



# VegNet

**The Ohio State University Extension Vegetable Crops**

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### **North Central Report- Tim Malinich, Extension Educator, Erie County**

As of yesterday you could still find snow in shaded areas. Ground is thawing rapidly but there is still plenty of standing water and soil is not fit to be worked, nor will it support much traffic.

\*Buds are beginning to swell and bark is coloring up on fruit crops.

\*Orchards still reporting significant damage to peaches.

\*As blackberries canes begin to color up you can easily see freeze damage that may have been questionable a couple weeks ago.

Rabbit damage has been mentioned by a few growers. With the long snow cover and deep freeze, rabbits damaged orchards that had not normally experienced significant problems. In fact, rabbits were feeding above the trunk guards by sitting on snowdrifts and chewing on lower scaffolds.



Rabbit damage on blackberry and pear (Photos by Tim Malinich)

### **Southern Ohio Vegetable and Fruit Update- Brad Bergefurd, OSU Extension Educator, OSU Extension Scioto County and OSU South Centers**

Despite 1 to 2 inches of snow and 1 to 2 inches of rain Saturday (3/29) and early Sunday morning (3/30) across the area, lots of field work continues to get done in southern Ohio with chisel and moldboard plowing, ground being worked, fertilizer and lime being spread, anhydrous ammonia being applied and pre-emergent herbicides being applied even kicking up some dust today (4/1) in the Scioto River valley near Piketon. High tunnel tomatoes, lettuce, greens continue to be planted in high tunnels this week. Seeding of all vegetable and melon transplants continues. Lime sulfur applications are being made to brambles, blueberries and grapes this week. Cabbage was planted in Washington county (Lowell) last Friday March 28, more sweet corn was planted under clear plastic in Highland county (Rainsboro) on Friday March 28, and sweet corn was planted to bare soil in Washington county (Lowell) today April 1<sup>st</sup>. Row covers are beginning to be removed from plasticulture strawberry at Piketon and Circleville with plants showing some leaf desiccation from the cold temperatures. Irrigation pipe is being laid out in preparation for spring frost protection on plasticulture strawberry. Row covers were removed this week from blackberry on Rotatable

Cross Arm Trellis systems in Circleville, Ohio. Temperatures in Portsmouth Ohio topped 78 degrees today (4/1) with sunny skies.



High tunnel tomatoes were planted at Jackson, OH on 3/31 Cabbage was transplanted in Lowell, OH on 3/28 Plastic sweet corn was planted in Rainsboro, OH 3/28

(Photo by Weber Farms, Jackson, Ohio)  
(Photo by Brad Bergefurd)

(Photo by Witten Farms, Lowell, Ohio)



Row covers still in place on strawberry Irrigation pipe was strung out this week 3 to 4 branch crowns on plasticulture strawberry Row cover removed on blackberry this week

(Photos by Brad Bergefurd)



Moldboard and chisel plowing continues  
Anhydrous Ammonia has been applied this past week

Fertilizer and lime continues to be spread

(Photos by Brad Bergefurd)

**Report from Canfield- Eric Barrett, Extension Educator, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Mahoning County Extension**

Other than work inside hoop houses and greenhouses, growers continue pruning in the orchards and berry patches. Everyone is eager to get going, but soil temperatures and moisture are keeping growers out of fields.



Transplants in the greenhouse (Photo by Eric Barrett)

**Report from Cleveland- Jacqueline Kowalski, Extension Educator, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Cuyahoga County Extension**

Snow continued to fall through Sunday afternoon. However, by Monday most had melted. Farmers have started hardening-off cool season transplants for field production and are hoping to plant on raised beds by the end of the week.



**Lettuce seedlings hardening off (photo by Jacqueline Kowalski)**

**OSU South Centers Report- Thom Harker, Research Assistant and Ryan Slaughter, Research Assistant, OSU South Centers, Piketon**



**Winter protective covers have been removed from blackberry and strawberry plantings at Piketon this week**



(Photos by Ryan Slaughter)

**Natchez blackberry high tunnel   Natchez blackberry outside   Natchez blackberry rotatable cross arm trellis/row cover**

With nice weather Monday applications of Lime Sulfur went on brambles, blueberry and grapes. Row covers removed from strawberries. Plants have good size to them under the row covers. Strawberry plants that were uncovered all winter are starting to green up and show new growth. Row covers were also removed from Rotatable Cross Arm trellis blackberries. Hops yard is starting to come alive with bines ranging from 1/8" – 2 1/4" in height.



**Lime sulfur application  
Thom Harker)**

**Hops are 90% emerged (photos by**

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removed from RTA trellis blackberries. Hops yard is starting to come alive with bines ranging from 1/8" – 2 1/4" in height.

**Wayne County Report- Rory Lewandowski, Extension Educator, Agriculture and Natural Resources, OSU Extension Wayne County**

Many high tunnel growers have cole crops started and growing. Some growers were planting tomato seeds at the end of last week, looking ahead to warmer temperatures. There is some added high tunnel construction in the West Salem area responding to a good first season at the County Line Produce Auction last year and looking forward to continued growth at that market. One of the IPM pest scouts talked to a couple of fruit growers that are in a wait and see mode regarding winter injury on peaches, but not very hopeful for 2014 production. Other growers are evaluating winter damage to black berries and grapes and at this point expecting significant production losses.

**OSU Student Farm Report- Elaine Grassbaugh, Research Associate & Staff Advisor to the OSU Student Farm, Columbus Ohio**

Cool season crops are growing well in the OSU Student Farm high tunnel on the OSU Columbus campus.



High Tunnel Crops at OSU Student Farm (photo by Deborah Holdren)

**IPM Field Scout (Orchard) Position Available - Tim Malinich, Extension Educator, Erie County**

Part time, seasonal position for Integrated Pest Management scout of orchard crops. Flexible schedule ranging from 12-19 hours per week. Work as a team

with two other scouts to cover orchards in Erie, Huron, Lorain, Sandusky, Ottawa, Knox and Richland counties. Bachelor's degree in biological science or agriculture preferred. Must be able to work in outdoor environment with significant walking. Knowledge of common weeds and orchard pests helpful. Need to provide own vehicle, mileage reimbursed.

For full description or to request an application packet contact: Erie County Extension Office, 419-627-7631 OR [malinich.1@osu.edu](mailto:malinich.1@osu.edu)

**Stan Ernst- Business & Marketing Specialist/Ag Economist-OSU Extension Specialty Crops Business Program, Columbus**

The 2014 Farm Bill finally passed and is generating more questions than we have answers for until all the USDA regulations are set for the new legislation. You'll recall that we were operating under the 2008 legislation that was extended in 2012 and partially stretched some more when that extension ran out in September 2013. As usual, most public attention is on traditional Title I commodity crops, consumer food programs, environmental issues, and the like.

So what's relevant to horticulture, specialty crops/foods, and the consumer interests that are often so tightly tied to these sectors? My quick/general answer is: "Expect more of the same." That's a good thing because of the use of the word "more." Fruits, vegetables, organic products, and consumer food interests got a serious dose of attention in 2008. They generally found more support in terms of expanded funding and growth in policy directions in 2014. A number of us have written about the somewhat unique group of supporters pushing the produce (etc) agenda in the farm bill, so we don't need to go there. There are also detailed reports on key, Title-by-Title points for horticulture in the 2014 law (see below).

Some highlights that catch my attention:

- In general, the 2014 law was pretty strong in its interest in healthy eating – especially for kids and low income. Even with budget battles, produce fares well in that.
- Research and education programs look pretty good with more funding and slight twists to the major programs making industry involvement even more critical and the cost-share gymnastics less strenuous for core researchers.

- Food safety issues stay prevalent and are tucked into several parts of the legislation in terms of funding, education, oversight, and general policy emphasis. That's increasingly targeting the entire supply chain for produce and its consumers.
- There are "hints" of recognition of data weaknesses for production, inventory, and marketing/prices in fruit/vegetable/specialty foods industries... something that constrains analysis needed to evaluate the performance and policy needs of product sectors increasingly in the thick of dietary and cultural behavior in the US and abroad. The aforementioned "hints" come in the form of mentions of specific data sets or information programs previously funded or dropped, and numerous studies to evaluate information product or program needs – we'll have to wait and see how all that shakes out.
- Finally, there are some significant increases in funds, and clarification on existing programs, for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers. A good portion of support for these programs came from groups particularly interested in startup farm businesses in the horticulture sector.

Those are my quick highlights. Two resources that do a good job of summarizing direct and less-direct implications of each title and section of the farm bill on our sectors are:

Alba J. Collart, Mississippi State University Horticultural Economist, did a webinar segment on Farm Bill Implications for Horticulture as part of the "Ag in Uncertain Times" education program developed by a national coalition of ag economists. It's online at: [http://www.farmmanagement.org/aginuncertaintimesenglish/wp-content/SWF/2014\\_03\\_31\\_AIUTEnglish\\_ACollart.mp4](http://www.farmmanagement.org/aginuncertaintimesenglish/wp-content/SWF/2014_03_31_AIUTEnglish_ACollart.mp4)

The industry group United Fresh also has a good breakdown from the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance on its website:

[http://www.unitedfresh.org/assets/2014\\_Farm\\_Bill\\_SummaryFINAL.pdf](http://www.unitedfresh.org/assets/2014_Farm_Bill_SummaryFINAL.pdf)

### **OSU Food Safety Program Update- Lindsey M Hoover, Coordinator, Dept of Horticulture and Crop Sciences**

Produce Safety: We've got several good agricultural practices (GAPs) trainings scheduled for the month of April and a few in May throughout the state of Ohio.

Stay up-to-date with the training schedule at [producesafety.osu.edu](https://producesafety.osu.edu) and follow @FruitVegSafety for the latest produce safety news!

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