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Second workshop offered on Horticulture Crop Production in High Tunnels

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Abstract

In the past, planting season for many horticultural crops began in May to avoid the threat of frost; however, traditional planting times may change for some commercial growers as more producers use high tunnels to extend the growing season. High tunnels have become a popular and profitable method to produce high-value crops. They are simple, tall, plastic-covered structures used for the production of fruits and vegetables, cut flowers, and many other crops. They resemble greenhouses but cost less to erect and operate.

Disciplines

Agricultural Education | Agricultural Science | Agriculture | Entomology

certain whether the lady beetles' establishment in the United States was the result of accidental entries, planned releases, or both.

Iowa status: The multicolored Asian lady beetle was never released by Iowa State University in Iowa. The population we have is the result of the beetles probably flying here from Louisiana, or hitchhiking in a vehicle, although we will never know for sure how they arrived. They were first reported in Iowa in 1994. It is now a permanent, although sometimes unwanted, resident of our state. It is a known predator of the soybean aphid, and in that sense, it is a beneficial insect.

However, it has become a serious pest in Iowa vineyards—the alkaloids from a single beetle crushed in a cluster of grapes can ruin large quantities of juice, resulting in off-flavor wine. And if you live in a house in Iowa, you probably appreciate the nuisance factor of these little beetles during October when they defy all our efforts to keep them out and off our walls.

Insects and time—who can stop either one?

Marlin E. Rice is a professor of entomology with extension and research responsibilities in field and forage crops.



Announcements

Second workshop offered on Horticulture Crop Production in High Tunnels

by Linda Naeve, Integrated Pest Management

In the past, planting season for many horticultural crops began in May to avoid the threat of frost; however, traditional planting times may change for some commercial growers as more producers use high tunnels to extend the growing season. High tunnels have become a popular and profitable method to produce high-value crops. They are simple, tall, plastic-covered structures used for the production of fruits and vegetables, cut flowers, and many other crops. They resemble greenhouses but cost less to erect and operate.

Growers interested in seeing horticultural crops growing under high tunnels and learning more about their maintenance and crop management should plan to attend a workshop at the Iowa State University Armstrong Research and Demonstration Farm near Lewis, Iowa, on June 21, 2006. Workshop participants will be able to tour a newly constructed high tunnel planted with tomatoes, blackberries, and red raspberries, as well as see other horticultural plantings at the farm. Speakers include Henry Taber, Extension vegetable specialist, and Paul Domoto, Extension fruit specialist. Maury Wills, from the Iowa Department of Agriculture, will discuss organic certification.

The workshop, sponsored by Iowa State University Extension and the Wallace Foundation for Rural Research and Development, begins with registration at 4:30 p.m. followed by an "All-Iowa" dinner at 5 p.m. and the program. The cost is \$15 per person. Preregistration is required. For more information, go to www.extension.aiastate.edu/PME, call your local county ISU Extension office, or contact me at 515-294-8946.



Above—Tomato production under a high tunnel in mid-summer, 2005.

Right—Thanks to the efforts of the farm staff, volunteers, and a little break in the weather, the plastic was placed over the high tunnel at ISU

Armstrong Research and Demonstration Farm on April 8. Tomatoes, red raspberries, and blackberries will be planted under the high tunnel in mid-April. (Bernie Havlovic)



Linda Naeve is an extension program specialist in the Integrated Pest Management program at Iowa State University.