

Vegetable Pest Alert

Updates and Scouting Reports from the Field

June 27, 2025

What to be on the lookout for...

Squash Vine Borer

Two farms in CT recently reported finding Squash Vine Borer (SVB) moths in traps, one of which was in Berlin and caught 13 SVB moths. This indicates female adult moths will lay their eggs at the base of thick-stemmed cucurbit crops (e.g. summer squash, zucchini, giant pumpkins, and some winter squash) within the next couple of weeks. Fortunately, thin-stemmed crops like cucumber, watermelon and butternut squash are less habitable for the larvae and therefore less likely to be impacted.

Infestations of SVB can be minimized by using floating row cover, trapping moths, and late plantings to avoid peak SVB egg-laying activity. Insecticides can also help with reducing populations.

You can monitor SVB with Scentry Heliothis pheromone traps. The threshold for spraying is 5 moths/trap for vining cucurbits. Once larvae have bored inside the stem, insecticide application will have little control, so begin protecting your crops promptly. Thoroughly treat the base of stems to target hatching larvae. Some selective materials used for caterpillars in squash, such as spinosyns and *Bacillus thuringiensis aizawi*, have demonstrated efficacy in trials.

See the New England Vegetable Management Guide for more information on [insect control options for SVB](#).



Cucurbit vine cut open to show a larva inside. Larvae are typically 1 to 1.5 inches long, 3/8 inches wide. The larval stage is the most destructive as feeding damage can be severe. Photo: Alan Eaton, UNH.



The SVB adult is a day-flying orange and black moth. Photo: J. Obermeyer, Purdue University.



SVB eggs are reddish-brown ovals, about 1 mm long. Each female can lay 150 to 200 eggs. Eggs hatch within 10-15 days. Photo: Alan Eaton, UNH.

SVB give away their location by the sawdust-like frass they push out of an infested vine. Photo: Alan Eaton, UNH.

Potato Leafhoppers & Hopperburn

Potato leafhoppers (PLH) primarily impact potatoes, beans, and eggplant, but they are not picky eaters and have a wide host range, including other legumes (clover, soybean, alfalfa), solanaceous (tomato, pepper), and other vegetables (lettuce, celery). The presence of nymphs indicates an established population. Signs of injury begin with leaf veins turning pale, followed by the yellowing or browning of areas of the leaf or leaf tips which is known as "hopperburn". Leaves become brown, curl up, and die. Plants may be stunted and yields reduced or lost. PLH can also be a vector of many viruses.



A potato leafhopper seen gliding sideways across the leaves of a pepper plant. Photo: N. Davidow, UConn Extension.

Scout using sweep nets or by shaking plants to see if adults fly up when the plant is disturbed. Nymphs can be counted on the underside of leaves. Seedling beans should be treated if they have 2 adults per foot of row. From 3rd trifoliate leaf to bud stage, treat when PLH exceed 1 nymph per leaflet or 5 adults per foot of row. Repeat application in 7 to 10 days if necessary. In potatoes, treat if more than 1 adult per sweep is found, or more than 15 nymphs are found per 50 leaves. Be sure to treat lower leaf surfaces when spraying. In fields where systemic seed treatment was used, foliar treatment should not be needed before bloom.

See the New England Vegetable Management Guide for recommendations on insect control options for [beans](#), [potatoes](#), or [eggplant](#). Additional information on management strategies can be found on the page for "[Insects That Can Be Controlled By Row Covers](#)".

Ozone Injury

Ozone is the most common air pollutant in the eastern United States. Ozone is formed when the combustion of fossil fuels react with oxygen in the presence of sunlight. It moves from areas of high concentration (cities, heavy traffic areas) to nearby fields simply by wind. Common symptoms of ozone injury are very small, irregularly shaped spots that are dark brown to black or light tan to white on the upper leaf surface. Injury is usually more pronounced at the leaf tip and along the margins. It is most likely to occur when the weather is hot, humid, and air masses are stagnant.

There have been a few ozone level surges this month reaching toxic levels for crops in Connecticut, with severity changing slightly depending on the precise location in the state. Ozone injury in susceptible vegetable varieties develops when ozone levels are over 80 ppb for four or five consecutive hours, or 70 ppb for a day or two when vegetable foliage is at a susceptible stage of growth. Typically, the most susceptible vegetable crops include cucumber, potatoes, watermelon, cantaloupe, snap beans, pumpkins, and squash.

The best recommendation for managing susceptible crops in when ozone levels are high is to whatever extent possible, avoid additional stresses on plants. Do not apply unwarranted pesticides or nutrients during this period. Note which varieties show fewer symptoms and plan to select varieties that are less susceptible in the future.

For more information on the relationship between the Air Quality Index (AQI) and Ozone levels, visit the [Air Quality Guide for Ozone and Particle Pollution](#). For example, ozone concentrations would be 71-85 ppb when AQI is 101-150. To monitor local trends, visit airnow.gov.

AQI Basics for Ozone and Particle Pollution			
Daily AQI Color	Levels of Concern	Values of Index	Description of Air Quality
Green	Good	0 - 50	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Yellow	Moderate	51 - 100	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 - 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.
Red	Unhealthy	151 - 200	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Purple	Very Unhealthy	201 - 300	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.
Maroon	Hazardous	301 and higher	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.

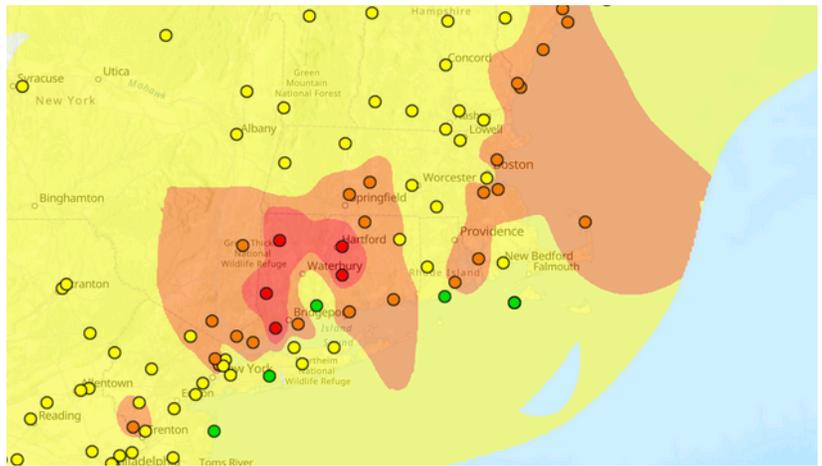


Ozone damage on a young tomato plant. Photo: Gerald Holmes, Strawberry Center, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Bugwood.org.

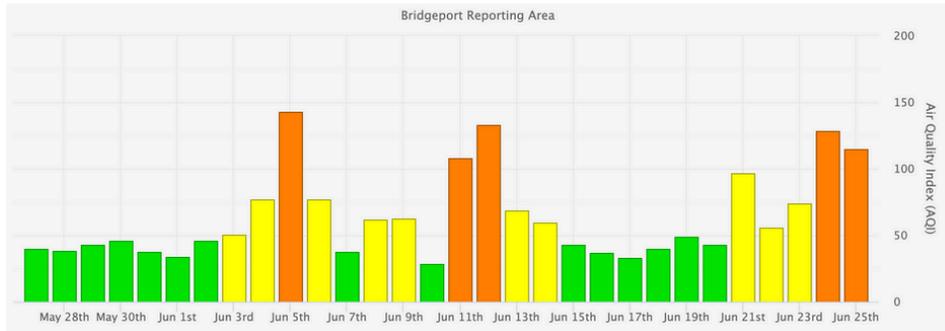
The AQI is divided into six categories that correspond with a different level of concern, so that risk can be determined quickly. <https://www.airnow.gov/aqi/aqi-basics/>

Recent Trends: Mapping and Charting the AQI in Connecticut

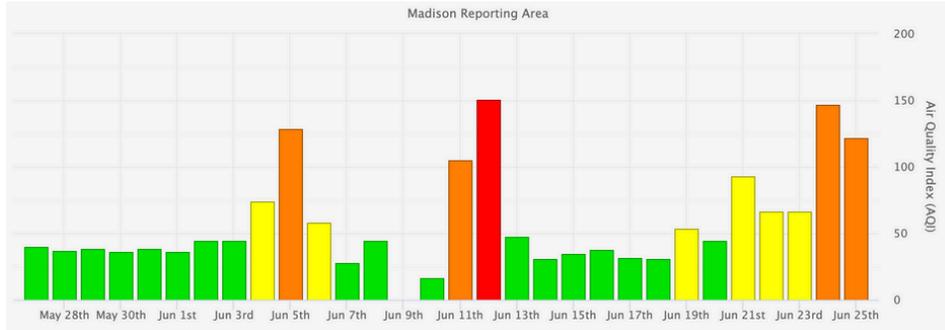
This map shows Ozone and Particulate Matter (PM) data from June 5, 2025. Notice how the color dispersion reflects a statewide ozone surge. Recreate this map for another day at: <https://gispub.epa.gov/airnow/>



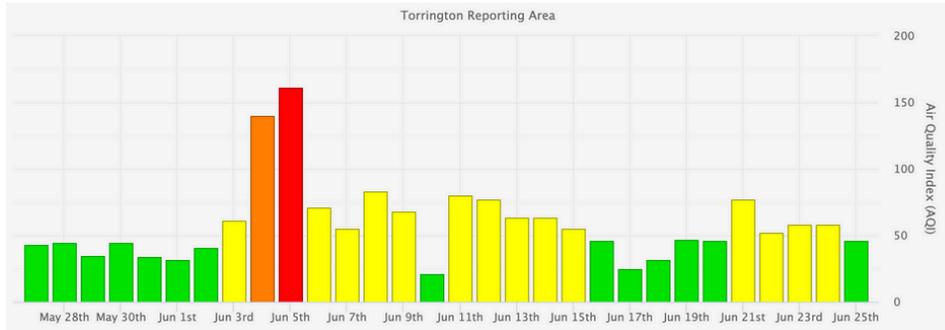
AQI in Bridgeport, CT from May 27 - June 26, 2025.



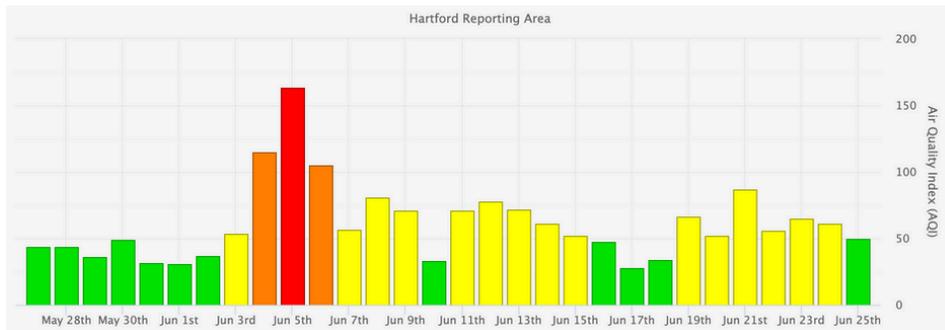
AQI in Madison, CT from May 27 - June 26, 2025.



AQI in Torrington, CT from May 27 - June 26, 2025.



AQI in Hartford, CT from May 27 - June 26, 2025.



Sweet Corn Pests - Trap Count Update

European Corn Borer (ECB)

With the significant change in weather this past week, corn has really started to take off, and so have the respective pests. This week a farm in Shelton, CT reported data from their heliothis traps which included 2 ECB NY moths, 0 IA, and 1 Hybrid for a total of 3 ECB. A farm in Berlin also reported finding 1 ECB NY moth and 1 ECB Hybrid moth in their traps, so ECB populations are on the rise. Corn with newly emerging tassels should be scouted weekly for the presence of ECB larvae. Inspect the tassels of 50 to 100 plants, in groups of 5 to 20 plants throughout the field. Treat if more than 15% of the plants have one or more larvae present. Use of selective products to control ECB will conserve natural enemies of aphids and ECB.

Corn earworm (CEW)

Traps have just been set up to start tracking CEW populations, and early checks indicate they are still empty. CEW is important to continue scouting for as they feed on a wide range of crops, and among vegetables, they favor corn and tomato (hence it is also known as “tomato fruitworm”).

Fall armyworm (FAW)

Since FAW do not overwinter in New England, infestations result from moths carried northward on storm fronts usually around mid-July and into September. But in recent years, they have been spotted as early as mid-June. FAW flights are sporadic and unpredictable and do not necessarily correspond with CEW flights, so monitoring with pheromone traps when corn is in whorl stage is very useful.

See the [New England Vegetable Management Guide for detailed management strategies for all sweet corn insect pests.](#)



ECB adults. Photo: USDA Cooperative Extension, Bugwood.org



Corn Earworm Moth.
Photo: David Handley



Fall Armyworm Moth.
Photo: Kansas State University

Continue to be on the lookout for the following:

Beet Leafminers

Colorado Potato Beetle

Striped and Spotted Cucumber Beetles

Brassica and Solanaceous Flea Beetles

Cabbage Maggot

Onion Thrips

Squash Bugs

Tarnished Plant Bugs

[See Previous Pest Alert Messages On Our Website](#)

Want the New England Vegetable Management Guide and/or Pest ID Guide at your fingertips?

Printed copies of the New England Vegetable Management Guide and Pest ID Guide are still available for purchase. Visit the [UConn Marketplace](#) to place your order.

You can also [download the Pest ID Guide](#) here!



SMALL FARM INNOVATION PROJECTS

New or existing tools to re/design?

Considering infrastructure improvements for energy use, water/waste management?

Incorporating data analytics for farm management?

Students in the College of Engineering and College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources want to help! We are offering financial and technical support for selected projects starting in Fall 2025. Help support the training of our students and we will help make your idea a reality.

LOOKING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IDEAS!

DUE JULY 15TH

Must be a production farmer located in Connecticut with at least 1 year of production experience operating their own farm business.



Contact Information

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Vegetable IPM Cell Phone Number: 959-929-1031 (feel free to text/iMessage photos)

Vegetable IPM Pest Alert Audio Recording: 860-870-6954

Stay in touch with us

- **Share what you see:** We're here to assist with identification, management strategies, and guidance on best practices. Send us a photo/message via text at 959-929-1031.
- **Facebook Group:** UConn Extension moderates a private Facebook group specifically for commercial vegetable producers. It is a space to share photos of insects and diseases you find in your fields, ask questions, share ideas, and stay engaged with growers across the state. **Click here to join:** "[UConn Extension – Vegetable IPM](#)"
- **Schedule a Consultation:** Would you benefit from meeting with an Extension Specialist at your farm to provide insight on pest or disease identification, management strategies, and more? If so, please contact our Vegetable Extension Specialist, Shuresh Ghimire, to set up a farm visit. Contact him at shuresh.ghimire@uconn.edu or 860-870-6933.

Thank you for reading!

This report was prepared by Nicole Davidow, Outreach Coordinator, and Shuresh Ghimire, Commercial Vegetable Specialist, UConn Extension.



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