund balance of \$211,400 at the end of the year, well above the target level balance of \$162,400. The Association purposely maintains a sizeable balance in the General Fund to enable it to self-insure itself against unexpected decreases in revenue. Bad weather during the Farm Show or Convention can significantly decrease the income in any given year but the General Fund reserves will enable the Association to maintain its support for research, promotion and other activities even though income may be lower than expected.

Three years ago the Board had committed \$8,000 annually for five years to a multi-state project on high tunnel berry production funded by a Specialty Crop Research Initiative grant.

(continued on page 12)

- be intent on pursuing a career in the vegetable, potato, or berry production industries.

Applications are now being accepted for the 2017 scholarships. The deadline is March 31, 2017. Applications are reviewed by the Association's Scholarship Committee which determines who receives the scholarships. The current committee members are: Carolyn Beinlich, Keith Eckel, Curtis Kaelin, Michael Orzolek and Hilary Schramm, Jr.

The \$1,000 scholarships are awarded for a one-year period. Recipients may apply for a renewal although preference will be given to other qualified students over previous recipients. It is not a need-based scholarship. Payment of the funds is made directly to the institution.

The following items must be included with a completed application form:

- A copy of the most recent academic transcript.
- Two letters of reference from someone outside of the immediate family.
- A typed essay (approximately 500 words) on one of the following topics:

- Describe the biggest issue that has faced the Vegetable/Potato/Berry Industry in Pennsylvania in the last five years or that the Industry will face in the next five years and how you plan to deal with this issue in your future career, or

- Describe your previous experiences with the Vegetable/Potato/Berry Industry and the role you hope to play in the Pennsylvania Vegetable/Potato/Berry Industry upon graduation.

Applications must be postmarked by March 31, 2017 and are available by contacting PVGA at 717-694-3596 or pvga@pvga.org. The application is also available on the website at <https://www.pvga.org/services/rudolph-grob-memorial-scholarship/>. The committee may request to interview the applicant in person or by telephone as well as contact college or school advisors and/or references. If you have a child or grandchild in college, encourage them to apply for the scholarships.

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2017 Convention Breaks Registration Records Again

The 2017 Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention continued the tradition of offering fruit and vegetable growers throughout the mid-Atlantic states a first-rate, three-day educational conference with a large industry trade show. About 1,090 persons registered with PVGA for the three-day event. With over 300 speakers and guests, the attendance for the vegetable portion of the Convention was about 1,390, the highest vegetable registration ever and about 150 more than the previous record set last year. About 850 fruit growers from Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey and Virginia plus 400 exhibitor representatives put total attendance at about 2,600.

This year's convention was the 40th year that fruit and vegetable growers from Pennsylvania, Maryland and New Jersey met together at Hershey. They have been joined by the Virginia fruit growers for the last four years.

The three-day Convention featured seven or nine concurrent educational sessions on all three days including, for the eighth year, two sessions in Spanish. In addition, the Convention included seven pre-convention workshops on January 30 plus a farm market bus tour. The workshops covered greenhouse vegetable production, hops production, FSMA farm food safety training, recall readiness, vegetable grafting, tree fruit grafting, and pesticide applicator license training. The farm market bus tour included visits to Brown's Orchards Farm Market, Flinchbaugh Orchards Farm Market, Leg Up Farm Market and the Moon Dancer Vineyard and Winery. Exhibits from 160 companies and organizations displayed their products and services in the exhibit halls all three days.

Chris Baugher from the State Horticultural Association of Pennsylvania was the Convention Joint Committee chairman for 2017. Jonathan Strite was the chairman of the PVGA Convention Planning Task Force. The educational sessions were organized by the following individuals:

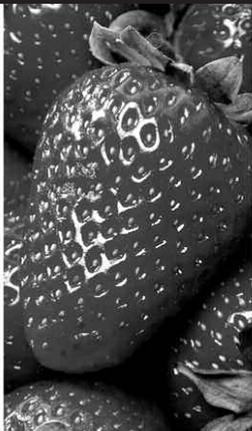
- Fall Ornamentals and Vine Crops: Thomas Butzler and Dr. Timothy Elkner – Penn State Extension
- Organic Vegetable Production: Dr. Elsa Sanchez - Penn State University
- Broccoli and Crucifers: Dr. William Lamont – Penn State University and Thomas Strzelecki – Covered Wagon Produce
- Changing Climate: Dr. Shelby Fleischer – Penn State University
- General Vegetables: Dr. Michael Orzolek - Penn State University Emeritus
- Winter Storage Crops and Potatoes: Dr. William Lamont – Penn State University
- Snap Beans and Tomatoes: Kenneth Martin – Furmano Foods
- Hydroponics, Asparagus, High Tunnels: Steven Bogash - ISP Technologies
- Sweet Corn: Dr. Shelby Fleischer – Penn State University, Brenton Barnhart – Country Creek Produce and Thomas Strzelecki – Covered Wagon Produce
- Greenhouse Ornamentals: Sinclair Adam – Penn State Extension
- Onions: Dr. Beth Gugino – Penn State University
- Cover Crops: Thomas Ford – Penn State Extension, Dr. Shelby Fleischer – Penn State University and Kenneth Martin – Furmano Foods
- Small Fruit: Kathleen Demchak – Penn State University
- Specialty Vegetables: John Esslinger – Penn State Extension
- Cut Flowers: Thomas Ford - Penn State Extension
- Leafy Greens: Lee Stivers – Penn State Extension and David King – Harvest Valley Farms
- Farm Transitions: John Berry – Penn State Extension

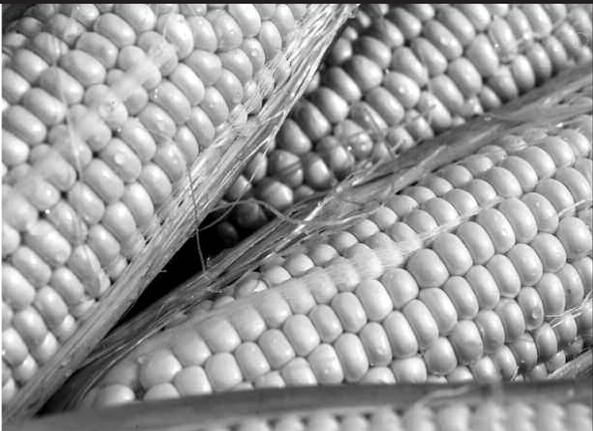
(continued on page 12)



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2017 Convention Breaks... (continued from page 11)

- Market Trends: Heather Manzo – Penn State Extension and Arthur King – Harvest Valley Farms
 - Wholesale Marketing: William Troxell - PVGA, Brian Moyer – Penn State Extension, and Richard VanVranken – Rutgers Cooperative Extension
 - Marketing 101: Brian Moyer and Carla Snyder - Penn State Extension
 - CSAs: Michelle Casella – Rutgers Cooperative Extension
 - Agritourism and Retail Marketing: William Hlubik and Gillian Armstrong – Rutgers Cooperative Extension and William Reynolds – Reynolds' Pumpkin Farm
 - Social Media and Advertising Marketing Strategies: Shannon Dill and Ginger Meyers – University of Maryland Extension
- Other members of the Convention Planning Task Force were: Tanner Delvalle, Fred Dymond III, Gary Faulkner, Peter Ferretti, Bruce Hellerick, Lois Klinger, David Miller, Eric Oesterling, Robert Pollock, Steve Sample, Jeffrey Stoltzfus, Randy Treichler, Grant Troup, Adam Voll and Pearl Wetheral
- Ag Choice Farm Credit and MidAtlantic Farm Credit sponsored a grower reception prior to the annual Fruit and Vegetable

Miller Re-elected... (continued from page 10)

The project includes researchers at Penn State University, Michigan State University, Cornell University and others. PVGA's contribution is part of the required industry matching funds required by the grant program. No other small fruit research proposals were received so far.

The Association's \$60,000 vegetable research allocation, will be added to the \$20,000 in assessment dollars allocated for research by the Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program for a total of \$80,000 in vegetable research funding.

In other action, the Board:

- approved the December meeting minutes and the year-end financial reports;
- approved the audit report from Mary Ann Lindner on her review of the financial records for 2015;
- authorized applying for a Specialty Crop Block Grant in cooperation with the Vegetable Marketing and Research Program for videoing sessions at next year's Convention;
- approved state and federal legislative priorities for 2017;
- endorsed Keith Masser for re-election to the Penn State Board of Trustees;
- suggested Brian Campbell as a member of the Pennsylvania Pollinator Protection Plan Task Force; and
- received reports on the Farm Show Food Booth, Simply Sweet Onion program and various other issues.

The next meeting of the Association will be held on Wednesday March 15, in conjunction with the Association's Legislative Visitation Day in the Capitol in Harrisburg.

Growers Dinner on January 31. PVGA presented its Annual Award to William Lamont, Jr., and announced Life Memberships for Robert Black (see articles on page 3). The State Horticultural Association presented their annual award to Leonard Tate along with Farm Show awards to Hollabaugh Bros. Orchards.

Sponsors for the banquet included Kirby Agri, Inc., Knouse Foods Cooperative, the State Horticultural Association of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Apple Marketing Program (Platinum Level \$1,000 or more); Adams County Nursery, Bernard C. Morrissey Insurance, Inc., Hess Brothers Fruit Co., Pabody Insurance and Financial Services, and Rice Fruit Company (Gold Level \$500 to \$999); Frey Brothers, Inc., Maryland State Horticultural Society, New Jersey State Horticultural Society, Nourse Farms, Inc., Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association, Rockford Package Supply, The Core Group (Bear Mountain Orchards, Bream Orchards and El Vista Orchards) and the Virginia State Horticultural Society (Silver Level \$250 to \$499); and C&O Nursery, Waffler Nursery and Weller & Associates, Inc. (Bronze Level \$100 to \$249). The following seed companies generously sponsored coffee during the trade show: Ball Seed Co., Harris Seeds, Johnny's Selected Seeds, Rupp Seeds, Sakata Seed America, Seminis, Stokes Seeds and Syngenta.

The American Fruit Grower magazine sponsored three of the tree fruit sessions and the American Vegetable Grower magazine sponsored three of the vegetable sessions. International Paper provided name badge lanyards.

On the second night of the Convention, PVGA hosted the eighteenth annual Ice Cream Social. Generous portions of ice cream and a choice of toppings (including Hershey's chocolate syrup, of course) were accompanied by potato chips and other snacks donated by Utz Potato Chips and Herr Foods.

The planning committees will meet in March to begin planning for next year's edition of the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention which will be held January 30 to February 1, 2018.



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PVGA Research Funding Exceeds \$1 Million

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association Board of Directors budgeted \$84,000 for vegetable and small fruit research in 2017 although to date only \$72,876 has been allocated towards specific projects. This year's contributions put PVGA's funding for research over the past 29 years at \$1,014,822.

The research funding has been made possible solely through the profits earned at the Association's food booths at the Farm Show and Ag Progress Days. While the Association earned much less than \$84,000 at the Farm Show and Ag Progress Days booths, this amount of research grants would not be possible without these food booth profits. Surplus income from the Mid-Atlantic Convention and other sources are helping to fund the 2017 research grants. This year, PVGA will contribute \$54,876 towards vegetable research, \$10,000 to help support a tomato breeding technician at Penn State and \$8,000 for small fruit research.

The following thirteen vegetable projects are being funded in conjunction with the Vegetable Marketing and Research Program which will contribute another \$20,000 for a total of \$84,876 for vegetable research. The projects approved for funding with their objectives are listed below.

New Herbicide Options for Weed Control in Sweet Corn: Round 2

Dwight Lingenfelter, Penn State Univ. and Dr. Mark VanGessel, Univ. of Delaware **\$3,000**

- To examine various new herbicides in sweet corn to determine their effectiveness on weed control.

- To evaluate these herbicide programs on sweet corn injury and yield impact.

Efficacy of Organic Biopesticides for the Management of White Mold in Processing Snap Bean in Pennsylvania

Dr. Sarah Pethybridge, Cornell Univ. and Dr. Beth K. Gugino, Penn State Univ. **\$6,800**

- The objective of this project is to support and facilitate organic production of snap beans by further quantifying the efficacy of OMRI-listed biopesticides available to growers for white mold control.

Fresh Market Slicer Tomato Variety Evaluation

Dr. Timothy Elkner, Penn State Extension **\$6,850**

- The purpose of this study is to evaluate disease resistance, yield and fruit quality of commercially available slicing tomato varieties in a replicated trial in southeast PA, repeating the trial from 2016. Several advanced selections from Dr. Foolad's breeding program will also be included in the trial to compare with the current commercial standards for yield and quality.

Breeding Tomatoes for Disease Resistance and Other Desirable Characteristics for Production in PA

Dr. Majid R. Foolad, The Pennsylvania State Univ. **\$12,000**

- Development of fresh-market (FM) tomato breeding lines with late blight (LB) resistance, conferred by Ph-3 and/or Ph-5 resistance genes.
- Development of processing tomato breeding lines with LB resistance, conferred by Ph-3 and/or Ph-5 resistance genes.

(continued on page 18)



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PVGA Has Another Successful Farm Show

While this year's PVGA Farm Show Food Booth at the 101st Pennsylvania Farm Show did not quite match last year's record sales, with sales of over \$207,000 it was still quite successful – thanks to the efforts of over 265 volunteers.

Sales were down about \$5,000 from last year's record sales although due to decreased costs profits are expected to be about \$4,500 higher or about \$60,000. Thanks to the help of over 40 volunteers each day who filled 350 shifts during the eight and half days of the Farm Show, PVGA earned a profit of about \$170 for each volunteer shift.

The only new menu item this year was a tossed garden salad which had only modest sales. The menu also included batter-dipped vegetables, blooming onions, berry, carrot-cake and pumpkin funnel cakes, fried pickles, strawberry slush drink, raspberry lemonade, vegetable soup, chicken corn soup, broccoli-cheese soup, chili, broccoli-cauliflower and bean salads, carrot/celery sticks, dill pickles, mixed berry and pumpkin pies, and vegetable wraps. Sales included (some counts are estimated):

- 8,600 servings of batter-dipped vegetables
- 7,400 blooming onions;
- 6,950 Strawberry Surprise drinks;
- 5,000 bowls of vegetable, chicken corn, broccoli/cheese and chili soups or about 423 gallons;
- 3,400 funnel cakes;
- 3,000 raspberry lemonades
- 1,350 bowls of broccoli/cauliflower and bean salads;
- 1,500 dill pickles;
- 1,700 servings of fried pickles
- 650 pieces of Very Berry and pumpkin pie
- 780 vegetable wraps and
- 325 garden salads

Bill Reynolds, PVGA Secretary-Treasurer and past presidents Brian Campbell and Rob Shenot each managed the booth for two days this year. The Board of Directors is working toward having other persons besides the Executive Secretary able to manage the booth. Jack Grace and his daughters Jackie and Nancy of Grove City graciously volunteered for the seventeenth year to oversee the soup-making operations and assist in overall management for the entire week while Boots Hetherington oversaw the drink portion of the booth for the week.

This year's booth again featured a large flat screen television where pictures from PVGA members' farms were shown. Nancy Grace put together the slide show from pictures submitted by members.

Michael's Concessions of Northampton, a family business that operates concessions at fairs and carnivals throughout the year did the actual preparation and frying of the batter-dipped vegetables, blooming onions, fried pickles and funnel cakes while PVGA volunteers served and sold them. PVGA volunteers also helped prepare the vegetables. The produce for the batter-dipped vegetables and blooming onions was supplied by Kegel's Produce.

The Honor Roll of this year's volunteers is listed on pages 16 and 17 to recognize those who made the effort to come to Harrisburg to help out. If you didn't help this year, please volunteer to help next year. The more new volunteers we have, the less time we need to ask of our veteran volunteers. The Farm Show Food Booth, along with the Ag Progress Days Food Booth, make it possible for the Association to support research and promotion activities.



Jack Grace, Jackie Grace, Mark Oakley, Nancy Grace and Al Sollenberger



Cheryl and Bonnie Troxell

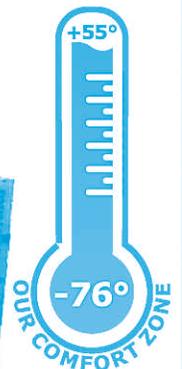


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Farm Show Volunteer Honor Roll

Following is the list of farms and individuals who volunteered time to staff the Farm Show Food Booth this year. We apologize for any names that might be omitted. Asterisks (*) indicate the number of days persons helped (if more than one).



Carl Cantaluppi,
Kay Mizer and
Ruth Cantaluppi



Brenda
Copenhaver



Alan Kemmerer



Robin, Morgan and
Boots Hetherington -
Morgan celebrated
her 25th birthday at
the Farm Show!



Bill Rankin, Tim Beard and Jerry Shimmel



Rick Klinger



Lynn Klinger

- Dave Adams
- Ag Choice Farm Credit
- Jared Bilinski
- Marcy Fitz-Gerald
- Roxanne Greising
- Matt Henderson
- Ann Metzler
- Rob Amsterdam** & Susan Richards**
- Alan Ard
- B&R Farms
- Robin** & Boots*****
- Hetherington
- Blair Hetherington
- Morgan Hetherington**
- Kevin Bond
- Barefoot Farm
- David & Laura Hartzell
- Eligah Hartzell
- Brenda & Mark Baumgardner
- Timothy Beard
- Bender's Potatoes
- Brook Bender
- Grace Bender
- Luke Oylar
- Amanda Tarman
- John Berry
- Bitler Farms
- Michael Richard
- Logan Strouse
- Steven Bogash
- Brian Campbell Farms
- Brian & Erica Campbell***
- Alexandra Campbell
- Brooke Campbell**
- Evan Campbell
- Ryan Longenberger
- Bonnie & Mark Mordan
- Brooklawn Farm
- Jim & Romaine Erb
- Diana Erb
- Tim Brown
- Broyan's Farm Produce
- Francis & Jennifer Broyan
- Shania Broyan
- Burger Farms
- Leonard Burger Jr.
- Lenny Burger III
- Aaron Burkholder
- Alvin Burkholder
- Eli Burkholder
- Carl & Ruth Cantaluppi**
- Duane & Judith Charles
- Charles Farm Produce
- Kevin & Sharon Charles
- Conrad Charles
- Copenhaver Farms
- Ronald & Brenda Copenhaver & family
- Jessie & Martha Copenhaver
- Crop Production Services
- Jonathan Corey
- Jim Jordan
- George Umholtz
- Kenneth Dearolf**
- Don & Marion Deckman
- Ted Dymond**
- Fred W. Eckel Sons Farms
- Don & David Green
- Robert & Rachel Lunger
- Rob Erlemeier**
- John Esslinger
- FDR Produce
- Fred Ranck
- Austin Ranck
- Earl Ferry
- Fory's Roadside Market
- Greg**** and Tina Fory**
- Dustin Fory
- Mary Foster**
- Foxleigh Farm
- Carville Mace
- Carville Mace, Jr.
- Dennis & Becky Frey
- Furmano Foods
- Don Bergey**
- Jim Clemens
- Don*** & Sue Geise
- Terry Greaser
- Scott Hoffman**
- Ken & Dawn Martin**
- Mike Masser
- Steve & Andrea Reinard
- Mike Stroup
- Stephen & Gayle Ganser
- Garden Meadow Farm
- Brent & Julie Kaylor**
- Haley Diener**
- Jacob Zuklic**
- Gleaning Project of South Central PA
- Jay Eury
- Jessica Larkan
- Graceland Farm Market
- Jack Grace*****
- Nancy Grace*****
- Jackie Grace*****
- Gray's Apple Ridge Orchard
- David Gray
- Niles Long
- Jeff Waltermeyer
- David Zartman
- Groff's Vegetable Farm
- Earl & Edith Groff
- Mary Ann Leaman
- Harner Farm
- Dan Harner
- Chris Harner
- Bryan Harnish
- Harvest Valley Farms
- Arthur & Kathy King**
- David King**
- Glenn Hetherington
- Richard Johnson
- Keigel's Produce
- Ben Burchfield
- Seth Donecker
- Kathy Fuller
- Kevin McCart
- Brett Dunhoft
- Eloy Jaimes
- Peter Tsigotis
- Kemmerer Farms
- Alan Kemmerer
- Adam Kemmerer
- Nathan Kemmerer



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An association of commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers.

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York

First Vice President

Jonathan Strite '19
Harrisburg

Second Vice President

Brian Campbell '18
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Secretary-Treasurer

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New Alexandria

Michael Orzolek '18
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Christopher Powell '20
Strasburg

John Shenk '20
Lititz

Jeffrey Stoltzfus '20
Atglen

Thomas Strzelecki '18
Wapwalopen

Randy Treichler '18
Three Springs

Mark Troyer '18
Waterford

Timothy Weiser '19
York Springs

Executive Secretary
William Troxell
Richfield

State Legislative Priorities for 2017

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association is an association of commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers with 970 plus members representing an industry that annually produces crops valued at over \$170 million on 3,500 farms with 55,000 acres of farmland across the Commonwealth.

Penn State Agricultural Extension and Research Appropriations -

Funding for Penn State Extension and Research is critical to maintain agriculture's cutting edge and should be continued at least at current levels. The vegetable and berry industries have given over \$1.6 million to research in the past 29 years, but we need the extension and research infrastructure that is supported by state appropriations.

High Tunnel Storm Water Management Requirements - Some

municipalities are requiring engineered storm water management plans for high tunnel structures which can greatly increase the cost of erecting these structures. We feel these structures should be exempted from these requirements.

Farmers' Market Nutrition Program - Both the Women, Infant and Children

(WIC) and low-income senior citizens coupons have greatly increased farm market sales while providing nutrition to needy Pennsylvanians.

Driftwatch – *The impending introduction of dicamba and 2,4,D tolerant crops will result in the wider use of dicamba and 2,4,D in the state. Drift and/or volatilization of both of these herbicides can cause extensive damage to certain vegetable crops. Driftwatch is a voluntary registration program that allows growers of sensitive crops to register their field locations so applicators using dicamba and 2,4,D can locate potentially sensitive crops. However, funding is needed to establish the registry system.*

2017 Policy Resolutions

The Members of the Association recently adopted these additions to our Policy Resolutions putting the Association on record as:

State Issues

Surplus Food

1. Supporting an increase in the State Food Purchase Program budget of \$5 million to allow food banks to purchase and process more Pennsylvania surplus food products through the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS) Program.

Wildlife Crop Damage

2. Opposing hunting on Sundays with the exception of hunting crow, coyote and fox, as well as woodchuck in cultivated fields with express written permission of the landowner.

Labor

3. Supporting a requirement that all employees for whom unemployment compensation contributions are made be eligible to receive compensation only from the at-fault employer within the base year.

Right to Farm

4. Opposing the ability of municipalities to require permits for the harvesting of any agricultural commodity.

Transportation

5. Supporting the inclusion of questions in the Pennsylvania driver's test about safe driving practices in the presence of farm equipment, dump trucks, tractor trailers and other large machinery encountered on public roads, including a question on wide turns by large vehicles.

Solid Waste Management

6. Supporting the regulation of food waste used in agricultural facilities for digesters or composting as agricultural waste rather than as municipal waste under the Solid Waste Management Act.

Public Utilities

7. Supporting requirements for the control of noxious weeds along roads and other right-of-ways while minimizing drift and off-target movement to adjacent croplands.

State and Federal Issues

Food Safety and Pesticides

8. Supporting the participation of the state Department of Agriculture in the DriftWatch program to mitigate the potential problems as a result of the registration of dicamba and 2,4,D products for use on genetically modified soybeans.

Wetlands

9. Supporting a uniform standard for wetland determination by USDA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and EPA.

Flood Insurance

10. Supporting the exemption of agricultural buildings from FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program insurance surcharge.

Biotechnology

11. Opposing registration requirements for farmers utilizing GMO technology.

Farm Equipment

12. Supporting legislation requiring that all farm equipment manufacturers make diagnostic, service and technical information/software available to machinery owners and independent service technicians.

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 Barb Cotner
 Brittany Klinger
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 Kristen Joyce
 Greg & Annette Kratzer
 David Kreider**
 Lloyd & Mary Lois Kreider
 Theodore & Mary Kulp
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 Amber Portzline
 Roger Lauver
 Lichtenwalner Farms
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 Jennifer Glenister
 Caitlan Zlatos
 Laverne Nolt
 Eric Oesterling**
 Fran Olliver**
 Pallman Farms
 Todd Davis
 Wendy O'Malley
 Brian Pallman
 Bruce Pallman
 Craig Pallman
 Paulus Farm Market
 James Paulus
 Peter Connors
 Dan Crouse
 Walter & Robin Peregrin
 Pine Valley Farm
 Irvin Leid
 Dustin Leid
 Jordan Leid
 Kevin Leinbach
 Gerald Weaver
 Linda Weaver

Robert Pollock
 Chris Powell
 Ernest Pyle**
 Ryan Pyle**
 William Rankin*****
 Reiff's Farm Market
 Ed & Grace Reiff
 Nathan Erma Reiff
 Chyanne Reiff
 Sally Reiff
 Teresa Reiff
 Mary Zimmerman
 Leon Ressler
 Reynold's Pumpkin Farm
 William & Lois Reynolds***
 Kendra Dean
 Richfield Life Ministries Church
 Nathaniel Leitzel
 Tammy Leitzel
 Tyler & Jennifer Rohrer
 Jay & Marion Rutt
 Steve Sample***
 Dave Schreck**
 Corina Scott**
 John & Linda Shenk
 Rob Shenot***
 Tim Shultz
 Scott & Jan Simmons**
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 Allen Sollenberger
 Mark Stanley
 James and Lonnie Stauffer
 Elaine Steigman
 Charles Stoecker
 Elmer Stoltzfus
 Strawberry Lane
 Keith Kaucher**
 Noah Kaucher**
 Jon Strite**
 Tom Strzelecki
 Styer Farm & Market
 Daisy Styer
 Keith Styer
 Sara Styer
 Alex Surcica
 Larry & Chris Swartz
 Randy Treichler
 Bonnie Troxell
 Cheryl Troxell***
 Joel & Kris Weaver
 Tina Weyant
 Tim White
 Tim & Karen Wilson
 Donald Wise
 Yellow Hill Farm
 Natalie Bishop***
 Hannah Abel**
 Kim Hamilton**
 Kim Lockwood
 Josh McKinsey
 Zachery Smelser
 Arthur & Janice Yingling
 Cindy Yingling
 David Zimmerman



Greg Forry



Diane Heimbach and Amber Portzline



Don Geise



Brent Cleaver



Greg Watson



Ron Copenhaver and Scott Hoffman



Dave Miller and Dave Kreider



Jan Simmons

NEWS

PVGA Research Funding... (continued from page 13)

- Development and genetic analysis of a recombinant inbred line (RIL) population of tomato segregating for LB resistance. This population will be used for identification and verification of new LB resistance genes and transferring to PSU tomato breeding lines.
- Genetic characterization of additional (recently identified) sources of LB resistance in tomato.
- Development and field evaluation of FM experimental F1 hybrids with high yield, early blight (EB) resistance, and other desirable characteristics including fruit quality.
- Development and field evaluation of processing experimental F1 hybrids with high yield, EB resistance, and other desirable characteristics including fruit quality.
- Development of FM experimental F1 hybrids in collaboration with a seed company (co-hybrids) and evaluation under multiple field locations.
- Field evaluation of Penn State advanced FM and processing breeding lines.

Authority MTZ: the Fit for Processing Tomatoes

Dr. Mark VanGessel, Univ. of Delaware; Dwight Lingenfelter, Penn State Univ. **\$3,000**

- Evaluate Authority MTZ for safety with processing tomatoes.
- Determine level of early-season weed control from Authority MTZ

Phytophthora Blight Management

John Esslinger, Penn State Extension **\$2,400**

- To test whether Orondis is as effective as it appeared to be on one farm in 2016.
- To evaluate other fungicide options that might give comparable control at a lower cost per acre.
- To compare a pepper cultivar tolerant to phytophthora blight with one that is not tolerant under each treatment.
- To test whether a generous application of manure-based compost has a positive impact on limiting phytophthora blight by out competing it in the soil. The hope is that the final objective will provide a viable phytophthora management option for the state's organic vegetable growers.

Keeping PA Vegetable Growers Profitable: Statewide Pumpkin Cultivar Trials

Dr. Elsa Sánchez, Penn State Univ., Timothy Elkner, Thomas Butzler and Robert Pollock, Penn State Extension and Dr. William Lamont, Penn State Univ. **\$12,000.**

- Evaluate up to 25 cultivars of 15-25 lb orange smooth-faced pumpkins at three locations: southwestern Pennsylvania, central Pennsylvania and southeastern Pennsylvania.

Impact of Insectary Strips to Control Cucumber Beetles

Dr. Gladis Zinati, Rodale Institute **\$5,000**

- Monitor weekly (June through mid-August) the populations of striped cucumber beetles, beneficial insects, and ground beetles (bi-weekly) attracted to insectary strips and cucurbit beds using yellow sticky cards and pitfall traps.
- Assess percent parasitism weekly by parasitoids from field collected striped cucumber beetles between May and August 2017.

Colored Bell Pepper High Tunnel Variety Trial

Dr. Timothy Elkner, Penn State Extension **\$4,000**

- To evaluate commercially available colored bell pepper varieties in a replicated trial in a high tunnel. Peppers will

be grown and evaluated for yield, fruit quality and marketability.

Issues with High Soluble Salt Levels in High Tunnels

Dr. Elsa Sánchez, Penn State Univ. and Thomas Ford, Penn State Extension **\$4,400**

- The purpose of this study will be analyze soil and irrigation water from various high tunnels throughout Pennsylvania and offer recommendations using the information we learn as well as develop publications with information to help avoid high soluble salt levels.

Allium Leaf Miner Monitoring and Management

Dr. Timothy Elkner, Penn State Ext. and Shelby Fleischer, Penn State Univ. **\$3,500**

- To further investigate the emergence period of allium leafminer in the spring and fall in order to alert growers of the need for control measures.
- To initiate an alert system for growers regarding the emergence of allium leafminer.
- To investigate the impact of plant age on attractiveness to leafminer adults; and to do some insecticide efficacy evaluations on a fall leek crop.

Leek & Celery Variety Evaluations

Dr. Timothy Elkner, Penn State Extension **\$4,750**

- To evaluate current varieties of celery and leek for yield, disease and insect resistance and quality.

(continued on page 19)

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PVGA Research Funding...

(continued from page 18)

Tactics for the Management of Center Rot of Onion: Augmented Nitrogen Fertigation and Cultivar Selection.

Dr. Beth K. Gugino, *The Pennsylvania State Univ.* \$7,176

- Conduct two replicated trials at Rock Springs as well as four on-farm trials to evaluate cultivar susceptibility to bacterial disease and production potential under commercial production conditions and evaluate the interaction between N rate and disease pressure to provide growers with additional tools and information that they could use in building an integrated program to manage bacterial diseases of onions.

In addition the Association is helping to fund a high tunnel berry production project primarily funded by a Specialty Crop Research Initiative grant from USDA. The project includes researchers at Penn State University (Kathy Demchak), Michigan State University, Cornell University and others. PVGA's \$8,000 contribution is part of the required industry matching funds required by the grant program. This is the third year of a five-year commitment to the project.

The Association is also providing \$10,000 to the Department of Plant Science at Penn State University to help fund a research technician for the tomato breeding program there.

National News Briefs

USDA Measuring Northeastern Farmer Financial Health

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has sent out surveys to farmers in the Northeast, including Pennsylvania, to gauge the health of farm economies. The USDA's National Agricultural Statistic Service will spend the next several months compiling and sifting through data on farm economies and production practices. The data is being used as part of an Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS).

"ARMS is the only survey program that allows anyone to clearly see the current financial well-being of agricultural producers and their households as a whole," said King Whetstone, Director of the NASS Northeast Office. "The results of this survey will serve as a primary source of information for numerous local and federal policies and programs that affect Northeast farms and farm families."

USDA agencies are expected to reach out to more than 30,000 farmers nationwide, and around 2,200 in the Northeast region between now and April. The survey will ask farmers to provide data on their operating expenses, production costs and household makeup. In February, USDA researchers will be reaching out to farmers who have not responded to the survey to answer questions and help fill out the questionnaires.

Data received by NASS from farmers is kept confidential and only published in aggregate form. Survey results are expected to be released in early August. For more information about NASS visit www.nass.usda.gov.

From the *Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update*,
Penna. Farm Bureau, January 2017.

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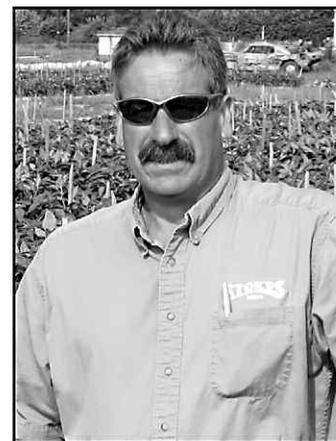
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NEWS

State News Briefs

Sallie to Step Down as Farm Bureau Administrative Secretary; Kieffer Named Replacement

After serving for 25 years as Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's Administrative Secretary, Louis R. Sallie is retiring from the organization. Sallie has dedicated his time and talents to Farm Bureau throughout his career, working in various capacities within the Farm Bureau family since his graduation from college more than 40 years ago. Sallie has had a tremendous impact on the growth and influence of Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. During his time leading the organization, PFB membership has increased three-fold. In addition, the Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation has flourished in its mission of educating the public about agriculture through programs like the Mobile Ag Ed Science Lab program.

"Mr. Sallie is able to reflect back on a career of helping farmers seek positive outcomes and grow their leadership skills," said PFB President Rick Ebert. "I know every member will join me in thanking Mr. Sallie for his years of service to Farm Bureau."

In March, Samuel A. Kieffer will take over as Administrative Secretary. Kieffer, who has worked for 12 years at Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, is currently the director of PFB's Government Affairs & Communications Division, which serves the public policy and communications needs of the organization.

From the Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update, Penna. Farm Bureau, February 2017.

Penn State Develops Education Resources for Food Safety Act

Penn State has developed educational resource tools to help growers and food processors understand the new federal Food Safety Modernization Act.

FSMA regulations, developed by the Food and Drug Administration, will require farmers to follow certain food safety standards and record keeping. The act includes seven categories under food safety, including Produce Safety, Preventative Controls for Human Food Rule and the Preventive Controls for Animal Feed Rule.

"These rules represent a new approach toward preventing foodborne illnesses," said Luke LaBorde, associate professor of food science in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. "Food and feed businesses are charged to take a preventative, instead of a reactive, approach. This means that growers and processors will be responsible for understanding potential risks in their operations and developing science-based measures to control those risks before a problem actually occurs."

Penn State has developed education videos to help farmers and food processors understand the new regulations, and if their farm falls under specific portions of the rules.

In addition, Penn State is hosting several workshops this year to help farmers with issues like grower certification training and food-safety writing plans: March, 7 in Butler County and March 31 in Bedford County. For more information visit: <http://extension.psu.edu/fsma>.

From the Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update, Penna. Farm Bureau, January 2017.

Volunteers Needed For New Agriculture Literacy Outreach

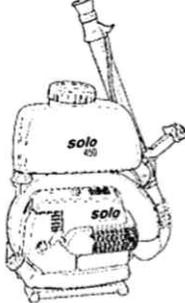
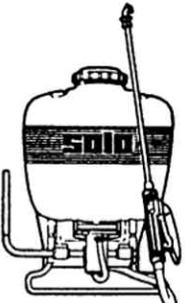
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and the Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation are partnering on a new initiative to increase agriculture literacy among elementary children. The first Pennsylvania Ag Literacy Week will be held March 20-24, 2017. Pennsylvania Ag Literacy Week is an extension of the existing FARMtastic Book program, spearheaded by Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's Women's Leadership Committee. PFB and the foundation are looking to recruit farmers from across the state to purchase the book to be donated and volunteer their time to read to children. The foundation, through Ag Literacy Week, will connect volunteer readers with classrooms (kindergarten through second grade). Along with reading a book, and leading kids through a simple activity, farmers will also have the chance to talk about their farms and experience in agriculture. In 2017, volunteers will read "Before We Eat: From Farm to Table," which illustrates the men and women involved in the growing, harvesting, shipping and preparing of foods we eat. The Friends of Agriculture Foundation will supply all the necessary materials and training. To learn more about Ag Literacy Week visit www.pfb.com/agliteracy.

From the Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update, Penna. Farm Bureau, January 2017.

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Proposed State Budget Overview

Vince Phillips

Overall, the proposed State Budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017, sees General Fund spending at \$32.3 billion. To put in perspective, the General Fund is only one part of the state's total operating budget which is \$81 billion. In addition to the General Fund's \$32.3 billion, Federal funds account for an additional \$28.7 billion, lottery \$1.8 billion, Motor License Fund \$2.9 billion, and fees, etc. \$3.7 billion. Following are general questions as a quick reference.

Where does General Fund money come from?

- Personal Income Tax 40.1%
- Sales Tax 31.8%
- Corporate Net Income Tax 8.4%
- "Gross Receipts" Tax 3.8%
- Cigarette Tax 3.7%
- Non-tax Revenue & Other Taxes 10.0%

Where does the money go?

- Medical Assistance (Medicaid) & Long-Term Care 22.8%
- Other Health & Human Services 17.1%
- Pre-K through 12 Education 36.7%
- Higher Education 5.0%
- Criminal Justice (incl. Corrections) 7.8%
- Interest paid on state debt (loan servicing) 3.0%
- Everything else—including Agriculture — 7.6%

What new taxes will there be?

Given the state's dismal fiscal situation, the big news generally – no broad-based increase in Pennsylvania Personal Income Tax or Sales Tax – was greeted with relief.

The Governor seeks a Marcellus Shale extraction tax, Sales Tax expansion to specialty software, computer services, prepared food sold to airlines, aircraft maintenance and repair, and some business storage as well as an extension of the premium tax paid by insurance companies. Closing the so-called Delaware Loophole – also known as combined reporting – would bring in monies now "sheltered" in Delaware. The Wolf Administration believes that significant savings will come from combining four social service departments into one Department of Health & Human Services as well as from combining the Board of Parole and the Corrections Department. In addition, changes with liquor sales and expanded gambling are supposed to bring in \$137 million and \$150 million respectively. A complicated lease arrangement for the Farm Show Complex is expected to bring in additional revenues over the next ten years

Department of Agriculture Budget

General Operations increased from \$29.379 to \$31.612 million. While an increase, this simply allows PDA to keep pace with benefits and pension costs. Farm Show operating budget has a slight increase from \$12.639 to \$12.798 million.

Staying the Same or About the Same

- Youth Shows \$145,000
- State Food Purchase \$19.188 million
- PA Preferred \$605,000
- Univ. of Penna. Center for Infectious Diseases \$281,000
- Farmers Food Market Coupons \$2.079 million.

(continued on page 22)



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NEWS

Proposed State... (continued from page 21)

Penn State \$51.8 million (separate from PDA budget: transferred to Scrip Fund)

Fairs \$4 million (separate from PDA budget: Horse Race Development Fund)

PA First (in Dept. Community & Economic Development budget) \$20 million

University of Pittsburgh Rural Education Outreach (in Education Dept. budget) \$2.563 million

Center for Rural PA (General Assembly budget) \$1.046 million

County bridge construction/repair (Dept. Transportation Motor License Fund) \$5 million

Eliminated

University of Pennsylvania's veterinary program was \$30.135 million in FY 2016-17

Avian Influenza Preparedness was \$2 million

Center for Dairy Excellence & Center for Beef Excellence was \$1.21 million

Agriculture Research (within PDA budget as a line item) was \$1.687 million

Agricultural Promotion, Education and Exports was \$275,000

Hardwoods Research and Promotion was \$385,000

Livestock Show and Open Dairy Shows were \$195,000 respectively

Food Marketing & Research was \$494,000

Rural Leadership Training (in Dept. Community & Economic Development budget) \$100,000.

Conservation and Environment

PDA contributes \$869,000 to Conservation District Fund and \$2.714 million to Nutrient Management Fund (no change). Dept. Environmental Protection contributes \$2.506 million to the Conservation District Fund (no change), \$2.591 million for Chesapeake Bay Agricultural Source Abatement (a decrease of \$54,000)

NOTE: The above budget figures show state funds only, not Federal monies that are part of the total state budget.

*Mr. Phillips is the Association Manager for the Penna. State Council of Farm Organizations. From the **AG ONE Newsletter**, Penna. State Council of Farm Organizations, Issue 2017.3, February 10, 2017*

Farm Show Complex Plan

The 2017-18 budget proposal calls for the Commonwealth to enter into a lease-leaseback arrangement for the Complex in which a private entity will lease the Farm Show from the state for a 29-year term in exchange for a fair market payment of \$200 million. The state will then lease the facility back from the private entity over the same period with annual payments that include a negotiated interest rate.

"To be clear, this is not an attempt to sell or to privatize the complex. The commonwealth will continue to own, operate and manage the facility. All of the staff will continue to be employed by the commonwealth," explained Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding. "This is simply a financing mechanism that uses the value of the property to address funding shortfalls."

From the Penna. Department of Agriculture.

New Sustainable Agriculture Educator

A new Sustainable Agriculture Educator, Megan Chawner, joined Penn State Extension in Lehigh and Northampton counties the beginning of December.

Originally from the Hudson Valley in New York, Megan earned her undergraduate degree from Lafayette College in

Biology and her Master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Soil Science and Agroecology.

From 2011 to 2012, at the USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Salinas, California, she worked with plant breeders to develop disease resistant varieties of lettuce. For the next two and a half years, while pursuing a graduate degree at the University of Wisconsin, she worked with local farmers on quantifying the benefits of radish as a cover crop in field crop rotations. From 2015 to 2016, at University of Wisconsin Extension, she joined Discovery Farms to research nitrogen use efficiency and soil health of grain and dairy farmers across the state.

Megan is excited to share her expertise with the farmers and communities in Lehigh and Northampton counties, working as part of the statewide horticulture team. She can be reached at mzc335@psu.edu or by calling the Lehigh county office at 610-391-9840, or the Northampton county office at 610-746-1970.

*From the **Vegetable, Small Fruit and Mushroom Production News**, Penn State Extension,*

<http://extension.psu.edu/plants/vegetable-fruit>, December 5, 2016.

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Vegetable Growers Reflect on Improving Efficiency on Small Farms

Lee Stivers

At a recent study circle meeting held in New Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, vegetable growers shared their questions, thoughts and experiences about how to make the most efficient use of time, tools, labor and resources on the farm.

The Penn State Extension Start Farming Team has begun another season of study circle meetings across the state. Study circles are gatherings held for new and young farmers establishing their businesses (in years 2-10 of their operation) who want to learn from each other and discuss challenges with invited experts, compare notes with peers, and network over a shared meal. Farmers help guide the meeting topics and discussion, from production practices, to business management and marketing strategies.

Chris Brittenberg and Aeros Lillstrom hosted the February study circle for western Pennsylvania growers at their Who Cooks for You Farm in Clarion County. Eighteen growers with a range of years of experience in farming gathered for a potluck dinner and discussion. The question on the table: what are the most effective steps that small scale farmers can take to improve efficiency? Here are some of the recommendations generated by the group:

Control weeds EARLY. Weed control is often identified as one of the biggest challenges for beginning and establishing farmers, especially organic farmers. Getting on weeds early—when they are still small seedlings—is much easier, faster and more effective than waiting until they grow larger. The less hand

weeding, the better. Plastic mulch is a very valuable tool for weed control on small farms. Controlling weeds not only helps the crop grow better, it improves harvesting efficiency as well.

Invest in the right tools and equipment. Vacuum seeders make quick work of seeding transplant trays. A flex-tine weeder can save a lot of time and effort in weed control. Portable poly wire electric fencing is fast and easy to set up, and can be very effective at keeping deer out of fields. Some growers report good results with single strands placed around smaller fields; others use double fences placed a few feet apart. A harvest-aid or conveyor belt can significantly speed up harvest and transport of vegetables from the field. Setting up the packing shed to allow for easy flow of product allows workers to focus on quality pack-outs.

Purchasing a second field tractor was an important turning point for one grower. Having two tractors available at planting means that tilling, pulling and mulching beds, and transplanting can happen much faster during very hectic times.

Maintain work-horse equipment. Major mechanical breakdowns of tractors, planters, trucks and other equipment can cause serious disruptions of work flow on the farm.

Keep tools organized. Setting up tool sheds and workbenches in an orderly and uncluttered way may take some effort up front, but it saves workers from having to waste precious time looking for tools they need to complete tasks.

(continued on page 24)

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VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Sweet Corn Starter Fertilizer

Gordon Johnson

The first sweet corn will soon be planted on plastic and bare ground plantings will be starting soon. This is a good time to revisit starter fertilizer use in sweet corn.

Sweet corn does respond to starter fertilizer. Of the nutrients that can be provided in a starter fertilizer, research has shown nitrogen (N) and Sulfur (S) to be the most beneficial, followed by phosphorus (P). In sweet corn it is common to include all 3 in starter fertilizer, although P does not always show a response.

We are starting to see some potassium (K) deficiencies in sweet corn on Delmarva. K in starter can be beneficial but rates should be limited. If soil K levels are high, K in starter fertilizer is not necessary.

We usually do not see a response to boron (B) in sweet corn so it is generally not recommended in starter fertilizer.

Vegetable Growers... (continued from page 23)

Consider labor inputs carefully when choosing crops, varieties, and seeds. While your markets are the primary driver of the decision of what to produce, labor requirements should be another deciding factor. For example, non-trellising or determinate varieties of vegetables may be good choices when available. Pelleted seed may be more expensive, but can save considerable time and wasted seeds during planting.

Don't get bogged down—outsource. If certain tasks are extremely time consuming for you, consider opportunities for outsourcing to someone with a higher skill level or interest. For example, neighboring farmers may be available to do some custom field work. Or, you may be better off hiring a bookkeeper to keep accurate and up to date financial records rather than doing it yourself.

Pay attention to the numbers. Keeping production and sales records in a format that allows you to easily analyze profits and sales trends helps keep you focused on what is really making you money and therefore worth your time. A few keystrokes on the computer should help answer questions like "Am I making any money on selling parsley?" or "How do my sales to this restaurant this year compare with last year?". Keeping track of how long it takes to do a few key tasks can also aid in planning and time management.

Look for efficiencies in your marketing efforts. Explore what high value markets may exist in your area, such as direct-to-consumer sales, farm to table restaurants, or off-season markets that may pay higher prices. Being part of a grower cooperative or marketing alliance may bring efficiencies to product transport and account management. High tunnels, greenhouses or storage facilities can be used to extend the market season to take advantage of higher prices and lower competition.

Penn State offers opportunities for exploring, start-up, establishing, and next generation farmers. Visit the Start Farming website to find more resources.

This project is supported by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Grant # 2015-70017-22852.

Ms. Stivers is with Penn State Extension in Washington Co. From the **Vegetable, Small Fruit and Mushroom Production News**, Penn State Extension,

<http://extension.psu.edu/plants/vegetable-fruit>, February 24, 2017.

Fields that receive B broadcast applications (1-2 lbs/A) at least once every 2 years should have sufficient B for sweet corn growth. If B has not been broadcast in the rotation it can be added to starter fertilizer but the rate should be very low to avoid B toxicity (1/8 lb/A, or less).

Zinc is usually not added to starter fertilizer for sweet corn except on high pH soils or soils with excessive P.

It is important to be careful in how close you place starter fertilizer to the seed (a concern with sweet corn starter fertilizer is reduction in stands due to fertilizer salt injury). The standard recommendation is to place starter fertilizer 2" to the side and 2" deep. This provides a concentrated band for early uptake (plant roots will proliferate around the band); and the band will be far enough away not to cause salt injury to germinating seedlings. Do not use pop-up (in seed furrow) fertilizers with sweet corn because there is too much risk of salt injury.

Suggested rates for starter fertilizer nutrients in sweet corn are shown below:

N = 20 lbs/A (10-20 lb/A range)

P = 20 lbs/A (15-20 lb/A range)

K = 10 lbs/A (10-15 lb/A range) only if K is not testing high in soils

S = 10 lbs/A (10-15 lb/A range)

Zn = 1 lb/A (none if Zn levels in soil are sufficient)

B = 0.125 lbs/A (none if you apply broadcast B in previous crops).

*Dr. Johnson is Extension Vegetable & Fruit Specialist at the Univ. of Delaware. From the **Weekly Crop Update**, Univ. of Delaware Coop. Ext., Vol. 24, Issue 2, April 1, 2016.*

MARKETING

Pennsylvania Leads the Nation in Number of Farmers Selling to Consumers

More Pennsylvania farmers are selling their products directly to consumers than any other state in the nation, according to a nationwide survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. While the state was fourth in the total dollar value of sales, it led in the total number of farmers involved in direct farm sales. Farm to consumer sales, including selling to wholesalers who distribute through food hubs, resulted in \$8.7 billion in revenue for farmers nationwide in 2015. The USDA survey found that 115,000 farmers were involved in direct-to-consumer sales at stores and farmers markets. California leads the nation with \$2.8 billion in direct marketing sales; while Pennsylvania farmers have \$439 million in direct farm sales. The Keystone State has more than 6,000 farmers engaged in direct to consumer sales.

*From the **Penna. Agricultural Alliance Issues Update**, Penna. Farm Bureau, January 2017.*

Seed Health: Hot Water Seed Treatment and Germination Testing

K. Campbell-Nelson, R. Hazzard and S. Scheufele

Two strategies to help you start the season with healthy, disease-free seed are hot water seed treatment to kill pathogens followed by a germination test to ensure a good stand. Even when only a small percentage of seeds are infested, disease can spread among transplants in the greenhouse or in the field, causing significant crop loss or increasing the need for sprays. In some cases, whole seed lots may be infested and this can result in severe disease outbreaks, as all seedlings will be affected and young plants may not be able to overcome early, systemic infections (Figure 1). Using disease-free seed is an important first step in management of many diseases, and hot water treatment is an effective tool for small-seeded crops such as tomatoes, peppers, spinach, onions, carrots, and all the brassicas. Hot water seed treatment is a cheap and effective way to penetrate the seed and kill pathogens that might be present. Whether or not you choose to treat your seeds, a simple germination test can be very helpful for determining viability of saved seed, old seed, or your treated seed.

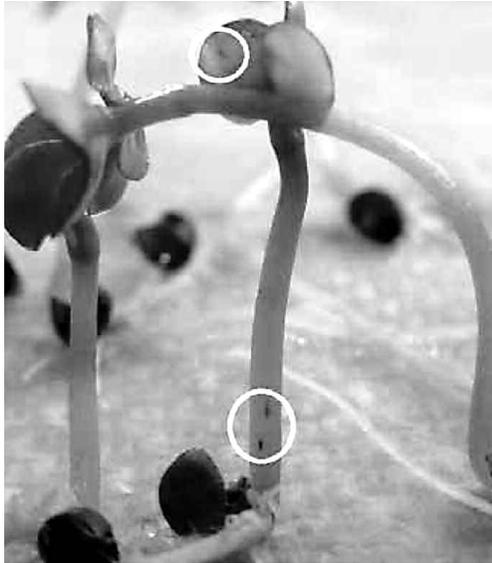


Figure 1. Kale seedling emerged from infested seed show symptoms of *Alternaria* leaf spot. Photo K.Campbell-Nelson.

Hot Water Seed Treatment: Not all pathogens can penetrate and survive within the seed but bacterial pathogens are commonly seed-borne, and some fungi, oomycetes, and many viruses can be seed-borne. Tomato, pepper and brassicas are good candidates for hot water seed treatment because there are common bacterial diseases of these small seeded crops that can be easily prevented. Even though bacterial pathogens do not survive well in soil once infected crop residues have decayed, they can be difficult to manage once established on a farm. Preventing establishment of these diseases, or their reintroduction year after year, is a critical management tool. Large seeded crops (beans, cucurbits, peas, etc.) cannot be effectively disinfested with hot water treatment because the temperature required to heat the whole seed inside and out would kill the outer seed tissue and the seed will not germinate.

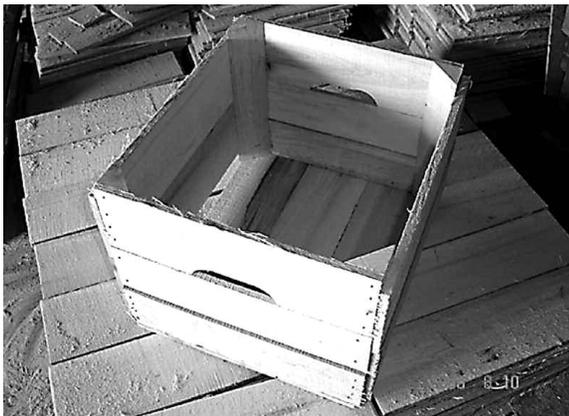
Chemically-treated or pelleted seed also cannot be hot water treated. Treating seed saved for more than one year or seed

(continued on page 26)



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VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Seed Health... (continued from page 25)

saved from a heavily infested field may inhibit germination entirely. Treat no more seed than you think you will use in the course of a season, as hot water treated seed may not remain viable for as long as untreated seed.

To decide whether to use heat treatment, first determine the likelihood that seed-borne pathogens could be present based on the crop (see Table 1). Next, ask your seed supplier if the seed was produced in a way to minimize exposure to seed-borne pathogens and if the seed was tested for their presence. Find out if the seed has already been treated with hot water or if it has been primed, as treating again could adversely affect the seed.

Table 1. Vegetable crops and seed borne pathogens control by hot water treatment.

Crop	Diseases Controlled
Brassicas	Alternaria leaf spot, Bacterial leaf spot, Black leg, Black rot
Beet / Swiss Chard	Phoma/Canker, Downy Mildew, Cercospora leaf spot
Carrot	Alternaria leaf blight, Bacterial leaf blight, Cercospora leaf spot, Crater rot/foliar blight
Celery / Celeriac	Bacterial leaf spot, Cercospora leaf spot, Septoria leaf spot, Phoma crown and root rot
Eggplant	Anthraxnose, Early blight, Phomopsis, Verticillium wilt
Lettuce	Anthraxnose, Bacterial leaf spot, Lettuce mosaic virus, Septoria leaf spot, Verticillium wilt
Onion	Purple blotch, Stemphylium leaf blight, Basal Rot, Botrytis blight, Smudge, Black mold
Pepper	Anthraxnose, Bacterial leaf spot, Cucumber mosaic virus, Pepper mild mosaic virus, Tobacco mosaic virus, Tomato mosaic virus
Parsley / Cilantro	Bacterial leaf blight, Alternaria leaf blight, Black rot, Cercosporoid leaf blight, Septoria blight
Spinach	Anthraxnose, Cladosporium leaf spot, Cucumber mosaic virus, Downy mildew, Fusarium wilt, Stemphylium leaf spot, Verticillium wilt
Tomato	Alfalfa mosaic virus, Anthracnose, Bacterial canker, Bacterial speck, Bacterial spot, Cucumber mosaic virus, Early blight, Fusarium wilt, Leaf mold, Septoria leaf spot, Tomato mosaic virus, Verticillium wilt, Double virus streak

The temperature of water for treating seed varies from 115 to 125°F, depending on the crop, and the treatment period varies from 10 to 60 minutes. It is important to use the appropriate protocol for each crop to control pathogens without damaging the seed. While hot water seed treatment can be done effectively on a stovetop, it is much better to use a precision water bath and an accurate thermometer.

For details on treatment procedures for each crop and for a list of supplies needed please see the factsheet published by Cornell and Rutgers Cooperative Extensions at <http://vegetablemendonline.ppath.cornell.edu/NewsArticles/HotWaterSeedTreatment.html>.

Germination Testing: It is a good practice to conduct a germination test on seed stored for more than one year, on your own saved seed, or on seed that has been hot water treated. Primed, chemically-treated and pelleted seed may also be germination tested, but be sure to wear gloves when handling chemically treated seed. A germination test will also help you determine if infield germination problems were due to bad seed, or if environmental conditions or a field pest was the culprit. Unlike hot water seed treatment, a germination test can easily and accurately be completed on the farm without special equipment. You will need 2 weeks to complete the test, so now is a good time to do it.

If your greenhouse has a moist chamber, this is a great place to do your germination test, but a warm, dark place will also work. Inside the greenhouse may not be a suitable place, as the seeds will dry out quickly. To conduct the test, prepare two 8" x 8" squares of blotting paper or heavy weight paper tow-

Table 2. Soil Temperature Conditions for Vegetable Seed Germination.

VEGETABLE	MIN. (°F)	RANGE (°F)	OPTIMUM (°F)	MAX (°F)
BEAN	60°	60° - 85°	80°	95°
BEAN LIMA	60°	65° - 85°	85°	85°
BEET	40°	50° - 85°	85°	95°
CABBAGE	40°	45° - 95°	85°	100°
CARROT	40°	45° - 85°	80°	95°
CAULIFLOWER	40°	45° - 85°	80°	100°
CELERY	40°	60° - 70°	70° ^z	85°
CHARD SWISS	50°	50° - 85°	85°	95°
CORN	50°	60° - 95°	95°	105°
CUCUMBER	60°	75° - 95°	95°	105°
EGGPLANT	60°	40° - 80°	85°	95°
LETTUCE	35°	40° - 80°	75°	85°
MUSKMELON	60°	75° - 95°	90°	100°
OKRA	60°	70° - 95°	95°	105°
ONION	35°	50° - 95°	75°	95°
PARSLEY	40°	50° - 85°	75°	90°
PARSNIP	35°	50° - 70°	65°	85°
PEA	40°	40° - 75°	75°	85°
PEPPER	60°	65° - 95°	85°	95°
PUMPKIN	60°	70° - 90°	95°	100°
RADISH	40°	45° - 90°	95°	95°
SPINACH	35°	45° - 75°	70°	85°
SQUASH	60°	70° - 95°	95°	100°
TOMATO	59°	60° - 85°	85°	95°
TURNIP	40°	60° - 105°	85°	105°
WATERMELON	60°	70° - 95°	95°	105°

Compiled by J.F. Harrington, Dept. of Vegetable Crops, University of California, Davis. ^z Daily fluctuation to 60° or lower at night is essential.

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VEGETABLE PRODUCTION
Seed Health... *(continued from page 26)*

els for each seed lot you will be testing. Spray the paper towels until moistened with warm tap water, but not too moist, especially for melon seeds which rot easily. If you have a small seed lot, place 25 seeds, evenly spaced on one moistened surface. If an accurate count is needed, use 100 seeds and larger paper towels. Cover the seeds with the second paper towel and gently place inside a gallon size ziplock bag. Do not seal the bag completely—leave a 3” section unzipped. Clearly label each bag and place on a greenhouse heating pad. Keep the heating pad temperature at 75°F, or see Table 2 and use the optimum germination temperature for each variety. Germination of many Solanaceous seeds is inhibited by natural gas, so do not place tests for these seeds near gas stoves or water heaters. Check on the seeds daily, re-moistening the towels as needed. After 7 days, count the total seeds with vigorous germination and record the number. Repeat this again after 14 days. Take the average of the 2 germination totals and use that number to calculate the % germination. Averaging the germination rates will take into account seed that is more vigorous (germinating after 7 days) and seed that may be less viable (after 14 days).

Germination standards are provided by the rules and regulations of the Federal Seed Act and can vary widely. For example, carrots may be sold commercially with a germination rate of 55%, while cucumbers must be at 80% germination. It is up to you what germination rate you are willing to tolerate in your fields, but a minimum of 75% is common. Table 2 gives the ideal germination temperate for various vegetable seeds, these should be followed in germination testing and also planting in the greenhouse or field.

Hot Water Seed Treatment Service. If you read this article and would now like to treat your seed but do not have the equipment, contact Beth Gugino at Penn State at bkgugino@psu.edu or 814-865-7328.

Resources:

Ashworth, S. Seed to Seed 2nd ed. Seed Savers Exchange, Iowa, 2002.

Maynard, D.N. and Hochmuth, G.J. Knotts Handbook for Vegetable Growers 5th ed. Wiley, New Jersey, 2007

*The authors are with the Univ. of Massachusetts Extension. Ms. Campbell-Nelson updated material previously prepared by Ms. Hazzard and Ms. Scheufele. From the **Vegetable Notes for Vegetable Farmers in Massachusetts**, Univ. of Mass. Ext., Vol. 29, No. 1, Jan. 12, 2017.*



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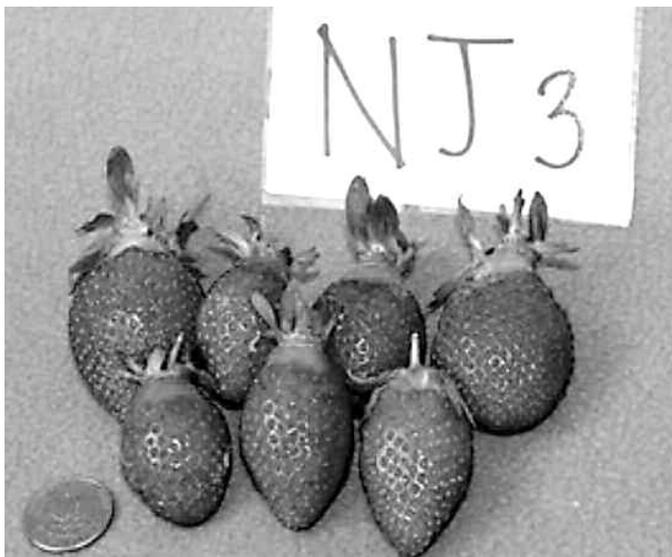
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BERRY PRODUCTION

Plasticulture Strawberry Variety Trial Report—2016 Results

Kathleen Demchak and Timothy Elkner

We collected data on performance of strawberry cultivars in the second harvest year of a plasticulture planting at the Penn State South East Ag Research and Extension Center in Manheim.



NJ 9-2-1 (trialed as NJ 3) was a high-yielding and excellent flavored variety but the berry shape is not typical. Photo: Tim Elkner

Back in December 2016, Kathy Demchak reported on a matted-row strawberry variety trial at the Penn State Horticulture Research Farm at Rock Springs. This is a report on the performance of many of these same varieties.

The planting was established in August 2014 and the first harvest was in 2015. Following harvest half of the plants were thinned by removing approximately 50% of the crown by hand. The purpose was to determine whether there is a benefit to this practice when carrying over plasticulture plantings for a second harvest year.

The 2016 season was generally wet the entire harvest period (total rainfall 4.1 inches in 5 weeks) which necessitated use of a standard fungicide program. In addition, the temperatures were well above normal with 15 consecutive days of 80°+ starting the second week of harvest and two 90°+ days in the last week of harvest. There were also some early flower losses because of the weather. High temperatures of 79° and 78° on April 1 and 2 were followed by low temperatures of 18° and 22° on April 6 and 10. Even under two row covers on these cold nights the most developed king blossoms were killed on the earliest varieties, particularly 'Sweet Charlie'.

Harvest started on May 13 with 'Chandler' and one of the Rutgers selections; 'Sweet Charlie', 'Daroyal' and a second Rutgers selection started on May 16; 'Earliglow', and 'Radiance' started May 18; 'Galletta' May 20; 'Rubicon', 'Wendy', two Cornell selections and the last Rutgers selection on May 23; 'Donna', 'Flavorfest', and 'Sonata' on May 25 and on May 27 the final Cornell selection started harvest.

The thinning treatment generally affected yield and the percentage of marketable fruit, but had no effect on berry size or brix (soluble solids) levels. Thus data presented below for yields and percentage marketable fruit are given for unthinned and thinned treatments respectively, but are averaged over thinning

treatment for berry size and soluble solids.

'Chandler' performed about average this season with total yields of 12,230 and 9,611 lbs/acre in the non-thinned and thinned plots, respectively. The marketable percentages were 67 and 72%. 'Chandler' had one of the highest plant losses in the planting. A sample was sent to the Penn State Plant Disease Lab and showed *Phytophthora* rot on this variety. Average size of the marketable fruit was 12.9 g/berry with an average brix reading of 6.6. Overall performance of 'Chandler' in this study was not consistent with its position as the standard variety for plasticulture production in the southeast part of Pennsylvania. It did perform better than in 2015 with yields almost twice as high this season in the unthinned plot.

'Sweet Charlie' yields were poor whether plants were non-thinned or thinned (8,139 and 7,366 lbs/acre, respectively) with marketable fruit percentages of 79 and 77% and average berry size of 12.1 g. As noted earlier, many early flowers were lost in the April sub-freezing temperatures. However, these yields were almost 50% better than in 2015 even with the early fruit loss.

'Daroyal' had good yields in the unthinned treatment (18,327 lbs/acre) but markedly lower yields when thinned (9,491 lbs/acre). The low yield in the thinned plots might be an artifact of plant population in that part of the field. Average marketable percentage increased from 56% to 73% with thinning and average fruit size was 12.0 g with a brix reading of 6.7. Flavor and appearance were good in both seasons and yields were up about 33% in the unthinned plots compared to 2015.

'Radiance' had total yields of 13,458 lbs/acre unthinned and 12,334 lbs/acre thinned with marketable fruit percentages of 62 and 59%. These yields are almost twice what we harvested last season. Average berry size was 15.1 g/berry, brix level was 5.3 and while appearance was excellent, flavor was poor - just as in 2015.

'Earliglow' had marketable percentages of 77 and 81% on yields of 11,567 and 11,699 lbs/acre. Flavor was excellent with an average brix of 7.9. Average size was 10.5 g/berry and could look higher than average because we discarded any fruit weighing less than 9.0 g. Earliglow performed similarly in both seasons.

'Galletta' had very good yields (17,669 and 15,457 lbs/acre) and average fruit size (16.1 g/berry). Brix was 6.8 and 67% of the yield was marketable whether thinned or not. Powdery mildew was again present on this variety. Yields were up 50% compared to 2015 and fruit had the same good



Galletta yielded well and had good flavor in our trial. Photo: Tim Elkner

(continued on page 29)

BERRY PRODUCTION

Plasticulture Strawberry... (continued from page 28)

size and flavor.

'AC Wendy' was the second highest yielding of the named varieties (18,891 and 17,665 lbs/acre) with marketable yields of 55 and 68%, an average brix of 5.9 and average berry size of 12.9 g. Flavor was poor; heat may have negatively affected the flavor of this cultivar more than most perhaps given its cool-climate origin (Nova Scotia). Performance was similar to 2015 with yields slightly higher in 2016.

'Rubicon' had yields of 10,446 and 14,273 lbs/acre, marketable percentages of 58 and 62%, brix of 6.8 and average fruit size of 12.9 g. Berries were very susceptible to softening in the high temperatures we had during harvest. Rubicon performed similarly in both seasons. This was one cultivar that benefitted from crown thinning, presumably because of its noticeably high vigor.

'Flavorfest' was the highest yielding of the named varieties this season with production of 17,977 and 20,599 lbs/A. Average brix was 6.2, marketable percentages were 62 and 59, average berry size was 15.3 g. and flavor and appearance were good. Yields this season were 3 times those in 2015. We are not sure why this occurred – perhaps because we received relatively low-vigor plug plants in 2014, and they needed to have a season to establish, or perhaps this is one variety that can be carried over with good results. This variety may not need to be considered an annual-system-only variety.

'Sonata' had yields of 13,948 and 17,217 lbs/acre, average



Flavorfest strawberry was the highest yielding variety in the second year of the trial. Photo: Tim Elkner

berry size of 11.0 g, marketable percentages of 55 and 66% and brix readings averaging 5.3. When averaged, these yields were similar to those in 2015. The fruit had average flavor both seasons. This variety is very vigorous and because of the dense foliage many berries rotted, which likely accounted for the improvement in the percentage of marketable fruit when thinned. In addition, the fruit was also susceptible to softening in the high temperatures during harvest in both seasons.

'Donna' had yields of 13,946 and 12,532 lbs/acre and marketable percentages of 61 and 71%. The fruit had an average brix of 7.6 with good flavor and an average fruit size of 10.9 g. 'Donna' was another variety that had high plant losses in this planting. While fruit size was down slightly this season and yields were up slightly, overall performance was similar to 2015.

The three Cornell selections each suffered from at least one major flaw such as low yields (< 10,000 lbs/acre), low percentage marketable fruit (< 44), high plant losses or poor fruit quality. Two of these selections had higher plant losses in this study as well. These results are consistent with what we saw in 2015 and these selections are not acceptable for growing in the southeast part of the state.

The three Rutgers selections performed significantly better this year (yields 3-5x those of 2015) – perhaps because they had become better established after our late planting date last year, but yields were still low in two of these selections in the unthinned plots. Yields in the unthinned plots were 9,301, 9,890 and 20,675 lbs/acre and in the thinned plots were 12,456, 12,547 and 16,948 lbs/acre. One selection was the highest

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GREENHOUSE PRODUCTION

High Efficiency Vent-free Heaters and Ethylene Injury

Thomas Ford

Growers looking to high efficiency vent-free heaters for their greenhouse operation may be disappointed in their performance when growing ethylene sensitive crops like tomatoes.



Epinasty is the increased growth of the upper surface of a plant part, such as a leaf, resulting in a downward bending of the part. Photo: Tom Ford

Recently, a Pennsylvania grower sold on the high efficiency rating of a vent-free unit purchased and installed one in his tomato greenhouse. For those unfamiliar with these units they utilize a motorized fresh air inlet that transports fresh outside air into the unit to aid in the combustion of the propane or natural gas fuel.

The grower thought that the vent-free heater sounded great since it would combine 90% fuel efficiency with the added benefit of injecting growth enhancing CO₂ into the greenhouse environment. While this specific unit looked good on paper the real impact of this purchase would be seen months later when cropping problems would be observed.

Traditional unit heaters are vented to the outside to allow for the transport of flue gases and water vapor to the outdoor environment. Flue gases can contain air pollutants like sulfur dioxide and ethylene. If these flue gases enter the growing space, they can result in flower and leaf abscission, epinasty (the downward bending of stems), foliar burn, and yield loss. Vented heaters tend to be less



Tomato plant exhibiting signs of ethylene injury. Photo: Tom Ford

efficient than the vent-free heaters because some of the heat generated through combustion is also conducted up the vent-pipe and is lost to the outdoor environment.

Vent-free heaters are designed to minimize the byproducts from combustion while limiting heat loss to the outside environment. Vent-free heaters also produce water vapor which may increase the relative humidity in the greenhouse structure. Increases in relative humidity in the greenhouse environment may encourage condensation to form on the interior of the greenhouse film which could reduce light transmission to the growing crops. Reductions in light transmission may impact crop quality while elevated greenhouse humidity levels could increase the risk of foliar infection from diseases like leaf mold and pollination related fruiting issues.

Ethylene is a colorless, odorless gas that can injure some plants at very low levels (.05 to .01 ppm). As the level of ethylene increases in the greenhouse atmosphere the observable severity of plant injury increases. The installation of an old school distribution tube (fan jet system) in the greenhouse will dilute the flue gases while mixing the air inside the structure. This practice should lessen the risk of plant injury in greenhouses where vent-free heating technologies have been employed.

*Mr. Ford is with Penn State Extension in Cambria Co. From the **Vegetable, Small Fruit and Mushroom Production News**, Penn State Extension, <http://extension.psu.edu/plants/vegetable-fruit>, January 20, 2017.*

BERRY PRODUCTION

CLASSIFIEDS

Plasticulture Strawberry...*(continued from page 29)*

yielding cultivar in the trial this year. Brix readings were 8.1, 7.2 and 6.0; average fruit size was 14.1, 12.7 and 15.5 g and marketable percentages were between 58 and 78%. One general trait of all of these selections is excellent flavor. We understand that two of these selections are being considered for commercial release. We understand that Rutgers 'Scarlet,' a recently released variety from the New Jersey program, has similar flavor attributes. We did not test this variety but a grower interested in looking at the New Jersey plant material might consider a trial planting of this named variety.

Conclusions

The effects of thinning the crowns varied somewhat with variety and depended on the vigor of the variety but overall, unthinned plots had a delay in the start of harvest. All of the varieties except for 'Sonata' and 'Rubicon' were average in vigor, and thinning the crowns after harvest resulted in lower, similar, or very slightly higher yields when compared to plants where the crowns were not thinned. Only 'Sonata' and 'Rubicon' showed a trend towards yield increases when the crowns were thinned, and 'Sonata' also showed a significant improvement in percentage marketable fruit when thinned. The conclusion was that there may be a benefit to crown-thinning only with varieties that demonstrate excessive vigor in their first production year. There were no consistent trends in effects on berry size.

We thank the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association for funding these trials.

*Ms. Demchak is with the Department of Plant Science at Penn State Univ. and Dr. Elkner is with Penn State Extension in Lancaster Co. From the **Vegetable, Small Fruit and Mushroom Production News**, Penn State Extension, <http://extension.psu.edu/plants/vegetable-fruit>, January 27, 2017.*

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NEWS

Steve Groff Honored as No-Till Farming Legend

Frank Lessiter, publisher of No-Till Farming magazine honored farmer Steve Groff, of Holtwood, as one of 25 "No-Till Farming Legends" at the recent National No Till Conference, held in St. Louis, Missouri.

Groff's recognition was based on his early adoption of no-till farming concepts, and particularly his passion for educating farmers on cover crops and their practical application. He was the first in the United States to use a cover crop roller/crimper to terminate cover crops, a practice gaining popularity in recent years. He's known for perfecting commercial no-till vegetable transplanting and pioneered the no-till seeding of pumpkins - now used on 75% of the acreage of pumpkins grown in Pennsylvania.

Groff has shared his expertise by being a featured speaker at several National No-Till Conferences, as well as in hundreds of other meetings, both local and international. His most notable achievement was developing the Tillage Radish - a cover crop now used in well over a million acres world-wide. The success of the Tillage Radish spawned the first national seed company dedicated exclusively to cover crops and was a significant factor in building the foundation of the current cover crop movement. Groff now leads Cover Crop Coaching, a consulting business that educates the influencers in agriculture so they can in turn teach farmers about effective and profitable cover crop use.

Currently, Groff is launching a new initiative; Cover Crop Innovators, a membership based group of cutting edge thinkers who contribute cover crop knowledge. He provides daily updates and weekly webinars sharing valuable information in order to advance the productive use of cover crops worldwide.

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