What’s new?

Siegers Seed Company to Offer Volunteer White Half Runner Beans in 2009

The ‘Volunteer White Half Runner’ bean was developed by USDA plant breeder, J. Rennie Stavely at Beltsville, Maryland. Crosses of ‘Mountaineer White Half Runner’ and rust resistant lines were made in the early 1990’s. Screening trials at The University of Tennessee Plateau Experiment Station led to release of three rust resistant lines in 1995. Bel-Tenn RR-2 was selected as the best of the three releases. George Kotch, bean breeder for Asgrow division of Seminis Vegetable Seeds, convinced the company to select and increase the seed, provide a name, and release the selection as a named variety. The name given to the release was ‘Volunteer White Half Runner’.

‘Volunteer White Half Runner’ was widely evaluated by commercial growers in 2000. Some growers reported that it was slightly earlier than ‘State White Half Runner’ although this was not observed in tests at the Plateau Experiment Station. Plant and pod quality were reported to be very similar to that of ‘Mountaineer White Half Runner’. ‘Volunteer White Half Runner’ is resistant to rust, and some strains of virus that attack other ‘White Half Runner’ strains. This is a 60 day bean with 6-inch, light green, oval pods and white seeds.

Siegers is proud to be carrying this variety for next year. For more information on availability and pricing, contact the Tennessee Siegers representative:

Jim Elam
Phone (731) 431-6730
jim_elam@siegers.com

New Insecticide Chemistry from DuPont

DuPont has released Coragen, a new insect control compound. This is the first insecticide from a new class of chemistry, the anthranilic diamides, and controls almost all economically important Lepidopteran (caterpillar) pests and other select pests.

Coragen is effective in preventing the build-up of pest populations, when used early in the pest life cycle. The larvicidal potency and long-lasting activity of Coragen provide crop protection, even when circumstances prevent optimal application timing. Coragen quickly stops insects from feeding, has strong residual activity and is rainfast.

Coragen has a new mode of action, controlling pests resistant to other insecticides, while its selectivity to non-target arthropods conserves natural parasitoids, predators and pollinators. These attributes make Coragen a potentially valuable tool in IPM programs and provide growers greater flexibility in field operations. Coragen studies have demonstrated that it has remarkably low toxicity to mammals, fish and birds along with high insecticidal potency. Its favorable environmental and toxicological profile, as well as recommended low use rates, make Coragen a sound choice for growers, farm workers and the environment.

Coragen is now labeled in Tennessee for brassica crops, cucurbits, fruiting vegetables and leafy vegetables. A label for potatoes is pending.

This information was taken from DuPont’s Coragen Technical Bulletin. For more on Coragen, visit the DuPont website at: www.dupont.com.
Tomatoes and Salmonella

By now, everyone has been inundated with information about the recent *Salmonella* outbreak in tomatoes. Much of the information disseminated by the media has been overblown or misleading. This type of misinformation damages the reputation and sales of all tomato growers, even those, like Tennessee growers, whose farms are not implicated in the outbreak and who grow a safe product. Much of this damage could be avoided if everyone stuck to the facts.

**What are the facts?**

1) The outbreak of illnesses associated with *Salmonella* Saintpaul began to appear between April 10 and June 1, 2008.
2) As of last night, 228 persons infected with *Salmonella* Saintpaul with the same genetic fingerprint have been identified in 23 states, now including TN.
3) An epidemiologic investigation comparing foods eaten by ill and well persons has identified consumption of raw tomatoes as the likely source of the illnesses.
4) The specific type and source of tomatoes is under investigation; however, the data suggest that illnesses are linked to consumption of raw red plum, red Roma, and round red tomatoes, and products containing these raw tomatoes.
5) No deaths have been officially attributed to this outbreak.
6) At this time, FDA is advising U.S. consumers to limit their tomato consumption to those that are not the likely source of this outbreak, including cherry tomatoes; grape and on-the-vine tomatoes, and round red tomatoes from areas that have been cleared by the FDA, although some consumers have shied away from consumption of the crop as a whole.

**Where can you go for additional, reliable information?**

Center for Disease Control

http://www.cdc.gov/Salmonella/saintpaul/

This site contains a link to 'Questions and Answers Related to the Outbreak.'

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration

http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/tomatoes.html

The Packer Alert

http://www.thepacker.com/

Jim Prevor’s Perishable Pundit

www.perishablepundit.com

This site has been providing insights and analysis of the outbreak since its June 3, 2008 edition and has followed up with 4 subsequent editions. The Perishable Pundit has interviewed many involved in the industry (growers, packers, shippers, buyers, commodity groups) and offers many perspectives. I highly encourage anyone interested in learning more to visit this site.

**States with persons with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Saintpaul, by state of residence (as of June 12, 2008). From: http://www.cdc.gov/Salmonella/saintpaul/map.html.**
Question of the Week

**Q:** I am trying to plan my summer vacation around when my sweet corn will be ready. It is just beginning to tassel, so about how much time do I have until it is ready to harvest?

**A:** Sweet corn harvest times can vary depending on variety, available moisture and temperature.

Generally, tasseling begins just before silking. The exact number of days between tasseling and silking varies according to variety and environment, but is usually between 2-4 days. Pollen begins to shed 2-3 days after full tassel expansion & continues for several days. The blister stage, or the stage where the kernels are bubbling up like blisters filled with clear fluid, occurs 10-14 days after silking.

The milk stage, or the stage when kernels are full and the liquid inside turns milky in color, occurs shortly thereafter, or 17-24 days after silking.

When a thumbnail puncture of a kernel reveals the milky sap, this is an indication that the corn is ready for harvest. If the liquid is clear, this indicates the corn is still too immature. If there is no sap, the corn is overmature.

Many experienced growers can feel the outside of the husk and know when the cob has filled out.

In hot weather, maturity will occur more quickly; in cooler weather, more slowly. Other stress factors, like nutrient and water stress, can also shorten the time to ear maturity.

To learn more about sweet corn development, view ‘Sweet Corn Development and Critical Periods for Irrigation Management’ from The Ohio State University at: http://vegnet.osu.edu/library/scorn101/irrgcorn.ppt.

Weather and Crop Report

I like what I see as I look out the window and there are dark gray clouds and the smell of rain in the air. While chances for showers and thunderstorms are spotty for the next week or so, we will be thankful for every bit of rain that we get!

In East TN, we will also start to see a reprieve from the 90+ degree heat. Daytime high temperatures for the next 5-days will be in the upper 80’s. Nighttime temps will be in the mid-60’s. The extended forecast shows high temps dipping into the upper seventies and nighttime temperatures into the mid-50’s by next Friday.

West TN will stay a bit hotter with high’s in the upper 80’s to low-90’s, but cooler nighttime temperatures in the low to mid-60’s.

Middle TN will remain hot like West TN for the next few days and then cool down like East TN towards the middle of next week.

I have had many calls in the last week about tomato plants not setting fruit or losing their blooms. This is likely due to the unseasonably warm high day and nighttime temperatures that we had been having. Generally, flowering and fruit set are reduced when daytime temperatures are above 90°F and nighttime temperatures are above 70°F. The night temperature is critical in setting tomato fruit, the optimal range being 59° to 68°F. With night temperatures much above or below this critical range, fruiting is reduced or absent. With the reduction in both day and nighttime temperatures in the coming days, normal flowering and fruit development should resume.

Due to the cool, wet weather we had earlier this spring, green bean harvest is starting a bit later than expected. Harvests are set to start in Spring City this weekend. The crop around Cookeville will be ready in about two weeks.

Early sweet corn has hit the market. Sweet peas, greens, and new potatoes are abundant in the Farmers’ Markets. Local tomatoes are also available.
Upcoming Events

NCSU Specialty Crops Field Day, June 25, 2008, Laurel Springs, NC
This field day will be held from 10:00am-3:00pm at the Upper Mountain Research Station and focus on lettuce and strawberries. It is sponsored by the NC Specialty Crops Program at NC State. For more information, contact Extension Specialist Barclay Poling at Barclay_Poling@ncsu.edu.

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association Mountain Farm Tour, June 28-29, 2008, farms around Asheville, NC area
For more information, visit http://carolinafarmstewards.org.

This annual event promises a program full of educational presentations, workshops, and walks for herb hobbyists, gardeners, and professional herb growers and practitioners. For more about the conference, registration information, and to learn how to join the NC Herb Association, visit http://ncherbassociation.com.

CFSA High Country Farm Tour, August 2-3, 2008, Boone, NC area
Sponsored by Carolina Farm Stewardship Association. For more information, visit http://carolinafarmstewards.org.

NCSU Specialty Melons Field Day, August 5, 2008, Kinston, NC
This field day begins at 4:00 PM at the Cunningham Research Station. It is sponsored by the NC Specialty Crops Program at NCSU. For more information, contact Horticultural Science Extension Specialist Jonathan Schultheis at Jonathan_Schultheis@ncsu.edu or Extension Associate Bill Jester at Bill_Jester@ncsu.edu.

NCSU Annual Tomato Field Day, August 7, 2008, Fletcher, NC
More information will be posted as it becomes available.

TSU Small farm Expo/Small Farmer Recognition Program, August 8, 2008, Ashland City, TN
More details to follow.

Pumpkin/Gourd Field Day, October 16, 2008, Mountain Research Station, Waynesville, NC
For more information, contact Department of Horticultural Science Extension Specialist Jonathan Schultheis at Jonathan_Schultheis@ncsu.edu.

2008 University of Tennessee Research and Education Center Field Days:
(For more information on any of these events, visit http://taes.tennessee.edu/dynamic/events.asp.)

Fruits of the Backyard Field Day, June 17, 2008, Middle TN Research and Education Center, Spring Hill, TN

Tobacco, Beef and More Field Day, June 26, 2008, Highland Rim Research and Education Center, Springfield, TN

Blooms Days, June 28-29, 2008, University of Tennessee Gardens, Knoxville, TN

Summer Celebration, July 10, 2008, West TN Research and Education Center, Jackson, TN

Tobacco and Forage Production Field Day, July 17, 2008, Research and Education Center at Greeneville, Greeneville, TN

25th Milan No-Till Field Day, July 24, 2008, Research and Education Center at Milan, Milan, TN

Steak and Potatoes Field Day, August 5, 2008, Plateau Research and Education Center, Crossville, TN

SPROUTS now archived on the web at:
http://plantsciences.utk.edu/wszelaki_pubs.htm

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