



Newsletter Extension

Fruit ICM News

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Calendar

January 8-9, 2001: Kentucky State Horticultural Meeting. For more information contact John Strang, University of Kentucky (606) 257-5685.

January 9-10, 2001: Great Lakes Vegetable Growers Convention, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. For information and registration for the program contact Dave Smith, Michigan Vegetable Growers Association and program coordinator, at (734) 848-8899. As part of the convention, a "Plasticulture School" will follow the regular meeting and will be offered on January 11. Dr. Ron Goldy, Extension Vegetable Specialist, will be coordinator and contact for the program. Ron can be reached at (616) 944-1477. Please note that pre-registration for the plasticulture meeting will be required.

January 29-31, 2001: Indiana Horticultural Congress, at the Adams Mark Hotel in Indianapolis. The Congress is for participants; let them know what issues you would like them to address. Check the website often for updates: <http://www.hort.purdue.edu> and follow the link for Indiana Horticultural Congress.

February 7-9, 2001: Ohio Fruit Growers Society Congress, in conjunction with the Ohio Vegetable and Potato Growers Association, Ohio Direct Marketing Association, and The Ohio State University will be held in Toledo at the Seagate Centre and Radisson Hotel.

Governor Signs New Megafarm - Regulation Bill Into Law

Based on a Columbus Dispatch December 14 article

Governor Bob Taft signed legislation on December 14 giving the Ohio Department of Agriculture the authority to regulate the state's large livestock operations.

"I look forward to working with all parties to ensure this system allows agriculture to thrive in Ohio, while at the same time (this bill) assures the public a high standard of environmental protection," Taft said in a statement released after he signed the bill in a ceremony with officials from the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation.

The law, which takes effect in three months, gives the farm group something it has sought for years: an end to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's power to give permits to megafarms. Farmers have long complained about lengthy delays and arbitrary rules under the EPA.

Taft said that under the EPA, the livestock-waste permitting program did not have enough money or employees. The new law comes with \$2 million to hire inspectors. The actual transfer of authority will not take place until those employees are hired and new rules are put in place -- probably in a year or more.

The 125 farms that fall under the rules would have two years to meet the standards. The new law requires the farms to renew their permits every five years and to set up plans to control insects and rodents. It also allows the regulators to conduct background checks on farm operators and to deny permits to those with poor environmental records in Ohio and elsewhere.

Christie Whitman To Be Named Director of the EPA

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), created in 1972, is responsible for overseeing the nation's air, land, and water resources. It is not a Cabinet-level job, but it is one of the nation's top agency posts. Whitman would succeed Carol Browner, who was appointed in 1993 by President Clinton and is the longest-serving administrator in EPA history.

The EPA is divided into 10 regions, with more than 18,000 full-time employees and an annual budget of more than \$7.2 billion.

Bush Names Ann Veneman As New Ag Secretary

Source: Joe Kovach, OSU IPM Coordinator

President-elect George W. Bush announced a series of nominations for Cabinet posts, including Ann Veneman as Secretary of Agriculture. Veneman served as director of the California Food and Agriculture Department from 1995 to 1998. She was the highest-ranking woman at USDA from 1989 to 1991, when she served under President George Bush as deputy secretary for international affairs and commodities programs.

Ann Veneman, an attorney who is the daughter of California peach farmers, emphasized foreign trade,

food safety, and education during her tenure as California's agriculture director. Appointed by former Governor Pete Wilson, Veneman is the only woman to have held that state cabinet post. Prior to that, under former President George Bush she dealt with international trade at USDA, rising to deputy secretary. During that time, she helped negotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Uruguay Round Talks for the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Since Wilson left office, Veneman has practiced law in Sacramento, but has maintained farm connections as a specialist in food, agriculture, environment, technology, and trade issues. She is a strong advocate of high tech's role in farming, from e-commerce over the Internet to genetic engineering.

Rick Foster Receives 2000 Sharvelle Award

Source: Facts for Fancy Fruit, December 21, 2000

At the annual Cooperative Extension Conference held last month at Purdue University, Rick Foster received the 2000 Eric G. Sharvelle Distinguished Extension Specialist Award. Some of us know Rick from his work with fruit and vegetable growers throughout Indiana. Rick is also well known in the Midwest as one of the most knowledgeable Extension fruit and vegetable Entomologists in the region.

Rick received the honor in recognition of his work in developing and promoting integrated pest management programs for fruits and vegetables. These programs have helped to reduce pesticide use and provide useful pest control alternatives for fruit and vegetable growers. For example, the reduced use of miticides and the cultivation of predator mites in fruit production have helped growers both financially and environmentally.

Foster's contributions include continuing research and Extension work on management of insect pests on both fruits and vegetables. His efforts helped in reducing the use of insecticides on many fruit and vegetable crops by over 50%.

Rick has worked with apple growers on mite management. He has often reported on his work at the Indiana Hort Congress, at regional meetings, and in *Facts for Fancy Fruit*. He has been successful in getting growers to avoid management practices that encourage mite buildup and decrease predator mites and insects.

Rick has taught growers to change practices, using softer insecticides and avoiding the ones which are very toxic to predators. He has helped to reduce the number of miticide applications in Indiana orchards.

Rick has been involved in the production and updating of the three publications relating to fruit production in Indiana. He has been the primary editor for the annually revised publication *Midwest Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers*. He was a driving force behind the original publication, which is now the standard for commercial vegetable growers in much of the Midwest.

The Sharvelle award is presented each year by Dr. Derek and Sybil Sharvelle. Derek is the son of Eric Sharvelle, who was the Extension fruit pathologist at Purdue for many years - 1946 to 1975.

Congratulations, Rick!

National Organic Standards Are Released

By Michele Dula Baum CNN.com Health and Food Writer

For the first time, the U.S. government is telling farmers and food producers what makes a product organic. "These are the strictest, most comprehensive organic standards in the world," U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Wednesday, December 20, in announcing the final rule, which will be published in Thursday's Federal Register. The rule becomes effective 60 days from publication, and growers and livestock producers have a maximum of 18 months to comply if they want to market their products as organic.

"I am confident that our work will lead to even greater growth and opportunity in what is already a \$6 billion organic food industry," Glickman said. In making Wednesday's announcement, he was joined by U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy, a Democrat from Vermont, organic farmers Amy and Travis Forgues, and several staff members from USDA.

"These new standards are a win for both farmers and consumers," Glickman continued. "For farmers, the standards create clear guidelines for how to take advantage of the exploding demand for organic products. For consumers, the organic standards offer another choice in the marketplace." Those who "want to buy organic can do so with the confidence of knowing exactly what they're buying," he said.

National standards on organically produced foods have been in development since the Organic Foods Production Act was passed as part of the 1990 Farm Bill. Even so, seven years elapsed before initial regulations could be formulated and proposed.

What are the key differences in the rule issued by the USDA and what was proposed in 1997? It:

- Prohibits the use of irradiation, sewage sludge, or genetic engineering in foods marketed as organic;
- Requires that products labeled as "Made with Organic Ingredients" contain at least 70 percent organic ingredients, making the standard consistent with that used in the European Union;
- Requires handlers to use organic ingredients up to 100 percent, whenever possible, if a product is labeled as "organic"; Excludes retail outlets from most of the requirements, along with food producers whose gross income from organic sales is \$5,000 or less a year;
- Requires immediate notification of "drift" of a prohibited substance from a neighboring property or other source;
- Provides more opportunity to resolve cases of noncompliance prior to revocation of certification;
- Disallows use of pesticides on land designated for organic produce for at least three years prior to organic planting;
- Sets specific intervals between the application of raw manure to crops and harvesting them;

- Prohibits the use of antibiotics in livestock production.

Changes from earlier proposals include:

- Enhancing market incentives for organic products by making product content requirements stricter before the term organic can be used on the main label, including changing the percentage of organic ingredients in products labeled "Made with Organic Ingredients" from at least 50 percent to at least 70 percent;
- Providing better information for consumers by allowing manufacturers to state the exact percentage of organic ingredients on the principal display panel;
- Providing greater flexibility for organic farmers by simplifying requirements for composting of manure and by providing new options for dairy operations converting a whole herd to organic production;
- Incorporating industry standard practices by allowing wine produced with sulfur dioxide to be labeled "made with organic grapes" and adopting 5% of the EPA pesticide tolerance as the pesticide residue level above which a product cannot be sold as organic.

Access to the rules is available at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/>

Congress Appropriates \$200 Million for Purchase of Fruits and Vegetables

<http://www.fruitgrowersnews.com>

The U.S. government will buy \$200 million worth of fruits and vegetables in the next few months with money appropriated by Congress.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will buy large volumes of apples, cherries, citrus, cranberries, black-eyed peas, onions, melons, peaches and potatoes. Other commodities that meet the criteria for purchases include plums, apricots, pears, beans, corn, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, some mixed vegetables, and certain tree nuts. An AMS official said that \$30 million of the money is earmarked to buy cranberries.

President Clinton signed the legislation that contains the funds for the USDA to make purchases of commodities experiencing severely low prices during 1998 and 1999 crop years. The food will be used in some government feeding programs including the school lunch program.

The USDA's first purchases from now until March will be of commodities soon to be harvested or that are in inventories. AMS will post its buying intentions and purchases at

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fvcomm.htm>

The site contains guidelines and instructions for bidding. The final standard includes several changes from the proposed rule issued in March:

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