



Upcoming Events & News

SVGA FIELD DAY **Tuesday, July 8, 2015**

We're heading to Tisdale for our ever popular annual field day. Stops include:

- Hodgson Farms where Mark and Susan will show us their vast strawberry fields. They also run a market garden, butcher shop and offer wagon and sleigh rides to visitors.
- Star City Colony for lunch and a tour of Martin Tschetter's large vegetable garden and commercial greenhouse.
- At Murray Gray's farm we will get to see strawberries, melons and assorted other vegetables grown in high tunnels.

Book your attendance by e-mailing

skveggrowers@gmail.com

Or call Chelsea at (306) 867-9621

Please see the enclosed flyer for more information.

SASKATCHEWAN **GREEN TRADES CONFERENCE**

November 3 - 5, 2015

Saskatoon Inn, Saskatoon

Your volunteer board is already busy booking exciting speakers for this annual event. Subjects include:

-Dr. Chris Yost has been looking at microbial contamination of vegetables and will update the group.

-Dr. Doug Waterer will be back for his annual year in review and a surprise subject.

-Dale Schattenkirk, LTS Consulting will shed light on LEAN efficiencies and the benefits of establishing a lean program on your farm.

-Learn from other producers and hear their stories from the 2015 growing season.

For a full agenda you can check our new website at www.svga.ca



SVGA President, Bob Purton talks about cabbage at the 2014 SVGA Field Day

Your SVGA!

by SVGA secretary Chelsea Erlandson

The weather for the field day at Yorkton was a little sloppy, but the turnout was tremendous! Over 20 people visited Kangro Gardening, The Garlic Garden and Prairie Dome Enterprises. Thank you to our welcoming and informative hosts.

The Green Trades Conference was another success. Thank you to Affinity Credit Union for their platinum sponsorship. We had a great line up of speakers and are currently organizing the conference for 2015.

Bob Purton was reinstated as President at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Emile Marquette was elected as Vice President. Emile lives and farms near Kelvington. Chelsea Erlandson is the Secretary Treasurer. The remaining directors are: Shawn Hansen, Murray Gray and Wayne Gienow.

Board Members continue to represent the SVGA at various meetings. Bob has just returned from the Canadian Horticulture Council meetings in Quebec City. Look for his report at this year's AGM. Chelsea attended consultations related to the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) recent farm labour study. The preliminary results are concerning. More information regarding the survey will be presented at the Green Trades Conference.

The new and improved website is up and running. Check it out at www.svga.ca. We are currently updating and adding member profiles, please contact us if you are interested in being included. Remember to also like us on facebook and follow us on twitter @SaskVegGrowers.

A new vegetable manual "Commercial Vegetable Production on the Prairies" is now available to SVGA members for FREE! The manual is a joint effort between Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba. In order to get your copy, ensure that your 2015 membership is current and that your mailing information is correct.

We are now requesting that Membership Fees be paid by April 30th so that we stay organized before the busy season commences.



Bob Purton demonstrates how hydroponic lettuce roots should look.

Know a Grower

If you were unable to attend this past years' SVGA Field Day, don't worry, we thought we would feature one of the producers who participated in our Newsletter as well!

Darrel and Anna welcomed us all onto their farm the same way Anna welcomes customers to her booth at the Farmers' Market. Anna's sunny personality and flair for talking to the public create a never ending line up to get the tasty locally grown garlic.

We've asked Anna and Darrel Schaab to contribute to this edition's *Know a Grower* column.



Anna demonstrates the garlic harvester that was designed and built by Darrel.

The Garlic Garden is a family farm dedicated to growing high quality fresh garlic. It is located a short distance from Yorkton, SK and has been in operation since 2005.

Customers of The Garlic Garden typically have a strong appreciation for fresh, locally grown garlic. They are looking for a better alternative to store bought varieties.

Most of our production is sold at farmers markets in Saskatoon, Regina, and Yorkton. We also sell off the farm and directly to customers all across Canada.

Garlic is a unique and challenging crop to grow commercially. It does not lend itself well to large-scale production. Over the past number of centuries garlic has been reproduced asexually-with cloves or bulbils. As a result the plant has weakened and modern garlic has become more susceptible to disease and other pests. Providing a healthy environment for the garlic to grow is therefore critical and considered the biggest challenge we face at The Garlic Garden.



Darrel discusses how to harvest garlic scapes

Fortunately our harsh climate will not support many of the diseases and pests that affect garlic but there are a few that will survive. Since there are very few pest control products suitable

for garlic production and we lack the desire to use those that are available, our attention is on working with nature to help control pests and diseases that pose a problem. Four year crop rotations, cover crops, and paying great attention to planting undamaged cloves and bulbils are a few of the practices we have been using to provide our garlic with the best environment in which to grow.

More information on how we grow garlic and the products we offer can be found at www.yorktongarlic.com.

Agriculture Canada battles tomato blight on P.E.I. Tomato blight is a threat to P.E.I.'s potato industry

CBC News Posted Online: Mar 05, 2015 8:15 AM AT

Agriculture Canada has launched a campaign to encourage Prince Edward Islanders to grow blight-resistant tomatoes this summer due to a new aggressive strain of late blight which devastated tomato crops last season.

"You've probably heard the last couple of years home gardeners saying I just can't grow tomatoes anymore because of blight," Agriculture Canada research scientist Rick Peters told CBC News.

"This new strain is really aggressive on tomatoes."

Peters said even though the new strain – US 23 - primarily attacks tomatoes, it is also a concern for the province's billion dollar potato industry. Peters said some of the outbreaks of late blight in commercial potato crops can be traced to gardens where spores from infected plants were carried by the wind.

US 23 arrived in Canada three years, but struck gardeners on P.E.I. particularly hard last year.

Peters is speaking to garden clubs and industry groups this winter, encouraging them to grow blight resistant tomatoes this season. He's also handing out free packages of blight resistant seeds.

"We've tested all of these in our lab against US-23 and they've shown excellent resistance against this new strain," said Peters.

Peters said in the two years since US-23 has shown up on P.E.I., he has received more than 200 calls from gardeners looking for advice after losing their tomatoes to late blight and because of this issue a growing number of garden centres across P.E.I. say they will be selling more blight resistant tomato seedlings in 2015.

Article edited by Chelsea Erlandson. For the entire article and more information and discussion on this topic visit:
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/agriculture-canada-battles-tomato-blight-on-p-e-i-1.2982471>

Demonstration of the Potential to Use Bulbils as a More Practical and Cost-Effective Means of Establishing Garlic Crops in Saskatchewan

Dr. Doug Waterer, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Saskatchewan

This project was supported by the ADOPT Program of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture.
Special thanks to the Saskatchewan Vegetable Growers Association for collaboration on this project

The full report can be accessed at <http://veg.usask.ca/wp-content/uploads/Bulbils-to-Establish-Garlic-Website1.pdf>

January 2015

Timely access to affordable, high quality planting material represents one of the major difficulties slowing expansion of garlic production in Saskatchewan. This project sought to demonstrate the potential to use bulbils as a practical and cost-effective alternate means of establishing a garlic crop. A range of cultivars of stiffneck-type garlic were grown from the bulbils that arise from the flowers produced by this type of garlic. The bulbils were easier to prepare for seeding and more suited to mechanical planting than standard cloves. The plants arising from bulbils were as winter hardy as those derived from cloves but were slower growing, which rendered them susceptible to weed competition. In most cultivars, if the crop was established using bulbils, each plant was only able to produce a relatively small uncloved bulb (or round) by the end of the first growing season. While this bulb could potentially be sold to consumers, most growers would opt to replant this round. This project showed that replanting the rounds would allow production of a full-size fully-cloved bulb in the second year. However, this is an inherently inefficient process as it takes two complete growing seasons to produce a marketable product.

This project identified two garlic cultivars that produced good sized, fully cloved heads in a single growing season after being planted as bulbils – this represents a potentially valuable step forward in garlic production.

These adapted cultivars all produced relatively large bulbils which would have provided the nutrient reserves required to drive rapid growth and development. Growers could further increase the odds of success in this alternate method of crop establishment by selecting the largest bulbils from within their stocks of planting material. The available cultivars of garlic showed a huge range in the number of bulbils per flowering head as well as the size of the individual bulbils. Allowing the bulbils to form and reach full maturity represented a significant yield drain on the garlic plant. If however the grower used these bulbils as planting material they would then be free to sell all their garlic heads rather than retaining a portion of the harvested bulbs for seed use.

Using bulblets to establish the garlic crop should also reduce the likelihood of introducing soil-borne pathogens such as a Fusarium Basal Rot and/or Stem and Bulb Nematodes into the field – however, neither of these problems were observed in this study.

Figure Left. Hardneck garlic scape or flowering stalk

Figure Right. Bulbils or bulblets formed by hardneck garlic



Suggestions for future work

This study confirmed the potential to use garlic bulblets as planting material in certain hardneck types of garlic. Future work should focus on improving the efficiency and efficacy of this process by;

- Using only the largest bulblets collected from each cultivar as planting material – this should increase the size and degree of cloving of the resulting garlic heads
- Investigating the potential to not harvest and replant the crop derived from small bulblets – but instead to leave it in place for the full 2 years required to produce a full size cloved head. This process will come with additional challenges for weed control and fertility management.
- Assessing potential consumer acceptance of garlic rounds as an alternative to the standard cloved bulbs.

The full report can be accessed at <http://veg.usask.ca/wp-content/uploads/Bulbils-to-Establish-Garlic-Website1.pdf>

Saskatchewan Buy Local Day

Chelsea Erlandson

You may have already heard, but the Saskatchewan Government has just shown their support to declare the first Saturday of each month Buy Local Day. As a vegetable producer, one might think every day should be a day to support local business but none the less we shouldn't complain!

The importance of supporting local business is growing throughout society. More and more consumers are setting their attention on where exactly their food comes from. This proves to be good news for the many Saskatchewan hard-working entrepreneurs and small business owners who contribute so much to our community and economy.

Let's hope the passing of this new bill has a positive impact on our sales for this coming year and the years to come! We are interested in hearing your feedback about this topic and if you have any customer stories or general information regarding the Buy Local Days, please contact Chelsea at skveggrowers@gmail.com.

California Farmers Are Selling Water To The State Instead Of Growing Crops

By Dan Nosowitz, *Modern Farmer*, March 23, 2015

California is in trouble. According to a much-discussed recent L.A. Times article, the state has only about a year's worth of water in its reservoirs, which, if depleted, would leave the state reliant on groundwater and praying for heavy snows in winter.

Already, the state is tightening water use restrictions, especially for uses like watering lawns, but many think that won't nearly be enough to dig California out of its dry, parched, cracked hole.

Weirdly, this is opening a new avenue of revenue for California farmers. In the Sacramento Valley, northeast of San Francisco, farmers are actually selling water to the state, for exorbitant fees. That's due to the way the drought-prone state deals with allocating water.

Farmers are given "water rights," essentially rations of water, based on size and output. When California analyzes how dire its drought situation is, it doesn't count the water allocated to farmers; that water is no longer California's to give. That means instead of growing crops, the farmers in the region have decided to actually sell about 20 percent their water to the state, at the price of \$700 per acre-foot of water. An acre-foot is a unit of volume; imagine a swimming pool that's the size of an acre and a foot deep. It's equal to about 325,000 gallons of water.

It's obviously dangerous to encourage farmers to cease growing in order to make sure the state has water, but what's the alternative? And at least this way, the farmers are guaranteed to have a pretty good year.

For more information and discussion on this topic visit <http://modernfarmer.com/2015/03/california-farmers-are-selling-water-to-the-state-instead-of-growing-crops>

Agriculture Awareness Initiative Program

The SVGA is soliciting your ideas for projects to promote the vegetable industry in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, through the Agriculture Awareness Initiative Program offers matching dollars to a maximum of \$25,000 to assist organizations such as the SVGA in enhancing the public's perception of agriculture.

This *Growing Forward 2* program will support projects in communications, training and resource development and help cover costs for training spokespersons, planning and organizing workshops or conferences and developing awareness and educational resources.

Anyone with any ideas on a project showing the public that we produce safe and healthy food and that we produce it responsibly should email Chelsea at skveggrowers@gmail.com. Let's show our pride in what we do.



Here is a recipe to share with family and friends on those chilly and rainy days in the heart of summer.

Warm Roasted Vegetable Salad

- 12 small new potatoes, unpeeled & quartered
- 3 cups mushrooms
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and chunked
- 2 medium zucchini, chunked
- 1 medium red onion cut into rings
- 1 large red pepper cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 large yellow bell pepper cut into bite-sized pieces
- 3 cloves garlic minced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp minced fresh rosemary or 1 tsp dried
- 1 tbsp minced fresh oregano or 1 tsp dried
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ¼ tsp each salt & pepper
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese

Spray a large roasting pan with cooking spray. Add vegetables, garlic, oil and herbs. Mix well. Roast uncovered at 425°F for 30 minutes. Stir occasionally during cooking time.

Turn on broiler and broil vegetables until edges begin to brown (about 5 minutes).

Remove vegetables from oven and transfer to serving bowl. Toss with vinegar, salt and pepper. Sprinkle crumbled feta over top. Serve warm.

New OFFS Funding

A fourth category to the On Farm Food Safety rebate program has just been added and should be available in next years' budget. The following is an explanation. For more information contact Board member Murray Gray at (306) 276-8847.

** Note that this information could be updated further and is not final.*

OFFS specified equipment for producers who are OFFS registered (i.e. audited and certified): 50 per cent of the cost up to \$2,000. In addition to meeting the other program parameters such as training, no invoice splitting, etc., category criteria is as follows:

- Producers must have current OFFS registration (i.e. audited and certified) at time of application and equipment must be purchased January 31, 2013, to January 31, 2018.
- Top up funding for equipment already purchased and claimed within the above timeframe will be allowed. Total reimbursement cannot exceed 50% of total cost of the item. Producers must re-apply to receive this additional funding.

