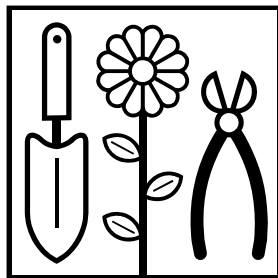


**July
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Issue 7**



Piscataquis Gardening

University of Maine Cooperative Extension (UMaine Extension) is the major educational outreach program of the University of Maine, with offices statewide. UMaine Extension provides Maine people with research-based educational programs to help them live fuller, more productive lives.

Goal:

The goal of the Piscataquis Gardening Newsletter is to provide timely information on practical, sustainable, research-based horticultural practices, tools and techniques which will improve home gardening success. Topics on growing and caring for vegetables, fruits, flowers, and landscaping for the home will be included as well as pest management techniques. Information will be based on our U.S.D.A plant hardiness zone. Upcoming events and programs of interest will also be included.

You can receive this newsletter electronically. To sign up for the electronic version go to www.umext.umaine.edu/piscataquis/gardening/newsletter.htm.

If you have a question, feel free to contact me and I can include it in our garden question section.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads 'Donna R. Coffin'.

Donna R. Coffin
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Piscataquis County Extension
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165 East Main Street
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Late Blight on Tomatoes and Potatoes



Photo taken by Bruce Watt

Home gardeners need to be on the lookout for Late Blight – a **very** destructive and **very** infectious disease that's killing tomato and potato plants in gardens and on commercial farms in the eastern U.S. Late blight is the same disease that caused the Irish Potato Famine in the 1840s. It has never occurred this early and this widespread in the U.S.

One of the most visible early symptoms of the disease is **brown spots (lesions) on stems**. They begin small and firm, and then quickly enlarge, with **white fungal growth** developing under moist conditions that leads to a soft rot collapsing the stem. Online images at www.tinyurl.com/lateblightontomato.

You need to act quickly to protect your garden-grown tomato and potato plants and to make sure that your plants don't become a source of spores that could infect commercial farms, as late blight spores are easily dispersed by wind.

Here are the steps you should take:

1. Examine your tomato and potato plants thoroughly at least once a week for signs of late blight.
2. Spray fungicides preventively and regularly **and/or**
3. Be prepared to destroy your plants when late blight starts to become severe. **Seal them in a plastic bag. Do not put them in the compost pile.** Leave the bag 'cooking' in sunlight for several hours to kill plant and pathogen, and then put in the trash.

If you want to try to control late blight with fungicides, you need to begin spraying fungicide now – even before you see symptoms – and you need to continue spraying regularly. Use a product that contains chlorothalonil. Copper is not very effective on late blight. Petunias, which are closely related to tomatoes and potatoes, can also be infected by late blight and show similar symptoms.

If you suspect your tomatoes or potatoes have late blight feel free

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- ◆ Late Blight on Tomatoes and Potatoes
- ◆ Threat to Maine Forest: The Asian Longhorned Beetle
- ◆ Master Gardener Training
- ◆ Finding Locally Grown Food
- ◆ Fiber Maine-ia
- ◆ Monthly Garden Activities
- ◆ Featured Extension Publications
- ◆ Calendar

to bring them in to the Piscataquis County Extension Office, 156 East Main St., Dover-Foxcroft for confirmation. You can also send samples to the UMaine Extension Pest Management Office at 491 College Ave., University of Maine, Orono, ME 04473. Source: Cornell's Blog by Meg Mcgrath <http://blogs.cornell.edu/hort/2009/06/> accessed July, 2009

Threat to Maine Forest: Asian Longhorned Beetle

While you are spending time in the woods or just puttering around in your back yard this summer perhaps you could help us survey for a major threat to Maine trees. The Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) has become a hot topic recently and for good reason. ALB is an invasive wood-boring beetle that attacks healthy hardwood trees and poses a serious threat to the trees and forests of Maine. The ALB favorable trees include: maples (*Acer spp.*), poplar (*Populus spp.*), mountain ash (*Sorbus spp.*), horsechestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum L.*), elm (*Ulmus spp.*), birch (*Betula spp.*), and willows (*Salix spp.*). These beetles are not a conifer pest.



UGA1124042

Donald Duerr, USDA Forest Service Bugwood.org

The best defense is early detection by people who work with trees and those who enjoy the outdoors. Since the ALB spends most of its life cycle within the host tree the best time to observe this pest is from July to October when the beetle is in the adult stage outside the tree. The ALB is very distinct in its appearance, there is only one major "look-a-like" in Maine - the White Spotted Pine Sawyer, which is another beetle in the longhorned family. The White Spotted Pine Sawyer only feeds on conifers and is a much duller shade of black. For pictures of these beetles go to: <http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/InvasiveThreats.htm#ALB>

If you find a beetle and need help identifying it please put it in a zip lock bag and freeze it (remember these beetles chew their way out of trees, and have been known to chew out of bags). Then bring the frozen specimen to Piscataquis, or your local County Extension Office. Also if you are going to be camping, please buy your wood where you camp. These beetles can travel many miles within wood and the threat of spreading them by movement of wood products is severe. Encourage your friends, and relatives to do likewise. This beetle has not been discovered in Maine yet. Let's make sure if its here

we find it swiftly and minimize its damage. Together we can make a difference!

To find out more about ALB, visit <http://massnrc.org/pests/alb/> and/or come by the Piscataquis County Extension Office, 165 Main St. Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426 for some publications. Article by Hannah Todd, Piscataquis and Somerset Home Horticulture Aide, Photo source: U.S. Forest Service web site: http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/alb/slides_images/beetlepics.shtm

From the Soil Up... A Webinar for Beginning Vegetable Gardeners

A three-session online course on the basics of home vegetable gardening, from garden planning to pest management, harvest and storage that you can take on your computer. The one hour long sessions are available to you now if you go to <http://tinyurl.com/FromtheSoilUp>
Episode 1 - Planning your garden and starting seeds.
Episode 2 - Transplanting, fertilizing and weed control
Episode 3 - Pest and disease management
These sessions are closed captioned.

Master Gardener Training Fall 2009

Are you a gardening enthusiast? Would you like to share your gardening knowledge with your community? If so, you may want to consider joining the Piscataquis County Master Gardeners. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension is pleased to again offer its popular Master Gardener program in the fall of 2009. Participants in the Master Gardener program will receive thirteen 3-hour in-depth training sessions in the art and science of horticulture starting September 9th, 2009. Trainees also receive current, research based information from Extension educators and industry experts.

After successful completion of the training program, each Master Gardener will volunteer 40 hours to a community gardening project such as planting and maintaining a vegetable variety trial, designing and creating a mobile display to be used at fairs and other public functions, or answering public calls and requests for gardening information. Master Gardeners become a part of a nationwide Cooperative Extension effort to train one another on best gardening practices and are recognized as well-trained practitioners who serve and beautify their communities. They are linked to a professional network of support through county, state and national Cooperative Extension offices.

The 2009 program will focus on ornamentals, shrubs, and trees. The course will cover topics such as: soil science, composting and fertilizing, botany, growing flowering annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees and lawns, pruning and many other aspects of plant management. The extensive course reference manual also includes chapters on growing vegetables and fruits.

The program will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6pm to 9pm beginning September 9th at the Charlotte White Center on the Bangor Rd. (Rt. 15) in Dover-Foxcroft. For more information or to request an application, please call the Piscataquis County Extension Office at 564-3301 or 1-800-287-1491. Applications are due September 1st, 2009. If you are a person with a disability and will need any accommodations to participate in this program, please call Hannah Todd at the Piscataquis County Extension Office at 1-800-287-1491 or TDD: 1-800-287-8957 to discuss your needs. Receiving requests for accommodation at least 10 days before the program provides a reasonable amount of time to meet the request, however all requests will be accepted. The University of Maine and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Cooperative Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Article by Hannah Todd, Piscataquis and Somerset Home Horticulture Aide

Finding Locally Grown Food

Many home gardeners like to supplement what they raise with produce, meat and other food products that are locally grown and made. We are fortunate to have a group of farmers in our area that are raising crops and livestock products for their neighbors. Their group is called the Maine Highlands Farmers and you can see where they are located and what they have available at the group's website

www.MaineHighlandsFarmers.com .

Products that members have for sale include: seedlings, vegetables, small fruits, tree fruits, jams & jellies, pickles, meat, cheese, bakery products, honey, maple syrup, etc.

The Maine Department of Agriculture also maintains a list of Maine farmers who sell directly to consumers. It is located at www.GetRealMaine.com. The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association maintain a list of certified organic farmers at their web site www.MOFGA.org.

Fiber Maine-ia

A Celebration of the International Year of Natural Fiber. In response to the United Nations declaration of the 2009 International Year of Natural Fiber (IYNF), organizations all over Maine are joining together to celebrate the importance of plant and animal fibers in our state's history and culture, and to explore fiber's place in our agricultural and creative economies.

For a calendar of events and more information visit: <http://extension.umaine.edu/fibermaine-ia/default.htm>

July Garden Activities:

- ◆ Watch for disease or insect attacks on your plants.

If you don't know what it is you can give us a call at the Extension Office at 564-3301 or in Maine 1-800-287-1491 or you can email Hannah Todd, Extension Home Horticulture Aide at htodd@umext.maine.edu.

- ◆ Harvesting has started with lettuce, spinach, peas, and early potatoes.
- ◆ Continue planting crops for continuous harvest.
- ◆ Renovate strawberry beds immediately after harvest is finished.
- ◆ Annual flowers need additional fertilizer to maintain lush growth and flowering.
- ◆ Yellowed garden plants may point to lack of nitrogen due to our excessive rains and cool weather. Consider side-dressing with a nitrogen rich fertilizer.
- ◆ Take your extra garden produce to the local food cupboard or share with a neighbor in need.

Featured Extension Publications:

The following Gardening Extension Publications are available at the Extension office nearest you. Many publications are also available online for free download at <http://extensionpubs.umext.maine.edu/>.

For sale publications can be ordered directly from our publications store at the same web site.

Gardening in Small Spaces, Container & Raised-Bed Gardening series, Item #2761 Publisher: UMaine Extension. A surprising amount of vegetables can be produced in a relatively small area. Small-space gardening techniques can offer solutions for apartment and condominium dwellers as well as people with limited mobility. This bulletin discusses raised-bed gardening, Square Foot Gardening, and layer gardening; includes a plant-spacing chart. 7 pages, 2009. Free download available or buy a color copy for \$1.00.

Garden Equipment and Items to Make for the Maine Garden Container & Raised-Bed Gardening series. Item #2763. Publisher: UMaine Extension. Practical, detailed plans and materials lists for newspaper pots, a light stand, a two-tier seedling stand, a cold frame, and raised beds, as well as ideas for making planting holes in plastic, blanching celery, and growing a "plant in a bag." Includes photos and illustrations. 5 pages, 2009. Download it for free or add it to your cart to buy a color printout. \$0.75

Hatching Your Own Chicks Maine Poultry Facts series. Item #2072 Publisher: UMaine Extension. This expanded and updated edition of our classic bulletin provides a thorough discussion of hatching chicks, from where to obtain eggs for hatching and how to store/care for them, to hatching chicks with a "broody" hen, hatching with an incubator, and troubleshooting hatching problems. Includes information on making an egg candler and candling eggs, as well as determining relative incubator humidity. 7 pages, 2009. Free download available or buy a color copy for \$1.00.

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Piscataquis Gardening July 2009



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Calendar:

July 23rd, 2009 **Rain Garden Workshop** from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Piscataquis Count Extension Office, Dover-Foxcroft. Laura Wilson, Extension Water Quality

July 30th - August 1st, 2009 **The 2009 Kneading Conference**, Skowhegan, Maine. Trade Show Day and Local Bread Fair are on August 1. Coordinators invite professional and home bakers, farmers and millers, oven builders and interested community members to participate in hands-on demonstrations and lectures on progressive ideas in the art of wood-fired bread baking, local grain growing, milling and oven building. The conference celebrates and inspires growing and milling grain close to home for bread baked in wood-fired ovens as a way to bring food production to a smaller circle that will foster sustainable soils, local economies and vibrant, healthy communities. As in years past, space is limited. To register or for updates on Conference speakers and topics, please visit www.kneadingconference.com, we are offering scholarships that reduce the cost to \$75. For an application please email Tessa Burpee at tessa@heartofmaine.org.

August 21-22, 2009 - **2009 Maine Farm Days** at the Barker Farm, Leeds, ME. The Maine Farm Days Theme for 2009 is Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources. Presentations are scheduled pertaining to solar and wind

energy, with presentations on farmland preservation from groups like Androscoggin Land Trust and Maine Farm Land Protection. Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District Executive Director Susan Gammon will speak about Carbon. You can learn more at www.androscogginswcd.net by clicking on Maine Farm Days (MFD) link on the home page.

August 24th, 2009 **Preserving the Harvest** There will be two (morning or afternoon) sessions- 10:00 AM—1:00 PM or 1:30 –4:30 PM at the Congregational Church on West Main St, Dover-Foxcroft, Maine. University of Maine Cooperative is offering a 3-hour “Preserving the Harvest” workshop for beginner or first time food preservers. Participants will learn recommended methods for preserving foods, the latest and safest recipes, and equipment to insure safety and how to check for properly sealed jars. All participants will receive a “Preserving the Harvest” food preservation packet. There is a materials fee of \$20 per person. Materials fee is payable by check payable to “PEA” putting “Preserving the Harvest and Piscataquis County” the memo section. Participants need to bring a potholder with you to the workshop. Space is limited. Registration Deadline is August 14th. Please call 564-3301 or 1-800-287-1491 by August 14th to register for the preserving workshop. Contact Extension Educator, Jane Conroy if you have any questions or if you need special accommodations to attend 7 days prior to the event.