

Extension Benefits
Economic and Resource
Sustainability

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

 University of
Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment



Introducing

The University of Kentucky Vegetable IPM Hotline

Free Call for Vegetable Producers

Crop Information - Chemical Updates
Seasonal Pest Alerts - Weather
General Production Tips

New Message Every Tuesday
Begins March 20, 2018



888-4 VEG IPM

(888-483-4476)

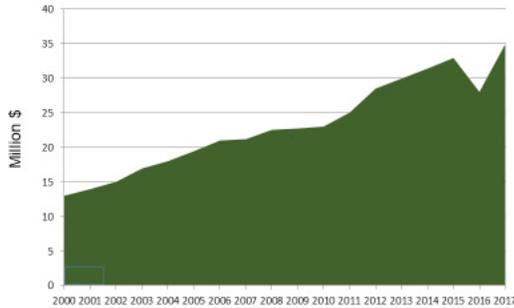
The Vegetable Integrated Pest Management
Hotline Provides Timely Access to Plant Pathology,
Entomology and Horticulture Specialists

Department of Plant Pathology
201F Plant Science Building
1405 Veterans Drive
Lexington, KY 40546-0312(859) 257-7445
<https://plantpathology.ca.uky.edu/>



extension.ca.uky.edu
It starts with us

Kentucky Vegetable Cash Receipts



Source: T. Woods, UKAEC 2018 using various trade, NASS, and Census sources



The number of Kentucky farms growing produce has increased from 1,474 in 2002 to over 2,200 farms in 2012. Kentucky vegetable production has increased nearly 50% with 2018 value of farm produce sales estimated to be \$34 million for vegetables. (UK Agricultural Economics).

Kentucky vegetables are sold through both direct-marketing, like roadside stands and farmers' markets, and wholesale marketing, primarily through produce auctions. Over six produce auctions market vegetables wholesale in Kentucky, and over 162 farmers' markets were registered with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture in 2017 (Center for Crop Diversification, 2018). Produce auctions allow for sale of produce lots ranging in size from just a few pieces to large truck loads. These variably-sized produce lots are sold to buyers from grocery store chains, local restaurants, farm stand managers, and home processors.

In **Christian County**, the majority of producers contributing to produce auctions do not use rapid communication methods, either by choice or through necessity. Christian and surrounding counties serve a large number of plain clothes producers, comprised of Amish, Mennonite, or other Anabaptist groups. The producers are quite knowledgeable about crop production, but may need more rapid communication methods for pressing issues such as pest management concerns. In 2017, UK Department of Plant Pathology and other Extension specialists with the Integrated Pest Management program

(IPM) teamed up with Christian County Extension to create the Veg IPM Phone-In Hotline.

Because of the toll free hotline success, access to service has expanded to the entire state and is supported by a grant from the USDA-NIFA Extension Implementation Program through 2020. It has been advertised by county Extension agents, produce auction newsletters, and through word-of-mouth by producers. Through 2017 and 2018, the Veg IPM hotline has received 1864 individual calls, and producers often discuss the message further amongst themselves and with Extension personnel.

Extension Specialists from the Departments of Plant Pathology, Entomology, and Horticulture contribute weekly Veg IPM hotline content focused on timely vegetable issues throughout the growing season. This encompasses emerging insect pests, pressing disease concerns, spray program recommendations, fertilizer recommendations, and herbicide utilization and application planning. Users phone in to listen to the pre-recorded message, making information accessible to producers with technology limitations.

Kentucky producers adopting practices recommended by Extension realize increased yield while minimizing environmental impact and strengthening the local food system.

According to the 2018 Kentucky Extension Reporting System:

- 9033 producers implemented sustainable practices as a result of participating in Extension programs
- 511 producers researched multiple options before selecting and applying pesticides
- 359 producers scouted fields weekly for pest pressure
- 401 producers altered existing spray program to reduce non-target impacts
- 289 producers integrated a new cultural management tactic with current spray programs
- 61 producers used biological control