



# **UConn Extension Vegetable & Small Fruit Growers' Conference**

**January 7, 2025**

**UConn Student Union | Storrs, Connecticut**

# REGISTRATION INFORMATION

**Regular Registration: \$50.00** (ends December 29, 2024 at 11:59 PM)

**Late Registration** (starting on December 30, 2024): **\$70.00**

**Student Registration: \$35.00**

Online registration will close on January 5, 2025 at 11:59 PM.  
*Same day registration may be available but space is not guaranteed.*

*Trade Show held throughout the conference*  
***Pesticide recertification credits available: 4 CEU, PA,1A categories approved***

Lunch & Parking is included in conference registration

Prior to the day of the conference, you will be sent an event parking link to register for validated parking  
**You must be registered prior to January 5, 2024 in order to receive free parking.**

**Register at: [s.uconn.edu/vfcregistration](https://s.uconn.edu/vfcregistration)**

To pay via mail: [s.uconn.edu/vfcmailregistration](https://s.uconn.edu/vfcmailregistration)

For more information visit: [ipm.cahnr.uconn.edu](https://ipm.cahnr.uconn.edu)

**Questions? Email [tolland@uconn.edu](mailto:tolland@uconn.edu) or call 860-875-3331**

If you require reasonable accommodations for a disability, please call 860-875-3331 or email [tolland@uconn.edu](mailto:tolland@uconn.edu) at least two weeks in advance.

We can only accommodate those with dietary restrictions who register prior to December 29th.

For those with severe food allergies, while we will make every effort to accommodate, we cannot fully guarantee the prevention of cross-contamination. If needed, you may consider bringing your own lunch for added peace of mind.



# TRADE SHOW EXHIBITOR & SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION

## **Trade Show Registration: \$195.00**

*Includes a 6 six-foot table space and one attendant registration*

## **Silver Sponsor: \$100.00**

*Includes business card size advertisement in conference program*

## **Gold Sponsor: \$250.00**

*Includes 1 regular registration & 1/4 page advertisement in conference program*

## **Platinum Sponsor: \$500.00**

*Includes 1 trade show registration, 1 regular registration (2 people total) & 1/2 page advertisement in conference program*

Any business, farm, organization or individual can be a conference sponsor.  
Sponsors do not have attend the conference.

Trade Show and Sponsorship Registration Deadline is December 20, 2024

**REGISTER AT:**

**[s.uconn.edu/fvctradesponsorreg](https://s.uconn.edu/fvctradesponsorreg)**



# AGENDA

- 8:00 AM **Registration, refreshments, socialize, visit trade show**
- 8:55 AM **Welcome**
- 9:00 AM **Ag Trends for Vegetable & Fruit Growers**  
Chris Laughton, Farm Credit East
- 9:50 AM **High tunnels for winter growing: techniques and tips from farmers**  
Susan Mitchell, Cloverleigh Farm, Columbia  
Steve Munno, Massaro Community Farm, Woodbridge
- 10:20 AM **Announcements**
- 10:25 AM **Break**
- 10:50 AM **Weed Management Strategies for Strawberries**  
David T. Handley, Extension Vegetable & Small Fruit Specialist &  
Cooperating Professor of Horticulture for the University of Maine
- 11:25 AM **Value Added Product Development**
- 11:55 PM **Lunch break/trade show**
- 1:00 PM **Sweet Corn Farmer Panel**  
Bruce Gresczyk Jr., Gresczyk Farm, New Hartford, CT  
*Other Speakers to be announced*
- 1:45 PM **Growing in Freight (shipping container) Farm**  
Jeremy Whipple, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, Mashantucket, CT
- 2:05 PM **Break/Poster Presentation**
- 2:30 PM **Managing Anthracnose Crown Rot and Other Invasive Strawberry Pathogens in the Northeast**  
Nathan Westrick, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven, CT
- 3:00 PM **Pesticide recertification credits and socialize.** 4 CEU PA, 1A categories approved

**Trade Show will be open from 8:00 am - 2:30 pm**

**Research Posters will be displayed throughout conference**

During the afternoon break the presenters will be available to answer any questions regarding posters

**UConn** | EXTENSION

# TALK SUMMARIES & SPEAKER BIOS

## **AG TRENDS FOR VEGETABLE & FRUIT GROWERS**

Chris Laughton, Farm Credit East

Chris Laughton is Farm Credit East's Director of Knowledge Exchange and the FarmStart Program Manager, where he combines his expertise in agricultural finance with a passion for supporting new and established farmers. Chris frequently writes on topics at the intersection of agriculture, economics, and management, providing insights that help farmers navigate an evolving industry. In his upcoming talk, he will discuss agricultural trends specifically impacting vegetable and fruit growers, drawing on his extensive experience to highlight key developments and strategies for success in these sectors.

## **HIGH TUNNELS FOR WINTER GROWING: TECHNIQUES AND TIPS FROM FARMERS**

Susan Mitchell, Cloverleigh Farm, Columbia

Steve Munno, Massaro Community Farm, Woodbridge

Susan Mitchell runs Cloverleigh Farm, a certified organic vegetable farm in Columbia, CT, where she grows a wide range of vegetable crops and herbs in outdoor, high tunnels, and a greenhouse. Since starting Cloverleigh in 2014, she's focused on sustainable, organic practices to provide fresh, local produce to her community.

Steve Munno is the Farm Manager at Massaro Community Farm, a certified organic farm known for blending sustainable practices with community engagement. At Massaro, Steve oversees high tunnel and field production, focusing on year-round vegetable growth and supporting the local food system.

In this talk, Susan and Steve will cover key techniques for successful winter growing, including fall sowing and transplant timing, along with tips on setting up and managing high tunnels. Drawing from their own experiences, they'll share practical insights on making high tunnel systems work for winter production.

## **WEED MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR STRAWBERRIES**

David T. Handley, Extension Vegetable and Small Fruit Specialist and a Cooperating Professor of Horticulture for the University of Maine.

David T. Handley is the Extension Vegetable and Small Fruit Specialist and a Cooperating Professor of Horticulture for the University of Maine. Dr. Handley carries out applied research regarding berry and vegetable variety evaluation, production techniques and pest management strategies.

In this talk, Dr. Handley will cover multifaceted approach for successful weed management in strawberries, which begins prior to planting and carries through the final harvest. Available weed management options should be tailored to a particular operation and include appropriate crop rotation, preplant preparation, cultivation, and, when necessary, judicious herbicide use.

# TALK SUMMARIES & SPEAKER BIOS

## **SWEET CORN GROWERS PANEL**

Bruce Gresczyk Jr., Gresczyk Farm, New Hartford, CT.

Other growers to be confirmed

In this panel, growers will provide insights into selecting sweet corn varieties optimized for yield, flavor, and regional growing conditions. They will address key pest management strategies to tackle common issues faced by growers, focusing on weed control methods, insect management, and effective approaches to deterring birds.

## **GROWING IN FREIGHT (SHIPPING CONTAINER) FARM**

Jeremy Whipple, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, Mashantucket, CT

Jeremy Whipple is the Farm Manager at Meechook Farm, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation in Mashantucket, CT. Jeremy will discuss Meechook Farm's journey with Freight Farming, covering why they chose this system, the acquisition process, and troubleshooting support. He'll outline labor, water, and energy requirements, walk through the production timeline from seed to harvest, and share insights on yields, revenues, and recommendations for other growers considering container farming.

## **MANAGING ANTHRACNOSE CROWN ROT AND OTHER INVASIVE STRAWBERRY PATHOGENS IN THE NORTHEAST**

Nathan Westrick, The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven, CT

Nate Westrick is a plant pathologist with the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station whose research focusses on the biology and management of fungal plant pathogens on a range of specialty and field crops. Increase in plant movement across state lines and warming climates have led to the introduction of new invasive plant diseases to our region, with anthracnose crown rot of strawberry being a particularly devastating example. This talk will discuss the current IPM strategies which can be used to limit the spread of the disease and novel research into varietal resistance and chemical control of the pathogen.

## **RESEARCH POSTER PRESENTATION:**

- Characterizing the field composition and population genetics of *Alternaria* leaf blight and head rot of broccoli. *Roy Davis, UConn*
- Contaminant accumulation in crops irrigated with recycled wastewater. *Sara Nason, CAES*
- Drone Imaging for Detecting Potato Leafhopper Infestation and Nutrient Deficiency in Green Beans. *Bivek Bhusal and Ana Legrand, UConn*
- Early Assessment of Nutrient Deficiency in Fruit Crops using Unpiloted Aerial System (UAS) Imagery. *Susmita Lamichhane, UConn*
- Fall cabbage response to phosphorus and potassium fertilization. *Haiying Tao, UConn*
- Monitoring PFAS in CT Agricultural Soils: A pilot program to research soil contamination levels. *Jasmine Jones, CAES*
- Old Pest, New Problem: First report of European corn borer resistance to Bt traits in USA was detected in CT. *Kelsey Fisher, CAES*

# SPONORS



FARM CREDIT EAST

***Nutrien***  
*Ag Solutions*<sup>TM</sup>



DESIGN // BUILD // GROW



# PARKING INFORMATION & DIRECTIONS

Student Union Ballroom (Rooms 330/331, Tradeshow Room 304)

2100 Hillside Road, Storrs, CT 06269

Conference Parking is **available only in South Parking Garage**, 2366 Jim Calhoun Way, Storrs, CT 06269.

**Prior to the day of the conference, you will be sent an event parking link to register for validated parking.** Follow the instructions to enter in your vehicle's information and the passcode.

If you do not use the parking link, you will need to pay for parking via PaybyPhone or the parking kiosks on Floor 1 of South Parking Garage.

**This link is not valid for North Parking Garage. If you park there, you will be ticketed.**

**If you require handicap parking or additional accommodations, please call 860-875-3331 or email [tolland@uconn.edu](mailto:tolland@uconn.edu) one week prior to the event.**

Please note: Hillside Road between the South Parking Garage and the Student Union is now closed to motor vehicle traffic. If you have more materials than you can easily carry from the parking garage, bringing a transport cart is recommended.

## Driving Directions

Located in northeastern Connecticut, UConn's main campus in Storrs is conveniently accessible from various interstates, and is approximately 25 miles east of Hartford, 50 miles west of Providence, 100 miles southwest of Boston, and 150 miles northeast of New York City.

### From Points North (I-84)

- I-84 to Exit 68
- Follow signs on Route 195 South
- Turn Right onto Route 44 West
- Turn Left onto Discovery Drive
- Follow Signs to South Parking Garage, 2366 Jim Calhoun Way, Storrs, CT 06269.

### From Points South (I-95, I-395, US-6, SR-32)

- Follow Signs on Route 195 North
- Turn Left onto Bolton Road, or Next Left onto Mansfield Road
- Follow Signs to South Parking Garage, 2366 Jim Calhoun Way, Storrs, CT 06269.



## From Points East (I-95, I-395)

- Follow signs on Route 44 West
- Turn left onto Discovery Drive
- Follow Signs to South Parking Garage, 2366 Jim Calhoun Way, Storrs, CT 06269.

## From Points West (I-91, I-384, SR-32)

- Follow signs on Route 44 East
- Turn right onto Discovery Drive
- Follow Signs to South Parking Garage, 2366 Jim Calhoun Way, Storrs, CT 06269.

## Walking Directions From South Parking Garage to Student Union:

- Exit the South Parking Garage through the ground floor exit onto Jim Calhoun Way.
- Walk toward Hillside Road, in front of the UConn Bookstore.
- Turn left and walk past Gampel Pavilion on your left.
- The Student Union building will be on the right.
- The Ballroom is located on the third floor. Multiple elevators are available.

## Registration:

The registration desk is located outside the ballroom, on the third floor of the Student Union. All attendees must check-in.

**Parking garages are marked with the blue circle P on the map below.**

For additional parking information, please visit the [Storrs Visitor Parking](#) page.

