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Pumpkin Harvesting, Curing and Storage.

R. Precheur

With late fruit set in many areas due to hot weather, it is important to maintain healthy vines as long as possible. With good vines and warm September weather many pumpkins will ripen in time for Halloween. When pumpkin fruit in fields turn orange early and Halloween is still many weeks away, the suggestion has been made to move Halloween up several weeks right after Labor day. In many places, the fall festival decorating season starts right after Labor Day. The good news for many growers is that pumpkin demand seems to be earlier than in previous years with some companies wanting delivery by mid September. I have already seen Halloween items for sale in some retail outlets.

Here are some pointers on curing, handling and storing pumpkins and winter squash:

Harvest fruit as soon as they are mature and prior to frost. Both squashes and pumpkins should be well matured before harvest and storage. In some years when maturity is late, pumpkin fruit with at least 40-50% of the fruit surface with orange color will continue to ripen. Use care in handling fruits to avoid wounds. Cuts and bruises in the rind are open to decay organisms that may cause a great deal of loss in the short run. Under proper conditions wound areas can heal over by producing cork tissue. The protective tissue seems to develop best at relatively high temperature and in moist atmosphere.

Key Points

- **Harvest fruit when mature avoiding cuts and bruises.**
- **Cure after harvest 80-85 degrees F and 75-80% humidity for about 7-10 days.**

- After curing, store at 50-60 degrees and 70% humidity.
- Keep fruit dry and provide good air circulation.
- Temperatures below 40 degrees for long periods cause chilling injury and lead to fruit rots.
- Pumpkins will keep for 2-3 months

A 10 day curing period at 80 to 85 degrees and about 80% humidity before storage is often recommended for pumpkins and winter squashes. For pumpkins, many times this can be done in the field, in wind rows, in order to avoid excess handling and costs. At the end of the curing period, the humidity should be lowered to about 70 percent and the temperature kept between 50 to 60 degrees F. It is essential to keep the surface dry during the storage period. Any dry place where as close as possible to the desired storage temperatures can be maintained is suitable for storage of pumpkins and squashes. They keep best when not piled on top of each other but this is not practical for most operations. Try to keep stacks at minimum heights leaving room for good air circulation. Pumpkins will not keep so well as the hard winter squashes but pumpkins in good condition can be held 2 to 3 months without problems.



Crop Reports

Hal Kneen

SOUTHEAST

Sweet corn has been the success story of this past summer with good sales and price for the grower. The tomato crop was good to begin with. Quickly low prices caused several growers to stop picking in late July as picking, packaging, and shipping costs were higher than prices received. Overproduction may be the problem or is it lack of marketing? Most traditional growers feel their role is strictly in growing the crop and leave the marketing to brokerage houses. Perhaps the time is right for growers to work together in marketing through cooperatives or other marketing entities.

A few late May and June planted watermelons are just ripening. Local farm marketers are having good sales due to their large sizes and great taste. Second harvest of green bell peppers occurring. Prices lower than July's \$10- 12 per box.

Cover crops being sown in tomato and sweet corn fields in an attempt to recapture available nitrogen, lessen erosion and increase organic matter.

The year 2001 has been very unusual in that European corn borer trap counts have not been large the entire summer. This should have helped pepper growers in minimizing earlier sprays. Watch ECB trap counts as September and early October come along for the next and last? flight appears.



Farmers Market and Direct Marketing Associations

"Jennifer-Claire Klotz" jcvk@hotmail.com

National Directory of Farmers Market and Direct Marketing Associations 2001 is now on line at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing>

Is there an association near you???

Click on the link under "New Features". You can check for an association near you using a "click map".

Download a .pdf version of the document.

Order a hard copy (available in about one month - but you can pre-order now).

If your association isn't in the directory - there is also contact information on getting it included!

Also available is the 2001 version of the Farmer Direct Marketing Bibliography; (Check it out at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing/bibliography.htm>)

You can also download the publication as a .doc file, .pdf file, view it on line or order a hard copy!



MOTH TRAP REPORTS (~8/14 to 8/21)

C. Welty

corn earworm, pheromone trap

Meigs County (Racine): 41 (up from 17 last week)

Miami County (Troy): 150 (up from 13 last week)

Franklin County (Columbus): 236 (up from 33 last week)

Wayne County (Wooster): 0 (down from 2 last week)

Medina County (Wadsworth): 1 (up from 0 last week)

Summit County (Copley): 1 (up from 0 last week)

Huron County (Celeryville): 0 (same as last week)

Sandusky County (Fremont-South): 7 (up from 6 last week)

Sandusky County (Fremont-West): 32 (up from 21 last week)

Wood County (Hoytville): 0 (same as last week)

European corn borer, pheromone trap

Meigs County (Racine): 3 (up from 0 last week)

Franklin County (Columbus): 4 (down from 31 last week)

Wayne County (Wooster): 39 (down from 64 last week)

Medina County (Wadsworth): 0 (down from 19 last week)

Summit County (Copley): 0 (same as last week)
Huron County (Celeryville): 12 (down from 14 last week)
Sandusky County (Fremont-South): 5 (down from 69 last week)
Wood County (Hoytville): 2 (up from 0 last week)

European corn borer, blacklight trap

Franklin County (Columbus): 59 (down from 61 last week)
Sandusky County (Fremont-South): >103 (down from 173 last week)

fall armyworm, pheromone trap

Franklin County (Columbus): 6 (up from 1 last week)

Wood County (Hoytville): 9 (up from 1 last week)

squash vine borer, pheromone trap

Clark County (S. Charleston; mean of 2 traps): 0.0 (same as last week)
Franklin County (Columbus; mean of 3 traps): 0.7 (same as last week)

variegated cutworm, pheromone trap

Franklin County (Columbus): 13 (up from 10 last week)
Huron County (Celeryville): 10 (down from 18 last week)
Wood County (Hoytville): 2 (down from 6 last week)

black cutworm, pheromone trap

Huron County (Celeryville): 0 (down from 9 last week)
Wood County (Hoytville): 2 (up from 0 last week)

true armyworm, pheromone trap

Wood County (Hoytville): 2 (up from 0 last week)

Note: full season trap records are posted at: <http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~ipm/traps/traps.htm> A link is provided from the VegNet homepage, just click on the Vegetable IPM button.

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The 7 Day Outlook* Practices'

Some warm to hot weather will return to the Northeast the early part of next week but warm spells will be brief and only last about 2 or 3 days. A series of troughs will tend to dig in from the Great Lakes to the OH and TN valleys and hot, moist air will be sent our way. We shouldn't see any record heat and the warm air will be replaced by frequent cold fronts. The tropical Atlantic is really heating up and right now weather patterns will affect mostly the Southeast US and coastal regions. Pay attention to weather patterns over the next few weeks because with so many tropical waves heading our way from Africa, some may move into the Gulf or jump the Appalachians and start heading

towards OH and affect field operations. This is an important time of year to pay attention to the weather in order schedule spraying and harvest operations.

AKRON-CANTON

DAY DATE	FRI 24	SAT 25	SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29
TEMP						
MIN/MAX	61 79	59 81	64 84	61 80	62 79	60 82
WIND	5 7	5 6	5 7	5 8	5 7	5 7
PREC.						
PROB. 24	14	9	38	44	32	33

CLEVELAND

DAY DATE	FRI 24	SAT 25	SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29
TEMP						
MIN/MAX	61 75	59 80	62 82	63 80	62 80	62 81
WIND	4 5	4 7	5 8	5 8	5 7	5 7
PREC.						
PROB. 24	11	10	40	43	32	33

COLUMBUS

DAY DATE	FRI 24	SAT 25	SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29
TEMP						
MIN/MAX	64 82	62 84	64 84	64 84	63 84	63 84
WIND	3 5	2 5	3 5	3 5	3 5	3 5
PREC.						
PROB. 24	29	17	42	44	31	32

CINCINNATI

DAY DATE	FRI 24	SAT 25	SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29
TEMP						
MIN/MAX	65 83	65 84	66 84	64 83	64 82	64 81
WIND	4 6	5 7	5 7	5 7	5 6	5 7
PREC.						
PROB. 24	48	29	45	42	30	32

DAYTON

DAY DATE	FRI 24	SAT 25	SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29
TEMP						
MIN/MAX	63 82	62 83	63 84	64 83	62 83	61 83
WIND	4 5	3 6	4 7	4 6	4 6	4 5
PREC.						
PROB. 24	36	24	45	42	30	32

TOLEDO

DAY DATE	FRI 24	SAT 25	SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29
TEMP						
MIN/MAX	57 79	58 79	61 82	61 80	60 80	59 81
WIND	4 6	3 7	5 8	5 7	4 7	3 7
PREC.						
PROB. 24	14	18	46	40	30	32

YOUNGSTOWN

DAY DATE	FRI 24	SAT 25	SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29
TEMP						
MIN/MAX	58 79	55 82	61 84	60 81	59 80	59 81
WIND	4 6	4 5	5 7	5 7	4 6	4 6
PREC.						
PROB. 24	10	7	36	44	32	33

* LEGEND:

TEMP MIN/MAX - forecasted minimum and maximum temperature for time periods midnight to noon and noon to midnight.

WIND - MEAN WIND SPEED(KTS) FOR TIME PERIODS midnight to noon and noon to midnight.

PREC. PROB. 24 - probability of precipitation for the 24 hour period.



What's New At The VegNet Web Site

- [Online Edition of the 2001 Ohio Vegetable Production Guide - Now Available](#)

- **Sweet Corn Disease Resistance Ratings**

The following are summarized lists of Dr. Pataky's work at the Univ. of IL on disease reactions of sweet corn. In these summaries, all experimental and processing varieties have been removed and only named varieties which were rated for common rust or MDM are included. The first list are those named varieties rated for common rust. The second list are only those named varieties rated for Maize Dwarf Mosaic virus (MDM). For a complete report, E-mail: Bob Precheur: precheur.1@osu.edu

[Common Rust of Sweet Corn](#)

[MDM of Sweet Corn](#)

- **Do You Know Us?**

Find out what we've been up to. The OSU Vegetable Team Report is available in PDF file format for downloading from the VegNet homepage.

- **Sources of Pheromone Traps Used in Vegetable Pest Management.**

Do you need to find traps, lures or suppliers, click on the Vegetable IPM button on the left side of the homepage, then click on the 'Sources' document in the Vegetable IPM section.

IR-4 News

Also in the Vegetable IPM section, you can link to the IR-4 website. Read the results of the 2000 food use workshop, monthly and quaterly newsletters. Find out the latest on pesticide registrations for minor crops. Learn about biopesticides plus much more. Click on the Vegetable IPM button on the VegNet homepage and then click on the IR4 link in the Vegetable IPM section.



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[University Extension](#)

We appreciate very much the financial support for this series of vegetable reports which we have received from the board of growers responsible for the Ohio Vegetable and Small Fruit research and Development Program. This is an example of use of Funds from the "Assessment Program".

Where trade names are used, no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Ohio State University Extension is implied. Although every attempt is made to produce information that is complete, timely and accurate, the pesticide user bears the responsibility of consulting the pesticide label and adhering to those directions.

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