

2025 Vegetable & Small Fruit Working Group IPM Priorities

The Northeast Vegetable and Small Fruit Working Group met online on 3.10.25 to discuss each state's programs, personnel and major pest issues. One of the goals of the meeting was to develop education, research and regulatory priorities and vote for the top 15 in each group to help focus outreach and research. The following in yellow are the top 15 priorities in each category from the 26 specialists who participated in the rankings. Vegetable and Berry specialists from Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New York attended and voted.

EDUCATIONAL Priorities (1=highest priority)

Pest ID and Management	3.1
Extreme weather/climate extremes	7.1
Common causes of weed control failures (timing, species, products, multiple plans)	8.3
General education for new growers <10 years, soil testing	10.7
Alternatives to conventional plastic mulch	10.8
Request and demand for climate resiliency education	11.6
Pesticide regulations/safety, especially high tunnels	12.1
High tunnel nutrient management, irrigation	12.7
Fruit: new diseases Neopestalotiopsis, anthracnose	13.0
High tunnel soils (om, salt pH)	13.3
Cover cropping, reducing tillage	14.8
Pesticide label changes (WPS, rates), new materials	15.0
Resistance management, developing resistance to FRAC 7 (Alternaria in brassicas)	16.2
Incorporating biocontrols into production	16.4
Deep dive in specific crops, growers like that way of learning	16.8
Flooding in high tunnels, engineering controls	17.1
Phytophthora resistant crops	17.5
Endangered Species Act labelling	17.8
Soil drainage, tile drainage installation regulations, when can/how to get help doing it	19.5
Soil microbiology analysis, how they work, what we know, what we can measure	19.7
Nutrient management in small perennial fruit systems e.g. blueberry	22.2
Individualized on-farm consultation, support	22.3
Language barriers	23.6
General variety recommendations	25.9
More grapes everything horticultural, pests	26.2
Labor issues	26.3
Best practices for data collection, record-keeping: soil testing, moisture, temperature	26.6

Business management, cost vs profits, marketing, financial general	26.7
Intercropping transitions	26.8
Pollinator stuff in context of farm systems to support wild pollinators	27.1
How to build high tunnels, site selection	27.3
Row cover management	27.5
TFA (PFAS)	27.7
Groundcovers	28.0
Cut flower pest management	29.0
Biofumigation	29.7
Birds, other wildlife	33.0
Engineering, energy efficiency, walk-in coolers	33.7
Drone applications	34.5
Land access, implications, investment in leased land, farm succession	34.7
Food safety, GAPs	35.9
Rodenticide regulatory changes	37.1
WPS worker protection training	40.6

2025 Vegetable & Small Fruit RESEARCH Priorities (1=highest priority)

Pesticide efficacy trials	6.6
Biological pesticide efficacy in particular	8.1
Overwintering pests (primarily insects) in tunnels	8.5
Between row weed management	9.3
Phytophthora research, flooding related	9.8
Include cost analysis of treatments (non-production stressors)	10.1
Integration of natural enemies and reduced risk pesticides	11.1
Growing degree days phenology, models	11.5
Natural enemies/pollinator attract, cover crops, intercropping, habitat strips, purchase/release	12.2
Extreme weather mitigation strategies	12.5
Screening and monitoring of insecticide/fungicide resistance, including to organic products	13.8
Alternatives to conventional plastic mulch	15.3
Plastic pollution in agriculture	16.0
Birds, other wildlife	16.7
Pollinator emergence timing for decision making	17.1
Ag engineering support, not all states have a specialist	17.4
Cultivar evaluation	18.6
Plant breeding for weather resilience and pest resistance.	19.5
All the pests in chat	19.8
Organic: flea beetle, CPB, cucumber beetles/wilt	21.2
Bacterial disease mgmt.	21.8
Companion planting	21.8

TFA (PFAS)	22.1
Biocontrol in high tunnels (aphids, thrips, mites)	22.5
Engineering, pesticides, new tech, non-production management, lack information and staff	22.8
Strawberry soil-borne diseases	24.3
Cucurbit disease mgmt.	24.5
Cost benefit analysis of grafting	25.0
Screening and monitoring of insecticide/fungicide resistance, including organic products	25.9
Animals: deer, voles and birds	29.6
SWD Blueberries and Raspberries	29.8
Cabbage aphids	30.6
Corn earworm	30.9
Pepper maggot	33.6
Sap beetles in corn, strawberry	34.0
Extreme weather events” “Unpredictable weather events”	35.5
Potato aphids	35.6
Thrips	37.3
Wireworm	37.5
Japanese beetles	38.1
Summer annual grasses (foxtails, crabgrass, goosegrass)	38.5
Yellow nutsedge	40.1
Plant breeding for weather resilience and pest resistance	40.8
Timing of weed control	41.0
Mugwort	41.7
Hedge and field bindweeds	43.9
Poison ivy	44.5
Screening and monitoring of insecticide/fungicide resistance, including to organic products	45.3
Oriental bittersweet	46.5
Modern farmscape engineering and design/climate mitigation for farm infrastructure	46.9
Record keeping	47.8
Need for educating new growers on where to find various types of educational and production resources?	48.8
Taxation of tunnels	49.9
birds and wildlife here	51.2

2025 Vegetable & Small Fruit REGULATORY Priorities (1=highest priority)

Maintaining production guides	1.8
Maintaining staff	4.3
Engineering, pesticides, new tech, non-production management, lack information and staff	4.5
Crop insurance improvement that fit growers needs	4.7
TFA (PFAS) regulations	5.1

Flooding, food safety regulations	5.3
Pesticide packaging not compatible with small farmers' needs, clarify rules	5.5
WPS worker protection training	7.0
Consistency across towns building codes, land use, agritourism, etc.	8.4
Consistency in tile drainage installation regulations	8.5

26 completed ranking:

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| • Alicyn Smart | UMaine |
| • Amber Vinchesi-Vahl | UNH |
| • Angie Madeiras | UMass |
| • Ann Hazelrigg | UVM |
| • Becky Maden | UVM |
| • Cheryl Sullivan | UVM |
| • Daniel Heck | Cornell |
| • David Handley | UMaine |
| • Elisabeth Hodgdon | Cornell |
| • Elizabeth Buck | Cornell |
| • Evan Lentz | UConn |
| • Felicia Millett | CAES |
| • Heather Bryant | UNH |
| • Heather Kase | Cornell |
| • Jason Lilley | UMaine |
| • Keiddy Urrea-Morawicki | URI |
| • Liza DeGenring | UNH |
| • Margaret Skinner | UVM |
| • Maria Gannett | UMass |
| • Nick Goltz | UConn |
| • Olivia Saunders | UNH |
| • Peyton Ginakes | UMaine |
| • Marvin Pritts | Cornell |
| • Sue Scheufele | UMass |
| • Vic Izzo | UVM |
| • Anonymous (voted but did not submit name) | |