

## Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup>—Vegetables and Fruits

### Advanced Technical Workshops for Commercial Vegetable and Fruit Growers

#### Workshop Session I (10:15–11:30 am)

##### **Workshop A—Reflections on 20 Years of Work with Organic and Sustainable Vegetable Farmers**

Dr. Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension Vegetable and Berry Specialist, will reflect on what he has learned from 20 years of working with innovative farmers across Vermont and the region. Using slides, he'll discuss what works, what doesn't, what he's not sure about, but may be worth paying attention to.

**Workshop B—Grafting Vegetables** Grafted vegetables have more vigor and are resistant to root diseases. If you have had limited success on grafting, this is the session for you. Mike Collins of Old Athens Farm, in Putney, VT, has experience grafting tomatoes, cucumbers, and eggplants. He will focus on how to successfully graft tomatoes and eggplants.

##### **Workshop C—Everything You Need to Know About Insurance—and Now You Can**

**Ask** Kevin Bourdon, of Cooperative Insurance Company, in Middlebury, VT, will discuss things you should know about your farm's insurance program. This presentation will relay basic insurance information covering property, casualty, automobile, workers' compensation, and disability coverage. Pam Smith, UVM Extension Crop Insurance Coordinator, will share how to use crop insurance as part of an overall farm risk management strategy, tailored specifically to your farm. Paul Betz of Ledge Farm in Woodbury, VT, never imagined that he would get the phone call that his house was on fire, nor did he expect the amount of loss once the hoses were rolled up. He has chosen to provide a cautionary tale and encourage farmers to not avoid some basic insurance issues.

**Lunch Hour Roundtable Discussions (1:00–2:00 pm)** *Please pre-register—use the form on page 25. Note: U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack will be speaking from 11:45 am—12:30 pm, shortening the lunch period. If you would like to attend both the Secretary's talk and a Roundtable, you can have a bagged lunch delivered to your Roundtable or bring your own. Important: If choosing this option, please fill out the provided section on the registration form.*

**Roundtable A—Innovative Marketing** What are the new marketing models growers are using on their farms to sell their products? Join this grower roundtable to learn about innovative ideas developed on farms by growers. Come share what has worked to increase your sales. Facilitators: Eric Rozendaal, Rockville Market Farm, Starksboro, VT, and Howard Prussack, High Meadows Farm Putney, VT.

**Roundtable B—Best Tools and Efficiency Tips** Join this informal discussion focused on growers' best tools and efficiency tips. Learn practical ideas from other growers' experiences that can save you time and money on your farm. Bring your own best ideas to share! Facilitator: Joey Klein, Littlewood Farm, Plainfield, VT.

**Roundtable C—Farmers' Best Labor Practices** Do you have employee policies in place on your farm? Which ones do you need to manage employees well? Which ones are critical to protect a farm business (like a sexual harassment policy)? Learn about policies you should have in your farm employee

manual; ones for hiring, firing, and managing employees and apprentices. Facilitator: Dave Marchant River Berry Farm, Fairfax, VT.

## **Workshop Session II (2:15–5:15 pm)**

### **Workshop A—Season Extension, Storage, and Winter Growing: On-Farm**

**Research and Practices** Winter growing and storage—there is so much to understand about it! Sandy and Paul Arnold of Pleasant Valley Farm, Argyle, NY, will speak on season extension, winter growing, storage techniques, and the temperature research they have done in high tunnels. Supported by SARE Grant ONE08-084, Vermont vegetable growers will discuss the results of on-farm research they conducted on winter growing to examine how watering times in the hoop house impacts soil temperature, how number of row covers and their height above the crop impacts the growing environment in hoop houses or in the field, and how different treatments or storage containers impact crop quality and much more! Participating farms include: Champlain Orchards, Jericho Settlers' Farm, Luna Bleu, Pleasant Valley Farm, and Walker Farm.

**Workshop B—Growing Vegetables in a Changing Climate** How will climate change impact your farm? Have diseases, weeds, and wet soils problems, common these last two summers, got you down? Come hear about the latest issues for vegetable and berry growers and what you can do about them. Presenters: Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension Vegetable and Berry Specialist, will give an overview of how climate change is affecting crop production and what farmers can do to adapt; Ann Hazelrigg, UVM Extension Plant Diagnostic Lab, will tell us about up and coming diseases; Bianca Moebius-Clune, Cornell University Soil Health Team, will discuss tools for managing compaction and drainage and the Cornell Soil Health Test; and Geo Honigford, Hurricane Flats Farm, South Royalton, VT, will share preventive weed management techniques you can use on your farm.

**Workshop C—Integrating Grains on Vegetable Farms** Ever thought about growing grains as a part of your vegetable farm? Grains can serve as food for people, culinary oil, and your own straw or cover crop seed. Dr. Heather Darby, UVM Extension, will discuss how to grow grains in Vermont and their uses. Spencer Blackwell of Elmer Farm in Middlebury, and Bob and Jane Pomykala of Pomykala Farm in North Grand Isle will discuss their experiences integrating grains into their vegetable operations.