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Fresh Ideas

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 1

JUNE 2015

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.

Plan Now to Celebrate August as PA Produce Month

The Vegetable Marketing and Research Program will once again celebrate August as Pennsylvania Produce Month to highlight the peak season for most Pennsylvania vegetable crops. Like last year, the Program will basically concentrate most of its promotion efforts on the month of August. The purpose is to focus consumer attention on the abundant supplies of quality, fresh Pennsylvania produce that are available in farmers' markets, roadside farm markets and even supermarkets during the month of August.

This year's August is PA Produce Month will partner with Penn State Extension to utilize social media, like Facebook, to hopefully draw extra attention Pennsylvania vegetables. The Program will also be updating its directories of both retail markets and wholesale growers on its website – www.paveggies.org. Growers who have not yet filled out the pink "We Need Your Help" form that was mailed with the Program's Annual Report this spring are asked to fill it out as soon as possible (see the back of the enclosed yellow form). This will help the Program accurately list roadside markets, CSAs, and community farmer's market on the website for retail growers. Wholesale growers who did not complete back of the pink "We Need Your Help" form are asked to complete the form on the last page of this issue of Fresh Ideas so we can list your crops in a directory of wholesale growers on the Program's website.

The Program realizes that some Pennsylvania vegetables hit the market in May, June and July. And some of the promotion activities will begin in mid-July as a lead-up to the main promotion. But August is the month when nearly all vegetable crops are available in plentiful supply across the state. August is also the time when an extra boost in sales would be welcomed by most marketers.

The Program will be providing the following support to markets and growers to enable them to promote and hopefully profit by PA Produce Month:

1. ALL growers who order ANY point-of-purchase materials in 2015 will automatically receive six small (8.5" x 11") full-color "August is PA Produce Month" posters.
2. A Produce Month grower kit will be available to all growers at a nominal cost of \$2 per kit. This kit will include two large posters (about 18" x 24"), and twenty 7" x 11" price cards – both in full color. These kits can be ordered directly from the Program. Growers will also be able order additional small posters for \$0.50.
3. A sample press release that markets can use to both promote PA Produce Month and any special activities they will be undertaking to celebrate PA Produce Month to their local press will be sent to each participating market.
4. A general statewide press release on PA Produce Month will be issued to news media across the state.
5. One or more media events will be scheduled to highlight PA Produce Month. Farmers' markets, or even roadside markets, interested in hosting one of these events, should contact the Program.
6. A Produce Month market kit for non-grower markets will be available at most produce auctions across the state. These kits will include one large poster (about 18" x 24"), six small posters (8.5" x 11"), and twenty 7" x 11" price cards – all in full color. *continued next page.*

Time to Order Point-of-Purchase Materials for 2015

The Vegetable Marketing and Research Program will again be offering a large selection of point-of-purchase items for the 2015 season.

New this year are tee-shirt bags with "Fresh Local Vegetables" imprinted on them. These white, disposable (but recyclable) plastic grocery bags are 12" x 7" x 23" and 18 microns thick. They are standard grocery bag size and heavier than the cheapest grocery bags. With care they can be used for corn but they are NOT heavy-duty bags designed specifically for corn. While not as cheap as generic "Thank You" bags, they focus attention to your market's "Fresh Local Vegetables."

The centerpiece of this year's offerings is again the full-color heavy-duty banner that advertises "Fresh Local Vegetables" and features the "PA Preferred" logo. The Program will also be offering small and large price paddles with the "PA Preferred" logo. The Program can only ship the banners and price paddles with the "PA Preferred" logo to growers who are licensed with the "PA Preferred" program. The Board encourages all individual growers to become licensed to use the "PA Preferred" logo at their markets. Completing the license application is free and the form is now contained on the back of the Production Verification Statement enclosed with this mailing.

One of the newer items being offered is a series of "How to Use" information sheets for less familiar vegetables like Beets, Eggplant, Kale, Leeks, Spaghetti Squash, Summer Squash, Swiss Chard, and Winter Squash. These 3" x 5" sheets are in tablet form so they can be easily displayed along with the produce. The sheets contain information on how to prepare the item plus a recipe or serving suggestion.

Some of the most popular items historically have been the plastic price cards and price paddles which will be available along with the clip-on 3" x 4" price cards in plastic holders for retail market displays.

The crop or message stickers for the roadside signs will again be offered separately. There are 15 different stickers available for the signs. The choices include: Sweet Corn, Tomatoes, Peppers, Asparagus, Green Beans, Cantaloupe, Watermelons, Strawberries, Pumpkins, Fall Crops, Organic, Just Ahead, Farm Fresh, and a directional arrow. A blank sticker is also available allowing growers to letter in their own message or crop. Growers may choose to change the crop or message on the sign during the season or put a different crop on each side of the signs. The crop stickers can also be used on other signs.

We will be offering a set of 16 different recipe cards featuring the best recipes from the 2012 and 2013 Vegetable Recipe Contests.

A limited supply of tee-shirts (MEDIUM SIZE ONLY) and hats with the "Simply Delicious, Simply Nutritious" logo in full color on the front are available while supplies last. They enable growers to give their market personnel a more professional and uniform appearance.

Remember to order the PA Produce Month promotional materials kit if you plan on celebrating PA Produce Month in style along with your other point-of-purchase materials on the enclosed yellow sheet.

Each grower is allowed a credit equal to 50% of their assessment payment for the year up to a maximum credit of \$25 in ordering point-of-purchase materials. If you wish to order more than your credit allowance, you may do so by paying the additional amount due. For a full description of the items available, see the enclosed list on the green sheet and place your order on the enclosed yellow sheet.

PA Produce Month *(continued from page 1)*

7. The Program will also make posters and price cards available to supermarkets across the state to support their sales of local produce.

Growers or farmers' markets who want to participate in PA Produce Month can do so by using any of the following suggestions:

1. Order a Produce Month grower kit.
2. Use PA Produce Month in your print advertising during August.
3. Run a special coupon in your advertising for use at your market during PA Produce Month. Make it a percentage off coupon or a given dollar amount discount. Or you could make the coupon a frequent buyer offer where the customer receives the specified discount if they visit the market every week or four times during August. These could be handed out at your market during the end of July and early August.

4. Offer a PA Produce Month special during August.

For example:

- Pick 5 Get 10 - Buy 5 different vegetables and get a 10% discount
- 15 ears of sweet corn for the price 12
- Free tomato with a \$5 or \$10 purchase
- Free cantaloupe with \$10 or \$15 purchase

Be creative and offer a different special each week of the month. If your peppers are overproducing, make them the giveaway item. Use any special that has worked for you in the past.

5. Hold a PA Produce Month special event – like a Sweet Corn, Tomato, Watermelon, or Cantaloupe Festival. If you already have special event planned for August, incorporate PA Produce Month into your plans and publicity for that event. If you would like your special event to be considered for one of the Program's media events, contact the Program.

The key to the success of Pennsylvania Produce Month is the support and participation of growers and markets across the state. We hope growers will use this campaign to highlight the availability of their crops during August.

Questions? Call the Program at 717-694-3596 or email us at pvmrp@embarqmail.com.

2015 Assessments Are Now Payable

Enclosed with this newsletter is your Production Verification Statement for 2015. The assessment for the 2015 growing season is now payable. **Remember, high tunnel production is now 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 pink Production Verification 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 the pink copy of the form in your records for three years. Return just the white copy. Payments are due by January 31, 2016, at the latest. **You are encouraged to pay the assessment and order any point-of-purchase materials by July 15, 2015.**

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 68% of grower assessment dollars on research and 32% 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.

Help Us Help You

Like last year, this year's form includes several questions that will enable the Program to serve you better, especially if you are a fresh market grower. The questions ask whether your operation is certified organic, sustainable or conventional, if you sell your produce retail or wholesale, what form of retail sales you use, and what forms of wholesale outlets you use.

This information will serve two purposes. It will allow the Program to determine how many growers use different growing and marketing methods. This will help us to plan our promotion and marketing activities better. Second, the Program will be better able to inform you as a grower when new marketing opportunities that might

interest you are available. **We are also asking you to include your email address if you have one.** Obviously, that is quickest and most cost-effective method of contacting you.

New This Year – Monthly Grower Conference Calls

Last fall during our vegetable research conference calls, it was suggested that we conduct grower conference calls during the season to allow growers to talk about problems they are experiencing during the season – and hear recommendations from Penn State experts for solving them.

The calls will be on the following Tuesday evenings from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.:

June 16, **July 14,**
August 11, **September 8,** and
October 6.

To participate in the calls, call toll-free 1-877-643-6951 and then enter pass code 55835024# at the scheduled time. All callers will be able to speak if they wish or they can just listen in on the discussion.

IPM Information Once Again Available

Sweet corn, tomato and curcubit integrated pest management (IPM) weekly updates will again be available to growers in several forms this year, including email, fax or regular mail.

The Program has funded IPM research at Penn State for tomato disease control and sweet corn insect control for many years. The Board feels it is important to provide this IPM information to growers during the season when they can use it to time fungicide and insecticide applications. For the last eighteen years the Program has offered this information to growers in the PA Vegetable IPM Weekly Update. Besides being sent to individual growers, it is posted at many of the produce auctions.

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 on the yellow Grower Response Form. Please return the form by July 15, 2015, 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 the information from these projects to help them time their fungicide and insecticide sprays from a toll-free hotline, and from websites.

The toll-free recorded telephone message is available 24-hours-a-day by calling 1-800-PENN-IPM. The IPM information will also be available on the Penn State Extension Vegetable, Small Fruit and Mushroom website at <http://extension.psu.edu/plants/vegetable-fruit>.

Program to Help Fund 12 Research Projects in 2015

The Vegetable Marketing and Research Board approved \$17,000 in assessment funds for vegetable research in 2015. In cooperation with the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association, which contributed an additional \$56,000 from its General Fund, the two vegetable growers organizations will be funding 12 different projects. The Association's research funds are earned by the members at the Farm Show and Ag Progress Days Food Booths. The approved projects total \$73,000.

The projects approved for funding and their objectives are listed below. Projects marked with an asterisk "*" were only approved for partial funding.

Evaluation of Select Seed and In-Furrow Treatments for the Management of Soilborne Pathogens of Snap Bean

Beth K. Gugino, Penn State Univ. **\$5,088**

- To evaluate several seed and in-furrow treatments for effectiveness in managing *Rhizoctonia solani* and *Fusarium solani* for several commonly grown snap bean varieties.

Is There Potential of a New Herbicide in Snap Beans?

Dwight Lingenfelter, Penn State Univ. and Mark VanGessel, Univ. of Delaware **\$6,000**

- To evaluate crop safety of pyroxasulfone at different rates on three to four common snap bean varieties.
- To evaluate herbicide effectiveness when pyroxasulfone is used alone and in combination with a postemergence herbicide.
- Determine the effect of these herbicide treatments on snap bean stand, injury, and yield.

Enhancing the Fungicide-Based Management of White Mold in Snap Bean

Sarah Pethybridge and Amara Dunn, Cornell Univ., New York Agricultural Experiment Station and Beth K. Gugino, Penn State Univ. **\$5,000***

- To quantify the cost-effectiveness of fungicides in different resistance groups (FRAC codes) and their optimal timing for the control of white mold in snap bean.

Evaluating the Status of Copper Resistance in Bacterial Populations in Pennsylvania Tomato Fields

Beth K. Gugino, Penn State Univ. **\$6,000**

- To test whether pathogens which cause tomato bacterial spot, speck and canker collected from several Pennsylvania farms show genetic resistance to fixed-copper.

Characterization of Genetic Resistance to Bacterial Canker in Tomato

Timothy McNellis and Majid R. Foolad, Penn State Univ. **\$8,000**

- To characterize genetic resistance to bacterial canker disease of tomato, caused by *Clavibacter michiganensis* subspecies *michiganensis*.
- Initial characterization of the genetic basis of Cmm resistance in *S. Pimpinellifolium* accession PLSP125

- Determine whether PLSP125 resistance to Cmm involves immunity or tolerance
- Determine whether the canker resistance trait is effective under field conditions and over the course of an entire season.

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

Majid R. Foolad, Penn State Univ. **\$6,000***

- Transfer of late blight resistance gene *Ph-5* to PSU fresh-market and processing tomato breeding lines and field evaluation.
- Transfer of late blight resistance gene *Ph-3* to PSU fresh-market and processing tomato breeding lines and field evaluation.
- Characterization of new sources of LB resistance.
- Development of experimental F_1 hybrids with EB resistance and other desirable horticulture characteristics.
- Field evaluation of Penn State advanced processing and fresh-market tomato breeding lines.

High Tunnel Fresh Market Slicer Tomato Variety Trial 2015

Steve Bogash, Penn State Extension **\$7,494**

- Identify tomato cultivars that have promise as successful high tunnel varieties.
- Identify those cultivars that are both resistant and susceptible to leaf mold(s) and yellow shoulder based on an intensive tissue testing program.
- Identify cultivars that are considered superior in flavor and appearance.
- Produce saleable yield data (size, avg. weight, etc.) for the cultivars in this program in order to allow growers to select varieties that meet their marketing criteria.
- Increase local market share for fresh market tomatoes by local growers by assisting them in the selection of tomato cultivars that are considered superior by tasting panels.

Western Flower Thrips and Other Insect and Arthropod Pest Management in Field Staked Tomatoes

Steve Bogash, Penn State Extension **\$5,800**

- Evaluate current insect control materials and tactics for their ability to manage insect and arthropod infestations.
- Evaluate newer 'biological' pest materials for their ability to control insects and arthropods as compared to current BMP's for control.
- Measure insect and arthropod levels in the field for 2015 in order to establish a baseline for future work.

Sweet Corn Trapping Network

Shelby J. Fleischer, Penn State Univ. **\$2,600**

- Lures for corn earworm, and the E- and Z- race European corn borer, will be purchased from Hercon Environmental. Fall armyworm lures will be purchased from Scentry Biologics.

continued on the next page.

We've Made it Easy to Sign Up for PA Preferred

The PA Preferred program is the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's branding program for all agricultural products produced in the state. The brand has been established permanently by the General Assembly so it will remain the same from administration to administration. While the former "Simply Delicious" promotion program worked very well for produce, it was not adaptable to other agricultural products, especially non-edible crops and products.

The Department continues to work at building recognition for the PA Preferred logo and brand with advertising, social media and other public relations efforts as funding allows.



Individual growers play a very important part in that process by being licensed to use the PA Preferred logo on their products and in their markets. In order to better protect the integrity of the PA Preferred brand, the Department does require individual producers to be licensed to use the PA Preferred logo on their products and in their markets. There is no cost for the license, but it simply requires growers to certify that the products they use the logo on are actually produced in Pennsylvania.

The Department has streamlined the licensing/membership process by making it available online at www.papreferred.com. In addition, because vegetable growers represent one of the largest groups of agricultural producers who direct market much of their produce to consumers, the Department and the Program are cooperating to include the PA Preferred license/membership agreement with the Program's annual assessment notices. The back of the white copy of the Program's Production Verification Statement now contains the signature page for growers to sign up with the PA Preferred program. The details of the PA Preferred license are printed on a separate sheet. So if you have been putting off signing up for the PA Preferred program because of the extra paperwork, all you have to do now is to mark that you are a producer, list your major crops/products and sign at the appropriate place on the back of your Production Verification Statement. Please note that most growers who are sole proprietors only need to sign near the top of the page. Growers whose operations are a corporation, LLC or partnership need to sign further down at the appropriate place.

Once you are signed up to be a member of the PA Preferred program, you are not only able to order items from the Vegetable Program that contain the PA Preferred logo (like the banners and price paddles) but you will be able to request/receive selected point of purchase items

from the PA Preferred program at no cost. These items include price paddles, price cards, truck decals, window clings, plant tags, and stickers. You can also customize your listing of your market/farm on the PA Preferred website. Contact the PA Preferred coordinator at 717-705-9511 or ra-markets@pa.gov or go to the website.

The Vegetable Program urges growers to use the back of their assessment forms to sign up for PA Preferred. .

GAP/GHP Certification and Cost Share Available

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) offers farms and packinghouses the opportunity to be certified for Good Agricultural Practices for farms and Good Handling Practices for packinghouse operations. For further information on the certification program, contact the Department at 717-787-4315.

The Department is also offering a GAP/GHP Cost-Share Program for the 2015 calendar year. Growers that successfully complete one initial USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) or one initial USDA Good Handling Practices (GHP) audit are eligible to apply. Qualified applicants may receive up to a maximum of \$400 per year to cover the costs of *one* successful initial USDA GAP or GHP audit. For information, contact Kyle Heffner, at 717-836-3973 or kyheffner@pa.gov.

Research Projects Funded *(continued)*

Seedless Watermelon Variety Trial

Tanner Delvalle and Steve Bogash, Penn State Extension
\$6,975

- Evaluate current seedless watermelon varieties for yield, overall marketability, brix, hollow heart and color. Update recommendations for PA growers.
- Evaluate some varieties for susceptibility to powdery mildew and downy mildew under an IPM-based fungicide program using the 2015 Commercial Vegetable Production Recommendations guide.

Keeping PA Vegetable Growers Profitable: Statewide Broccoli Cultivar Trials

Elsa Sánchez and William Lamont, Penn State Univ.;
Timothy Elkner, Thomas Butzler, Steven Bogash, Lee Stivers, and Robert Pollock, Penn State Extension
\$12,000

Manure *E. coli* Research Project

Dr. Jeffrey LeJeune, Ohio Agricultural Research & Development Ctr.
\$2,500

To document under field conditions on several farms the survival of E. coli in the soil to develop an interval time period guideline between manure application and harvest of produce that does not reduce the safety of the produce.

ATTENTION – If you are a WHOLESALE GROWER - PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM if you have not already done so this year so we can list your farm in the Program’s Directory of Produce Growers for Wholesale Buyers, This directory is not intended to be used by retail consumer customers.

Farm Name _____ Contact Person(s) _____
 Address _____
 Town/State/Zip Code _____
 County _____ Telephone Number(s) _____
 Cell Phone Number _____ Fax Number _____
 Email _____ Website _____

Circle crops grown	Circle number of acres grown for wholesale			
Asparagus	<1	1-3	>3	
Beans (lima)	<3	3-10	>10	
Beans (snap)	<3	3-10	>10	
Beets	<1	1-3	>3	
Bok Choy (Chinese Cabbage)	<1	1-3	>3	
Broccoli	<3	3-10	>10	
Brussels Sprouts	<1	1-3	>3	
Cabbage (green)	<3	3-10	11-50	>50
Carrots	<1	1-3	>3	
Cauliflower	<3	3-10	>10	
Celery	<1	1-3	>3	
Corn (Indian)	<3	3-10	>10	
Corn (sweet)	<10	10-25	26-100	>100
Cucumbers (slicing)	<3	3-10	>10	
Cucumbers (greenhouse)	<3,000	3-10,000	>10,000	(sq ft)
Eggplant	<1	1-3	>3	
Garlic	<1	1-3	>3	
Gourds	<1	1-3	>3	
*Greens(collards, kale, mustard, turnip)	<3	3-10	>10	
Leeks	<1	1-3	>3	
*Lettuce (head, leaf, romaine)	<1	1-3	>3	
Lettuce (greenhouse)	<3,000	3-10,000	>10,000	(sq ft)
*Onions (green or sweet)	<1	1-3	>3	
Parsnips	<1	1-3	>3	
Peas	<1	1-3	>3	
Peppers (bell)	<3	3-10	>10	
Peppers (hot)	<3	3-10	>10	
Potatoes	<10	10-25	26-100	>100
Pumpkins (decorative)	<3	3-10	>10	
Pumpkins (sugar)	<3	3-10	>10	
Radish	<1	1-3	>3	
Rhubarb	<1	1-3	>3	
Spinach	<3	3-10	>10	
Squash (summer)	<1	1-3	>3	
Squash (winter, neck pumpkins)	<3	3-10	>10	
Sweet Potatoes	<1	1-3	>3	
Tomatoes	<3	3-10	11-50	>50
Tomatoes (greenhouse)	<3,000	3-10,000	>10,000	(sq ft)
Turnips	<3	3-10	>10	
Zucchini	<1	1-3	>3	
Herbs	<1	1-3	>3	
Herbs (greenhouse)	<1,000	1-3,000	>3,000	(sq ft)
Cantaloupe	<3	3-10	>10	
Watermelon	<3	3-10	>10	
Strawberries	<3	3-10	>10	
Raspberries/Blackberries	<3	3-10	>10	
Blueberries	<3	3-10	>10	
Flowers (cut)	<1	1-3	>3	

* for crops preceded by an asterick, circle the kinds of that crop produced

Return to:
 PA Vegetable Marketing &
 Research Program (PVMRP)
 2301 N. Cameron St.
 Harrisburg, PA 17110-9408

Indicate if you have following facilities or capabilities:

- Cold Storage
- Forced Air Precooling
- Hydrocooling
- Vacuum Cooling
- Top-Icing
- Export Capabilities
- Dock Facilities
- High Tunnel Production

Indicate if your crops are:

- GMO free (non-certified)
- Sustainable (non-certified)
- Pesticide free (non-certified)
- GAP (certified)
by what group? _____
- Natural (certified)
by what group? _____
- Organic (certified)
by what group? _____
- Sustainable (certified)
by what group? _____

Would you like the Program (PVMRP) to list your farm on PAMarketMaker, a national database of growers, for you?

yes no

List any additional crops and acreage on a separate sheet. For any questions contact the Program at 717-694-3596 or pvmrp@embarqmail.com.