



PENNSYLVANIA VEGETABLE MARKETING & RESEARCH PROGRAM

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Fresh Ideas

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The Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program is a state-wide marketing order established by a grower referendum, governed by a grower board and funded by grower assessments. The Program's sole purpose is to serve the vegetable growers of Pennsylvania by promoting Pennsylvania-grown vegetables and funding practical vegetable production research.

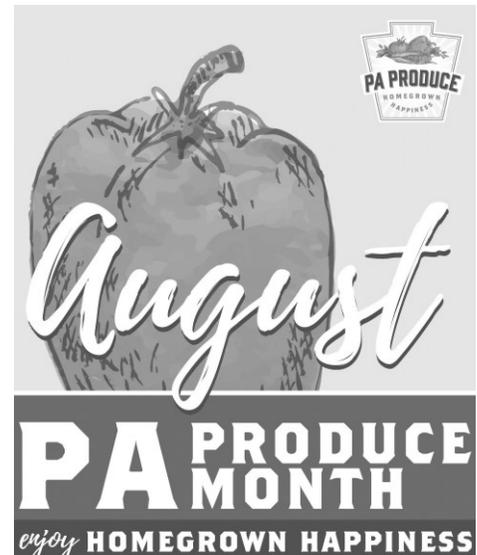
PROMOTING PA VEGGIES IN 2021

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program is gearing up to actively promote your product – PA Veggies – in 2021. Now is the time to begin planning how your on-farm market or farmers market will celebrate PA Produce Month in August. This will be the 16th year that the Program will be promoting the bountiful supply of Pennsylvania vegetables available in August with the PA Produce Month promotion.

With the help of a Specialty Crop Block Grant, the Program will be working with TasteProfit Marketing, a marketing firm associated with Kitchen Table Consultants that the Program has worked with for the past several years, to tout Pennsylvania vegetables in 2021. August will be the highlight of the activities and promotions, but press releases, social media posts, and new website content have already begun to promote PA Produce for this season.

Plans call for developing six vegetable recipe videos for the PAVeggies.com website. TasteProfit will also be developing digital graphics that growers can use in their own social media campaigns as well templates for PA Produce Month publicity materials for growers. At least four press releases will be distributed to media across the state to spotlight Pennsylvania vegetables and PA Produce Month.

PA Veggies Facebook and Instagram social media are a critical part of the Program's efforts to promote Pennsylvania vegetables throughout the year and TasteProfit will posting fresh content to stir consumer interest. In addition, the Program will be sending regular emails to over 800 consumers to who have asked



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PROMOTING PA VEGGIES

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to placed on an email list as a result of the Program's social media and website outreaches – keeping PA Produce in front of them throughout the season.

Taste Profit will also be updating the PAVeggies.org website creating several blogs with recipes, nutritional facts, cooking tips and other information about PA Veggies.

The newly re-designed PA Produce Month point-of-purchase materials introduced two years will be distributed to growers, sold to market owners at the produce auctions and shipped to supermarkets requesting them. If you have a retail market, please be sure to order these posters and price cards to show your participation in PA Produce Month.

POINT OF PURCHASE MATERIALS AVAILABLE

The Program will be again be offering a selection of various point-of-purchase materials for growers who retail their produce. Growers receive a credit of half of their assessment (up to a maximum credit of \$25) toward their order of point-of-purchase. See the enclosed description and order sheet. New supplies of point-of-purchase materials are being purchased with matching grant from the PA Dept. of Ag.

ARE YOU LISTED IN THE DIRECTORIES?

The Program has put a great deal of effort into developing online directories of growers who retail their produce to consumers through farm markets, farmers' markets and CSAs as well as a separate listing of growers who wholesale their produce. The value of a directory is determined by the number of growers listed and accuracy of the information listed. So if you are NOT LISTED (or are not sure if you are listed), please fill out the enclosed Directory Information form so we can include you. If you are LISTED, please check your listing to make sure we have the correct information.

THE FARMERS TOOLKIT

The Program has developed a trove of marketing tools for growers on the PAVeggies.org website. Located under the Farmer Resources tab is the the Farmers Toolkit which includes ideals and videos on how growers can make the most of PA Produce Month to boost their sales plus Facebook graphics, graphics for print and website use, infographics, press release templates, and tips. Be sure to make the most of these materials that are designed specifically for your use

Besides the items located in the Farmers Toolkit, PLEASE feel free to share the blog articles, recipes and videos on the PAVeggies.org website with your customers in your emails or social media posts or on your farm's website. They are all there for your use. As always, if you have any questions, requests, or comments to share with us, please feel free to call 717-694-3596 or send an email.

IPM INFORMATION ONCE AGAIN AVAILABLE

Sweet corn, tomato and curcurbit integrated pest management (IPM) weekly updates will again be available to growers in several forms this year, including email, fax or regular mail. For the last twenty-four years the Program has offered this information to growers in the PA Vegetable IPM Weekly Update. PVGA supports the sweet corn trapping with grants as needed. The IPM Weekly Update will be offered again this year from mid-June through August. The regular mail version will only be sent to growers who request it. Please return the form by June 30 or call 717-694-3596 as soon as possible to get on the list for the weekly mailings, faxes or emails. Please note that faxes will normally be sent during the nighttime hours.

Growers can also obtain IPM and additional information on a toll-free recorded telephone message that is available 24-hours-a-day by calling 1-800-PENN-IPM. The weekly reports will also be posted on the Program's website at <https://www.paveggies.org/farmers/ipm-weekly-updates/>

NINE RESEARCH PROJECTS FUNDED FOR 2021

The Vegetable Marketing and Research Board approved \$20,000 in assessment funds for vegetable research in 2021. In cooperation with the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association (PVGA), which will be contributing an additional \$38,021 from its General Fund, the two vegetable growers organizations will be funding nine different projects. The Association's research funds are usually earned at PVGA's Farm Show Food Booth and the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention, however this year the funds came from the Association's reserves and special donations from members.

The projects approved for funding and their objectives are listed below.

No-till vs. Plasticulture Tomatoes: Examining Yield, Earliness, and Soil Health **\$10,000**

Elsa Sánchez, Sjoerd Duiker and Francesco Di Gioia - Penn State Univ.

- to address the early yield problem using row covers and grafting onto cold-tolerant rootstock in summer crops.

Expanding Suppressive Microbial Communities to Manage Bacterial Spot of Tomato **\$8,596**

Kevin L. Hockett - Penn State Univ.

- to acquire 6-12 distinct microbial communities from different tomato sources in PA and NY and repeatedly transfer communities to select for those that suppress bacterial spot in a greenhouse setting.

Impact of Management Practices on Soil Health Indicators in Conventional and Organic Vegetable Cropping Systems (multiyear- Year 2) **\$8,000**

Gladis Zinati - Rodale Institute

- to assess the physical, biological and chemical properties in soil samples taken in 48 plots.
- to disseminate the results to growers during the annual field day and in a web article discussing the influence of management practices on selected soil health indicators by depth.

Evaluation of Atrazine Alternatives for Post-emergence Weed Control in Sweet Corn **\$2,451**

John Wallace and Dwight Lingenfelter - Penn State Univ., Lynn Sosnoskie - Cornell Univ., and Mark VanGessel - Univ. of Delaware

- to compare the weed control efficacy of key postemergence HPPD inhibiting herbicides (Group 27) applied alone or in combination with atrazine, Basagran, Maestro or Starane Ultra. The trial will be conducted at three locations (PA, NY and DE).

Breeding Processing Tomatoes for Production in PA **\$6,000**

Majid R. Foolad - Penn State Univ.

- to evaluate a total of 41 PROC tomato F₁ hybrids with EB resistance (Regular PROC F₁ Hybrids).
- to evaluate 54 PROC tomato F₁ hybrids with EB + LB resistance (LBR PROC F₁ Hybrids)
- to continue development of PROC tomatoes with EB resistance, EB + LB resistance and bacterial canker resistance.

Breeding Fresh-Market Tomatoes for Production in PA **\$8,000**

Majid R. Foolad - Penn State Univ.

- to evaluate 98 FM large-size F₁ hybrids with EB resistance (Regular FM F₁ Hybrids).
- to evaluate 77 FM large-size F₁ hybrids with EB + LB resistance (LBR FM F₁ Hybrids).
- to evaluate 104 FM grape tomato hybrids with EB and/or EB + LB resistance (Grape Tomato F₁ Hybrids).
- to continue development of FM tomatoes with EB resistance, EB + LB resistance and bacterial canker resistance along with other desirable traits.

Exploring Anaerobic Soil Disinfestation (ASD) as a Biological Method to Manage Root-Knot Nematodes and Enhance Soil Health in High Tunnel Vegetable Production Systems **\$10,000**

Francesco Di Gioia and Beth Gugino - Penn State Univ.

- to assess the efficacy of ASD in managing root-knot nematodes (RKNs) in high tunnel production systems under PA environmental conditions.

Herbicide Timing Effects on Snap Bean Development and Yield **\$2,474**

Lynn Sosnoskie - Cornell Univ., Mark VanGessel - Univ. of Delaware and John Wallace and Dwight Lingenfelter - Penn State Univ.

- to evaluate the impacts of herbicide application timing, with respect to crop development, on crop growth and development, harvest timing, and yield quantity and quality. This trial will be conducted at three locations (PA, DE, and NY).

Evaluating Burndown Options for No-till Snap Bean **\$2,500**

Mark VanGessel - Univ. of Delaware, John Wallace and Dwight Lingenfelter - Penn State Univ., and Lynn Sosnoskie - Cornell Univ.

- to evaluate potential burndown herbicides for no-till snap bean production. This trial will be conducted at three locations (PA, DE, and NY).

2021 ASSESSMENTS NOW PAYABLE

Enclosed with this newsletter is your Assessment Statement Form for 2021. The assessment for the 2021 growing season is now payable. **Remember, high tunnel production is considered greenhouse vegetable production and is assessed by the 1,000 sq. ft. of production area rather than by the acre. Also, growers that have both field production and greenhouse/high tunnel production simply add the acres of field production and the number of 1,000 sq. ft. of greenhouse/high tunnel production together to determine their total number of production "units" to calculate their assessment.**

For general information about the assessment and the crops to which it applies, see the back of the second Assessment Statement. **The assessment is NOT DUE on small fruits like strawberries, brambles or blueberries OR on white potatoes.**

If you are growing less than an acre of vegetables this year and less than 1,000 sq. ft. of greenhouse or high tunnel vegetables and expect to sell less than \$2,000 worth of vegetables, please indicate at the bottom of the form which statement best states your circumstance and return the form. This will enable us to update our records.

Please keep one copy of the form in your records for three years. Return the other copy. Payments are due by January 31, 2022, at the latest. **You are encouraged to pay the assessment and order any point-of-purchase materials by July 31, 2020.**

2020 RESEARCH REPORTS

The reports from most of the 10 research projects sponsored by the Program and the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association in 2020 are not yet available as the projects have been extended due to the pandemic or other circumstances. They will be available on the Program's website PAVeggies.org under the Farmer Resources tab when they are received. For growers who do not have access to the website, you can order paper copies on the back of the enclosed white assessment form and they will be sent when available.

You Have a Choice

You have the opportunity to designate on your Production Verification Statement how much of your assessment you want to see used for marketing activities and how much you would like to see used for research. Marketing activities include sponsoring PA Produce Month in August and printing and shipping of point-of-purchase materials. Over the past five years, the Program has spent about 60% of grower assessment dollars on research and 40% on marketing activities. It should be noted that these percentages do not take into account the money spent on general administrative expenses nor the grant funds the Program has received.

GAP/GHP CERTIFICATION COST SHARE AVAILABLE

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) offers farms and packinghouses the opportunity to be certified for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for farms and Good Handling Practices (GHP) for packinghouse operations. For further information on the certification program, contact Audra Mata at 717-831-6059 or amata@pa.gov.

The Department also offers a Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) / Good Handling Practices (GHP) Cost Share Program which provides direct financial support through cost sharing of applicable certification fees to producers and processors who successfully complete a USDA GAP or GHP audit. Any business or individual located in Pennsylvania that successfully completes one initial USDA (GAP) or (GHP) audit is eligible to apply. The cost share program is designed to help defray some of the costs related to a successful audit. The applicant must pay the upfront costs associated with the audit. Upon completion of the grant's requirements, they are then reimbursed by the Commonwealth for appropriate costs incurred.

For questions, contact Michele Brookins, PA Department of Agriculture, at 717-787-5319 or RA-AgBusiness@pa.gov, or by fax at 717-787-5643.