



WEEKLY CROP UPDATE

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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March 27, 2009

Vegetable Crops

Water Testing for Produce Food Safety -
Gordon Johnson, Extension Ag Agent, Kent Co.;
gcjohn@udel.edu

We recently had a round of trainings on produce food safety for fresh produce growers and packers. One of the questions that has come up from these trainings is how water testing should be done and what types of tests are required.

Water is tested for certain bacterial indicator species, which show the potential for produce to become contaminated with microbes coming from animal or human feces in that water.

The following are some guidelines for growers and packers to follow.

- All water sources must be tested, including: irrigation wells, packing house wells, wells used for spray water, and surface irrigation water sources. In other words, all irrigation, spray, and wash water sources must be tested.
- Surface water is not acceptable in the packing shed; only well water should be used. Potable water is required for all employee uses (drinking, hand washing, sanitation). Well water is the preferred source for all other uses (irrigation and spray water).
- The schedule for testing should be once a year for municipal water and twice a year for well water. Surface (pond, ditch, stream or river)

irrigation water sources should be tested three times a year; at the beginning of the irrigation season, at peak irrigation, and near harvest.

- For packing house water, use the following procedures to collect the water:
 - Run the water through the plumbing system for at least 5 minutes to flush the lines.
 - Obtain the samples from a spigot or faucet and ensure that water in the bottle has not contacted other surfaces that may contaminate the water such as bare hands and sleeves. Use sterile bottles supplied by the water testing laboratory you are going to use. Samples need to get to the laboratory within 24 hours.
- For irrigation water, use the following procedures to collect the water:
 - Run the water through the irrigation system for at least 20 min to flush the lines.
 - Obtain at least two samples, as microbial levels can fluctuate.
 - Obtain the samples from the sprinkler system (not the intake area) and ensure that water in the bottle has not contacted other surfaces that may contaminate the water such as bare hands and sleeves. Use sterile bottles supplied by the water testing laboratory you are going to use. You will need to put the samples on ice and deliver them to the laboratory within 6 hours.

The microbiological tests that are routinely done as indicators of water quality are: total coliform bacteria, fecal coliform bacteria, and *E. coli*. Total coliform is a measure of those bacteria that are found in the soil, in water that has been influenced by surface water, and in human or animal waste including some that may cause food borne illness. Fecal coliforms are the group of the total coliforms that are considered to be present specifically in the gut and feces of warm-blooded animals. Because the origins of fecal coliforms are more specific than the origins of the more general total coliform group of bacteria, fecal coliforms are considered a more accurate indication of animal or human waste than the total coliforms. *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) is the major species of concern in the fecal coliform group. Of the five general groups of bacteria that comprise the total coliforms, only *E. coli* does not grow and reproduce in the environment. Consequently, *E. coli* is considered to be the species of coliform bacteria that is the best indicator of fecal pollution and the possible presence of human pathogens.

It is important to note that these are just indicator tests and are not specific for a pathogen such as salmonella.

For well water used in the packing shed, worker drinking, washing, or worker sanitation it is best to run tests for total coliform and fecal coliform and/or *E. coli* at the same time when the sample is sent off. For irrigation water from surface sources, you should have water tested for total coliform and fecal coliform or *E. coli*. Most commonly, a combination test is done for total coliform and *E. coli* bacteria.

There are no clear cut levels for contamination with fecal coliforms or *E. coli* in irrigation water and produce safety. It depends on many factors. However, research has shown that when irrigating strawberries, irrigation water which exceeded the guideline of 100 colony-forming units (CFU) of *E. coli* per 100 mL of water, transferred *E. coli* to the berries. In research with other produce, the numbers were higher.

Based on the best currently available information, the following are some standards to apply when you receive the results of your tests:

- For overhead irrigation water source and the fecal coliform test, any samples above 200 CFU/100 ml should be viewed as contaminated and for the *E. coli* test, any samples above 126 CFU/100 ml should be viewed as contaminated.
- For drip irrigation water sources (non foliar contact) using the *E. coli* test, any samples above 576 CFU/100 ml should be viewed as contaminated.

When water samples are above these levels, efforts need to be made to find the source of contamination. Irrigation water use from these sources may need to be stopped or a water treatment system to reduce bacterial loads may need to be installed.

Some water testing laboratories that may be used are given below (other laboratories may also be available to do the tests - the list is not an endorsement of any laboratory).

ATLANTIC COAST LABORATORIES

630 Churchmans Road

Newark, DE 19702

Phone: 302-266-9121

Fax: 302-454-8720

<http://www.atlanticcoastlabs.com/index.html>

ENVIROCORP INC.

51 Clark Street

Harrington, DE 19952

Phone: 302-398-4313

Fax: 302-398-4312

<http://www.envirocorplabs.com/>

WATER TESTING LABS OF MARYLAND, INC.

113 High Street

Salisbury, MD 21810

MD Phone: (410) 546-1318

DE Phone: (302) 628-8876

<http://www.marylandwatertesting.com/>

DELAWARE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Delaware Health Department does water testing for private wells. The cost for private well testing is \$4.00 each for a bacterial and chemical test. Private well owners may pick up a sample form and bottle from the State Service Centers in each county or the Delaware Public Health Laboratory. Follow the directions given and return in a timely manner to the office

where you received the bottle. The Delaware Public Health Laboratory can also do water quality testing for commercial produce farms. Contact the laboratory at (302) 223-1520 for sampling kits and procedures. For more information go to:
<http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dph/lab/watertesting.html>

Fungicide Update for Vegetables 2009 - Bob Mulrooney, *Extension Plant Pathologist*; bobmul@udel.edu

Lima Beans

Ridomil Gold/Copper is now labeled nationally for control of downy mildew on lima beans. A 24c label is no longer needed for DE and MD.

Fungi-Phite is a phosphorus acid salt fungicide similar to Phostrol and is now labeled for downy mildew on lima beans. I have had this product in my tests for two years and it has performed extremely well, comparable to Ridomil/Gold Copper and Phostrol. Availability may be limited. It is not listed in the 2009 Commercial Vegetable Recs.

Cantaloupe and Watermelon

Quintec 2.08SC from Dow AgroSciences was labeled during last season and is a good powdery mildew fungicide in a new FRAC group 13 that can be alternated with Rally or Procure in addition to Pristine.

Bravo

The Bravo label has been expanded to include peppers (bell pepper, chili pepper, cooking pepper, pimento, sweet pepper), gourds, eggplant, okra, rhubarb, and cabbage. These new changes are not in the 2009 Commercial Vegetable Recs. With the phasing out of maneb these Bravo additions will replace many of the maneb applications on these crops that might be grown in DE.

Fungicide Guide for Managing Resistance of Fungi on Vegetable Crops Available Online

- Bob Mulrooney, *Extension Plant Pathologist*; bobmul@udel.edu

New Jersey Cooperative Extension has both the 2009 Commercial Vegetable Production Guide online as well as the FRAC guidelines for managing fungicide resistance on vegetable crops. There is much more at this site as well, but it is a good source of information at your fingertips. Both publications are also available free at the Delaware Extension offices. The website is <http://njveg.rutgers.edu>. The Production Guidelines are under *Growing Crops* and the FRAC Guidelines are under *Controlling Pests-IPM*.

Agronomic Crops

Soybean Cyst Nematode Survey to be Conducted in 2009 - Bob Mulrooney, *Extension Plant Pathologist*; bobmul@udel.edu

The soybean cyst nematode (SCN) is the most limiting biotic factor of soybean production in Delaware. In the mid 1990s a major effort was made to survey the soybean acreage for SCN and determine the race composition of the SCN populations present at the time. The Delaware Soybean Board funded this project and the results demonstrated that roughly 60% of the populations tested were race 3, 30% were race 1 and the remainder were a mix of races 5, 7, and 9. Since that time Round-Up Ready soybeans were introduced with a single source of resistance to SCN derived from a soybean plant introduction referred to as PI88788. At the time of the first survey we demonstrated a significant yield reduction in one variety trial where race 3 resistant soybeans were planted in a field known to be infested with race 1. This was the first indication that not all race 1 populations could be controlled with a race 3 or 3,14 resistant soybean variety. For the past 10, years SCN has not been identified as causing much yield loss because symptoms that were seen previously, namely severe stunting and chlorosis, now only seem to be present when a susceptible variety is

grown. This past season a small number of fields had stunted soybeans, chlorosis, and soybean cyst nematode was present on the roots. All of these fields were planted with a Round-Up Ready variety with resistance to SCN. The difference last season is that it was dry from planting through the first 30 days. High SCN egg numbers and early dry weather are known to be very detrimental to early soybean growth and can produce stunting, chlorosis and yield loss. It is time to determine what SCN egg numbers are present in soybean fields 12 years after the initial survey was conducted and what the race composition of infested fields might be. Within the last 5 years there are indications that race 3 is no longer the predominant race. A small set of samples tested here and those sent to other institutions have tested as race 1. Since the majority of resistance in Round-Up Ready soybeans is from PI88788, which allows reproduction of race 1 populations, these varieties may have reduced effectiveness in suppressing current SCN populations. Other control measures may be needed if the current population structure is no longer predominately race 3. No surveys of SCN have been conducted in Delaware since 1996.

The Delaware Soybean Board approved the SCN Survey Project that will provide this valuable information. We are asking that soybean growers that have had SCN in the past or that have soybean fields that have not been producing as expected to have your field sampled for SCN. The field can be in a crop presently as long as we can take a sample in a zig-zag pattern. Fields that have been in continuous soybean production or rotated with corn or other crops are good candidates for the survey. Sampling fields this spring before any tillage is done will give us a good start on the project, which will continue into the fall as well. If we find SCN infested fields during the growing season, these will be added also. We are hoping to sample at least 30 fields in Sussex, 20 in Kent and 10 in New Castle. A percentage of the fields will be typed for race, or HG type as we call it now. If you are interested in participating in the survey please give me a call (302) 831-4865 or email bobmul@udel.edu or contact your county agent and we will take the sample.

Watch Soil Temperatures When Planting Corn - *Richard Taylor, Extension Agronomist;* rtaylor@udel.edu

With temperatures in Delaware bouncing from below freezing in the mornings to only the 40s or 50s in the afternoons, corn growers need to curb any impatience they feel about getting that early jump on corn planting until after the soil temperature in the upper few inches of soil warms above 50°F and prospects are for it to continue to rise. Corn germination and growth does not start until the soil temperature at seeding depth is 50°F or greater. Soil temperatures that fluctuate around 50°F or remain in the low 50s for extended periods lead to slow, variable corn emergence that can have strong negative consequences on yield potential.

If the number of acres that you'll eventually plant to corn necessitates that you get a very early start, I suggest you plant first those fields that are likely to have the lowest yield potential. Save your highest yielding fields and hybrids to plant during the ideal planting window of April 20 to May 5. By planting your best fields during this window, you will ensure the best possible stand and yield. You also should increase your farm-wide average yields in this way.

Still Time for Frost-Crack Seeding of Pastures - *Richard Taylor, Extension Agronomist;* rtaylor@udel.edu

Frost crack seeding is an inexpensive means of establishing or reestablishing legumes in pasture or hay fields. This method is ideally suited to fields too small or irregularly shaped in which to use large equipment. It is most appropriate for use with small-seeded legumes such as white, ladino, or red clover, although it has been used with grasses and, on rare occasion, with larger-seeded legumes such as hairy vetch and alfalfa (low probability of success). If done at the correct time and managed properly to improve the success rate, frost crack seeding can be a very inexpensive tool available to all forage producers regardless of size and level of technology.

The principle involved in frost crack seeding is to seed during late winter or very early spring when freezing and thawing of the soil is producing frost action with ice crystals coming out of the ground and opening cracks in the soil. If the legume or grass is broadcast over the field surface the freezing, thawing, and refreezing will incorporate the seed to some degree into the soil to enhance germination. Also, the seed is present during a cool, moist time that favors legume germination before summer annual weeds germinate. Usually, this occurs between late January and late February although this year we're still having favorable conditions even this late in March.

In frost seedings, either the frost action or livestock activity is used to control competing vegetation, prepare a seedbed, cover the seeds, and provide seed to soil contact for germination. If there is not sufficient frost action after applying seed and animals are available, allow animals to walk the pastures to tread seed into the soil surface. This should be done only when the soil is firm enough so that the cattle or horses will not punch through the sod and push the seed too deep into the soil.

Grass seedings may not be successful with the frost crack method. It is likely that the smaller seeded grasses (timothy, Kentucky bluegrass, and orchardgrass) will be the most easily established with this method. The success rate can be increased if the field is mowed or grazed very short in the fall or winter before seeding. Results of the seeding often are not evident until at least midsummer. The legume or grass plants are very small early and will need as much sunlight and as little competition as possible to allow them to become established. Fields grazed down to 3 or 4-inch stubble will have a higher probability of success. Hay fields where existing vegetation can not be controlled to reduce its competition with the new seedlings will see far fewer surviving seedlings than in pasture situations.

Of the legumes that have been successfully over-seeded into cool-season grasses, red clover is the most productive, ladino clover is the easiest and least expensive to establish, and annual lespedeza is the most versatile. Red clover

generally will not survive more than two years due to the buildup of disease organisms in the soil. White or ladino clover are shallow rooted with surface stolons but can survive for many years if adequate soil moisture is available and harvest management is favorable. Under the best conditions, frost seedings succeed in only three or four years out of five but remain a less expensive option for producers who must rent or otherwise obtain no-till seeders. The lack of good soil-to-seed contact increases the risk of failure and even in successful years it often means that although the percentage of legume is increased the legume stand is not uniform. This often is acceptable to grazers but not to hay producers.

Spring Wake-Up of Pasture and Hay Fields -
Richard Taylor, Extension Agronomist;
rtaylor@udel.edu

It's hoped that your pastures and hay fields have made it successfully through another winter. Now it's time to get pastures actively growing for the needed grazing to extend your hay supplies or reduce the need to buy more hay and it's time for hay fields to green up and be ready for the first good hay making weather later this spring. Many of our hay and pasture fields have had a relatively hard winter with little snow cover and some very cold temperatures.

If the stands have thinned a little or if you just want to speed up growth this spring to be able to graze earlier or boost spring hay yields, now is the time to add a bit of nitrogen (N) to give the grasses a boost. If the field has a good amount of legume present, you should restrict the amount of N applied at any one time to no more than about 30 lbs N/acre. However if few legumes are present in the field, then addition of 50 to 75 lbs N/acre will stimulate the grass to grow and fill in bare spots or at least tiller out fully to help shade out weeds that might try to fill in any void spots.

Unless your soil test shows low to very low levels of phosphorus (P) and potassium (K), you should wait until after the first hay harvest or early to mid-June to apply the P and K that might be required according to your soil test

recommendations or your nutrient management plan. Generally, the freezing and thawing and other reactions that occur over the winter months will release enough available K and P to support spring forage growth.

Grain Marketing Highlights - *Carl German, Extension Crops Marketing Specialist;*
clgerman@udel.edu

Profit Taking and Position Squaring Ahead of Planting Intentions Report

Profit taking and position squaring ahead of USDA's March 31 Planting Intentions Report has taken some of the steam out of the late arriving seasonal rally for U.S. corn and soybeans. The resumption of the rally and the extent will depend to some degree upon planting intentions and weather conditions for planting progress. Of course Wall Street and the government's battle to stave off economic disaster will also weigh in on these markets in the weeks ahead.

Corn Analysis

Non-Commercial/speculative traders are currently net long in corn after being heavily short just three weeks ago, according to the Commitments of Traders Report issued March 17. Burdensome old crop supply is likely to stymie the seasonal rally until acreage intentions and crop progress become known for the '09 crop. Wet weather in the Midwest is threatening to slow row crop planting this spring.

The export sales report for the week ending March 19 showed U.S. corn sales at 46.9 million bushels, well above pre-report estimates and what was needed to meet USDA's projection of 1.7 billion bushels for the '08/'09 marketing year. Shipments were reported at 30.6 million bushels, below that needed to stay on pace with projections.

Soybean Analysis

The Commitments of Traders report showed mixed activity by fund traders. Old crop soybeans are viewed as being in short supply, with traders looking for a marked increase in U.S. soybean plantings for the '09 cropping season.

The U.S. Census Bureau reported soybeans crushed at 135.6 million bushels for the month of February, slightly above the pre-report estimate but significantly below last year's February crush rate of 144.4 million bushels. Bean oil stocks of 3.027 billion pounds were slightly higher than last month's 2.933 billion pounds. Meal stocks of 434.7 thousand short tons, were above the February '08 number of 331 thousand short tons.

The export sales report showed sales at 15.8 million bushels, above the 6.4 million bushels needed to meet USDA's projection of 1.185 billion bushels. Shipments were also above that needed to keep pace with projections.

Wheat Analysis

The net short position of large scale trend-following funds was reported to have scaled back some as of the week ending March 17. Rain is forecast in the dry Southwest and Southern Plains. Large portions of the SRW wheat growing area are currently reported to be wet.

The weekly export sales report showed sales of 9.7 million bushels, above what's needed to keep pace with USDA's '08/'09 marketing year projection of 980 million bushels. Shipments were also reported to be above that needed to stay on pace.

Market Strategy

In a normal year, the March 31 Planting Intentions Report would not generally be viewed as mattering all that much. The actual acreage report isn't published until the end of June. The difference this year seems to be two-fold. First, a significant acreage increase is anticipated for U.S. soybean production for the '09 crop year as compared to last year. That can have a significant impact on the dynamics of the market and ending stock projections, placing a premium on old crop soybeans while limiting upside potential for the new crop. In fact we are already observing the anticipation of a large acreage increase with an inverted soybean market. Second, the commodity markets, as most other markets, are looking for anything to provide them with direction. Remember, markets do not like uncertainty. Although a long shot, the planting intentions report is being held

out as being something that can clear up some of the uncertainty being held out for the corn and soybean markets. To some degree that may be true, however, anticipation of larger soybean acres and smaller to equal corn acres has already been factored into the markets. New crop Dec corn futures are currently trading at \$4.21; Nov soybean futures at \$8.81; and July SRW wheat futures at \$5.25 per bushel. For technical assistance on making grain marketing decisions contact Carl L. German, Extension Crops Marketing Specialist.

Announcements

LEADelaware is Accepting Applications

LEADelaware is now accepting applications for the next class of leadership Fellows. LEADelaware is an agricultural and natural resource leadership program designed to help build the next generation of leaders within the food and fiber industries. The LEADelaware Program will recruit a class of 15 to 20 leaders in Delaware to participate in a two-year program.

Applications are due March 31, 2009

To learn more, visit our website at: <http://ag.udel.edu/frec/LEAD> or contact Laurie Wolinski at lgw@udel.edu or (302) 831-2538

Voluntary Food Safety Certification Training Sessions Offered April 2 & 9 in Georgetown

Training will be offered for both Small Scale and Wholesale Producers at the Sussex County Extension Office in April.

Level 1 (Small Scale) Training Session (3hrs)

Date: **Thursday, April 2**

Time: 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Dinner Provided

Registration: Call Kim Lewis at 302-856-2585 ext. 542 or kimlewis@udel.edu by March 31.

Level 2 (Wholesale) Training Sessions (6 hrs total)

Dates: **Thursday, April 2 & Thursday, April 9**

Time: 6:00-9:00 p.m. on both dates

Dinner Provided

Registration: Call Kim Lewis at 302-856-2585 ext. 542 or kimlewis@udel.edu by March 31.

Not Sure Which Session to Attend?

Level 1 Training: (Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) only, one session – 3 hrs)

This training is for growers who sell to the end user or have such limited wholesale that they can trace produce back without formal traceback procedures.

This training is for growers who market only through:

- Direct market (roadside stand and farmers market)
- U-Pick
- CSA
- Limited local wholesale (sell only small amounts to three or fewer shops, restaurants, local small stores or local farm stands)

Level 2 Training: (Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP), two sessions – 3 hrs each and includes writing your own produce food safety plan).

This training is for:

- Growers who should have a produce food safety plan and traceback procedures in place.
- Growers who need to have a third party audit or are being requested to have a third party audit by buyers.
- All growers that also have packing operations or packing sheds for the wholesale market.
- Growers who deliver wholesale to any supermarkets or chains.
- Growers who deliver wholesale to more than three farm stands, restaurants, local shops, or stores.
- Growers who sell at auctions (no matter what quantity).
- Growers who sell to food service companies, food distributors, packers, repackers, or other produce wholesalers.
- Growers who sell to terminal markets or wholesale markets.
- Growers who sell to schools, government entities, or institutions.

Consider your future plans when attending. If you plan to start wholesaling as part of your business in the future, you should attend Level 2 training.

Questions? Contact Cory Whaley at (302) 856-2585 ext 594, whaley@udel.edu or Tracy Wootten at (302) 856-2585 ext. 538, wootten@udel.edu

We look forward to seeing you in April.

Guinea Fowl International Association Annual Conference

Friday April 3 Sunday April 5, 2009
Carvel Research & Education Center
16483 County Seat Hwy.
Georgetown, DE

The Guinea Fowl International Association (GFIA) is holding its annual conference dedicated to the education of Guinea and small flock owners.

The conference will be held April 3-5, 2009 in Georgetown, DE. This is the first time the Guinea Fowl Convention is being held on the Delmarva Peninsula! Take advantage of this fun and educational 3 day event.

Registration is \$35 for GFIA members and \$45 for non-members. Single day attendance is \$18. A variety of speakers will be presenting on various topics that range from profiting from a small flock, why keep guineas, common parasites, feeding and nutrition for guineas, housing, preparing birds for show, judging guineas, along with many other exciting topics.

For inquiries, or to reach a local GFIA member, please contact Hedy McCarter (410) 341-4343 or Dr. Brigid McCrea, Delaware State University Poultry Specialist (302) 857-6432 or you can register on-line at www.guineafowlinternational.org.

Pasture Walk Featuring Netherfield Estate

Saturday May 2, 2009 2:00-4:00 p.m.
50185 Hays Beach Road
Scotland, MD 20687
Hosts: Ruth & Peter Pry

There will be a tour of host farm highlighting conservation practices. Learn about pasture and hay management, soil testing and nutrient management, cost share incentive programs, manure composting, watering facilities, and more.

SPEAKERS:

Elmer Dengler

Grazing Specialist, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Les Vough

Forage Systems Management Consultant, RCS Southern Maryland RC & D

Bruce Young

District Manager, St. Mary's Soil Conservation District

Terry Heinard

District Conservationist, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Ben Beale

Extension Agent, St. Mary's County Extension

This event is FREE!!

Advance registration is required. Please RSVP by April 25 to Sara Lewis at St. Mary's County Soil Conservation District: (301) 475-8402 ext. 3 or Sara.Lewis@md.nacdnet.net

DIRECTIONS:

From Lexington Park: Go SOUTH on MD-235 S/Three Notch Rd. (12 mi). Turn SLIGHT LEFT onto MD-5. (1.4 mi). Turn LEFT onto Fresh Pond Neck Rd. (.8 mi) Stay STRAIGHT to go onto Hays Beach Rd.. (.8 mi). Parking is on right side, follow signs.

From Waldorf : Take Route 5 South. Continue to follow MD-5 S. (18 mi). MD-5 S becomes MD-235 S/Three Notch Rd.. (30.4 mi). Turn SLIGHT LEFT onto MD-5. (1.4 mi). Turn LEFT onto Fresh Pond Neck Rd. (.8 mi) Stay STRAIGHT to go onto Hays Beach Rd. (.8 mi). Parking is on right side, follow signs.

From Lusby: Go SOUTH on MD-2 S/MD-4 S/MD (13 mi.). Turn LEFT onto MD-235 S/Three Notch Rd. (16.5 mi). Turn SLIGHT LEFT onto MD-5. (1.4 mi). Turn LEFT onto Fresh Pond Neck Rd. (.8 mi) Stay STRAIGHT to go onto Hays Beach Rd. (.8 mi). Parking is on right side, follow signs

New Farm Bill Meeting in Maryland

Tuesday, March 31, 2009 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Thendara 4-H Center
6275 Lord's Crossing Rd.
Hurlock, MD 21643

Learn about the new farm bill, known as the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. The 2008 Farm Bill is approximately 50% larger than the previous farm bill, with 15 titles and more than 600 provisions. Gain important information that can help you plan farm production and business decisions for the future.

Program Topics

Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE)
Farm Storage Facility Loan Program
Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE)
Conservation Programs (EQIP, WHIP, AMA)

Call (410) 228-8800 by March 27 to register.

Upcoming Delaware Farm Bill Workshops

Wednesday, April 1, 2009 7:00 p.m.
Carvel Research and Education Center
16483 County Seat Highway
Georgetown, DE

Wednesday, April 8, 2009 7:00 p.m.
USDA Service Center- Kent Field Office
800 Bay Road, Suite #2
Dover, DE

Thursday, April 9, 2009 1:00 p.m.
Carvel Research and Education Center
16483 County Seat Highway
Georgetown, DE

Will my operation's eligibility be affected by new limits for adjusted gross income? Are there any incentives for beginning farmers or historically underserved customers? Have cost-share rates changed? Are there opportunities for organic or forestry operations? These and many more questions will be answered at a series of 2008 Farm Bill workshops hosted by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The farm bill is the primary agricultural and food policy tool of our Federal government. Some of the changes outlined in this legislation simplify existing programs and create new ones to address high priority environmental goals—affecting farmers for years to

come. The NRCS programs staff has planned three workshops to clarify how these changes might affect Delaware producers. You may be familiar with some of these changes; however, this is your opportunity to receive a more in-depth explanation. A question-and-answer period will be held at the end of each workshop.

For more information on the workshops, please contact your local NRCS Field Office in Kent County (302) 741-2600 x 3, New Castle County (302) 832-3100 x 3, or Sussex County (302) 856-3990 x 3. For more information on the 2008 Farm Bill, visit www.de.nrcs.usda.gov and click on "2008 Farm Bill."

Weather Summary

Carvel Research and Education Center Georgetown, DE

Week of March 19 to March 25, 2009

Readings Taken from Midnight to Midnight

Rainfall:

0.12 inch: March 19

Air Temperature:

Highs ranged from 62°F on March 19 to 45°F on March 20.

Lows ranged from 43°F on March 19 to 23°F on March 25.

Soil Temperature:

45.5°F average

Additional Delaware weather data is available at http://www.deos.udel.edu/agirrigation_retrieval.html and

<http://www.rec.udel.edu/TopLevel/Weather.htm>

Weekly Crop Update is compiled and edited by Emmalea Ernest, Extension Associate - Vegetable Crops

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