2015 Field Training Workshop Schedule

April 8  Nutrient Management & Interpreting Soil Tests
Do you know what nutrients your plants need for good health, vigor and yield over the growing season? Please join New Entry in the fields to learn about taking soil test samples, interpreting soil test reports, and how to apply the correct rate of amendments as recommended from soil test reports. We'll teach you how to manage soil fertility and produce vigorous plants through the use of cover crops, soil amendments and foliar sprays.

April 22  Field Preparation & Raised Beds
Join New Entry in our incubator plots and learn how to best prepare your fields. We will teach you how to lay out your fields and make raised beds with small and large farm equipment. There will be appropriate scales of tools and machinery for everyone. We will be working with hand tools, walk behind tractors and full size farm tractors to help you achieve your ideal field layout. We will discuss options for bed orientation and layout as well as how to establish “living mulch” strips between wide-spaced crops.

May 6  Irrigation and Water Management
What better way to be prepared for the hot summer months than by learning how to provide necessary water to drought stressed crops? Join New Entry in the fields and learn how to be prepared for inevitable seasonal periods of sparse rainfall. Together we will walk through the steps of setting up both a low-flow overhead water system as well as installing a drip irrigation system utilizing our incubator farm’s drilled well water. You will learn about water conservation, water requirements for certain vegetable crops, and the basic installation, maintenance and removal of these two complementary irrigation systems.

May 20  Small Farm Equipment & Tools
How does one determine appropriate scale equipment needs and how does one learn how to operate small machines safely? Come learn about operating small gas-powered farm and garden machines. You will learn about the basic operation and maintenance of walking tractors with powered attachments (sickle bar mowers, rototillers, hillers) as well as scaled up farm tractors & tractor mounted implements. We will also discuss the benefits of hand tools for small garden-scale plots.

June 3  Organic Pest Management
Please join New Entry in the fields to learn about identifying and organically managing common insect pests in the Northeast. We will cover management practices such as prevention, cultural controls and the appropriate application of organic (OMRI listed) pesticides. We will also identify beneficial insects and show practices that attract beneficial insects to our farm sites.
**June 17  Cover Cropping**
The first step in growing great market crops is building healthy soil. One of the best ways to do this is by planting green manure cover crops. At this workshop, we'll teach you about the importance of cover crops as well as how legume cover crops can fulfill your cash crop nitrogen needs. We’ll show how to fit cover crops into cash crop rotations, how cover crops can nurture beneficial insect communities and demonstrate techniques to suppress weeds through the management of cover crops.

**July 1  Weed Management**
Whether you've been fighting an uphill battle against weeds in your fields for years, or are a newcomer to weed challenges, this workshop is for you. Together we will learn how to identify common annual and perennial weeds in our incubator farm plots. You will learn how to effectively manage weeds utilizing organic practices. We will look at hand tools for managing weeds as well as mechanized weed management using walk behind tractors, flame-weeders, and cultivating tractors. We will also discuss how to manage weeds with living and straw mulches.

**July 15 Disease Management**
With plant disease, prevention is always the best practice, but do you know what to do when disease threatens? Please join New Entry in the fields to learn how you can prevent, identify, and treat common (and not so common!) plant diseases in your fields using organic methods. We will discuss disease pathogens that are soil borne and require long rotations for control as well as bacterial diseases that can migrate into fields from prevailing winds. We will discuss a new practice of suppressing soil diseases by utilizing biofumigant cover crops.

**July 29  Food Safety and Good Agricultural Practices**
In this workshop we will learn about post harvest techniques to improve produce quality and shelf life. We will discuss how to prioritize harvest schedules to protect produce quality. We will talk about Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and will focus on sanitation, good worker training, and the proper handling, washing, and storage of many different crops. We will demonstrate how to make the best use of our Smith Field cooler.

**August 12  Season Extension via High Tunnels and Row Covers**
Late summer planting dates can have a huge influence on how late one is able to harvest good yielding vegetables after the first frosts of autumn. In this workshop we will examine season extension strategies, utilizing frost hardy leafy greens and root vegetables. We will discuss the importance of planting dates as well as how to provide extra cold weather protection using row covers and the protective environment inside our Ogonowski high tunnel.

**Location:** All workshops are held at our Incubator Training Farms on Jones Avenue, Dracut, MA. Please email Eero Ruuttila, eero.ruuttila@tufts.edu for more information, to confirm location, and to register.

More workshops may be added. Please stay tuned for updates and changes during the 2015 season.