



University of Vermont

Extension

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

2025 On-Farm Workshops for Vegetable and Berry Growers

*These events are open to all--and they are geared for commercial growers.
No registration required, just show up!*

*If severe weather is predicted, an event may be cancelled, and a notice will be sent to the VVBGA listserv.
To join the VVBGA please go to vvgba.org.*

Wednesday May 21, 4:00-6:30 pm

BLUEBERRY PLANT HEALTH AND POLLINATORS

Wildwood Blueberry Farm

2977 Mad Tom Road East Dorset VT 05253

Cost: Free.

Wildwood Berry Farm is a 4-acre U-Pick blueberry farm with approximately 2,000 bushes, owned and operated by Rick Travers, who will provide an overview of the farm's management practices and goals. He will share his experience with making and selling value-added products. Vern Grubinger will discuss nutrient management, pruning, and mulching. Laura Johnson of the UVM Extension will describe how to optimize habitat to support pollinators, and Leslie Spencer of UVM Gund Institute will lead us into the field to capture and ID pollinators. Ann Hazelrigg will answer questions on insect pests and diseases. Tom Aiken of NRCS-VT will describe programs that can provide funding for conservation practices on berry farms.

Tuesday June 17, 4:00-6:30 pm

GREENHOUSE TOMATOES, PLASTICULTURE STRAWBERRIES, AND A NEW PACKSHED

Crossroad Farm, 671 West Fairlee Road, Fairlee, Vermont 05045

Cost: Free.

Crossroad Farm grows a wide range of vegetables, plus strawberries, flowers, and bedding plants on about 40 acres and in 18 high tunnels of different sizes. They have an on-farm market and a farm stand in Norwich. Established in the 1980's by Tim and Janet Tayor, the farm is now owned and operated by Phil Mason, who worked at the farm previously. Phil will describe the farm, its goals, and improvements underway including construction of a new wash-pack facility. We'll tour the strawberry field and visit several tomato tunnels that are planted at different times and have different levels of infrastructure investment. We'll discuss these systems, varieties, soil fertility, and pest management. Becky Maden and Vern Grubinger from UVM Extension will be on hand to offer observations on crop production, Andy Chamberlin will chime in about the pack shed project. Sarah McIlvenie from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets will talk about programs that provide funding for produce farms.

Tuesday July 22, 4:00-6:30 pm

ADAPTING TO FLOODING, AND WHOLESALE VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

River Berry Farm, 191 Goose Pond Rd, Fairfax, VT 05454

Cost: Free

River Berry Farm is a certified organic farm owned and operated by Jane Sorensen and David Marchant since 1992. Located along the Lamoille River they grow 50 acres of vegetables, 3 acres of strawberries, 1.5 acres of raspberries and 18,000 square feet of greenhouse plants. They primarily sell wholesale, and they have a farm stand for spring plant sales, with pick-your-own for the bulk of fruit sales. Parts of the farm have frequently flooded, so over the years David and Jane have changed the use of some fields, planted riparian buffers, and participated in crop insurance. They will describe their experience with these practices. We'll also tour strawberry plantings and look at fields of wholesale cabbage, carrots and kale, getting an overview of production practices and learning about marketing through the Deep Root Organic Cooperative. UVM Extension folks will be on hand to add to the conversation. **This event is supported by the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program](#).**

Tuesday August 5, 4:00-6:30 pm

SOIL HEALTH AND SCALING UP FOR WHOLESALE

Clearfield Farm, 250 Genes Road, Granville VT 05747

Cost: Free.

Clearfield Farm is owned and operated by Melissa Kosmaczewski and John Hirsch. In 2016, they worked with the Vermont Land Trust's Farmland Access Program to purchase the farm. They grow certified organic fingerling and specialty potatoes, carrots, winter squash, grains and herbs for wholesale markets on 50 acres of cropland. We'll check out the pack shed and discuss how it changed as marketing shifted. They will discuss the equipment and partnerships that have made it possible to access wholesale markets and work with distributors like Vermont Way Foods. We'll tour the fields to discuss soil health using cover crops, plant-based amendments and crop rotations. Representatives from Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets will be on hand to answer questions about Ag Development and Water Quality funding. NRCS-VT personnel will be available to discuss financial assistance for soil health practices. **This event is supported by the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program](#).**

Tuesday September 23, 3:00-5:30 pm

ORGANIC MEDICINAL HERB PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING

Hillside Botanicals, 5675 VT-12, Randolph, VT 05060

Cost: Free.

Hillside Botanicals is a certified organic medicinal herb farm, plant nursery, apothecary and wellness product manufacturer. Started by Sarah Shaw and Nathan Bacon in 2018, the 5 acre farm grows and processes many species of herbs primarily for wholesale markets and on-line retail sales. Their products include dried herbs, tinctures, teas, Fire Cider, and body care products. Sarah and Nathan will describe their production practices and provide a tour of the on-farm processing facility. Topics to be covered include crop selection, production practices, post-harvest processing and related infrastructure, market development, and value-add enterprises for herbal products. Attendees will also learn about a new herb growers initiative aimed at strengthening the network of herb growers and buyers in the state, co-led by Sarah and Julia Etter of Nomad Farm. **This event is supported by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture [Specialty Crop Block Grant program](#) and the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program](#).**

Tuesday October 14, 3:00-5:30 pm

HIGH TUNNELS FOR YEAR-ROUND ORGANIC VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Intervale Community Farm, 281 Intervale Rd, Burlington, VT 05401

Cost: Free.

Intervale Community Farm serves about 700 CSA members throughout the year, growing a diverse array of certified-organic produce on 20 acres and in 29,000 sq. ft. of high tunnels, from older, small structures to newer, larger structures. Andy Jones has been the farm manager since 1993, and he'll share an overview of the farm's goals and operations. We'll tour the farm's high tunnel complex that includes two newly constructed Harnois structures built for additional production of greenhouse tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers in summer months, followed by hardy greens in winter. Andy and ICF staff will talk about tunnel management, the transition from warm to cold crops, and specific practices used for growing winter greens including varieties, planting, disease management, environmental conditions and harvest. UVM personnel will be on hand to offer observations about soil fertility and pest management. **This event is supported by the [Transition to Organic Partnership Program](#).**

To request a disability-related accommodation to participate in these programs, please email vernon.grubinger@uvm.edu at least 3 weeks prior to the event so we may assist you.

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