



**NH Vegetable & Berry Growers' Association  
Annual Meeting March, 6<sup>th</sup> 2024**

**The Puritan Conference Center 245 Hooksett Rd, Manchester, NH 03104  
Continental Breakfast and Lunch Included with Registration**

**[Register Here](#), Online at [nhvegandberry.com](http://nhvegandberry.com), or email [nhvbga@gmail.com](mailto:nhvbga@gmail.com).**

**RSVP By February 28<sup>th</sup>**

**Member - \$35 Non-Member \$40**

- 8:30-9:15      **Registration:** Visit commercial members, grower guide handout, continental breakfast!
- 9:15-10      **Blueberry Leaf Rust and Exobasidium, Dr. Bo Liu:**  
This presentation will examine two new and emerging blueberry leaf diseases in New Hampshire; Blueberry Leaf Rust and Exobasidium Fruit and Leaf Spot. Bo, will be diving into the biology, ecology, epidemiology, of these two diseases and the best integrated pest management practices for control.
- 10-10:45      **Optimizing Nitrogen Use: Strategies for Vegetable Production in a Wet Climate, Dr. Renuka Mathur:**  
Recently the Northeast region has been experiencing long periods of wet weather. Nitrogen loss from soils in wet weather creates challenges for vegetable cultivation. Deciding how to manage soil nitrogen levels involves considering factors like initial nitrate levels, timing and type of nitrogen application, soil saturation duration, leaching and denitrification potential, crop growth stages, potential yield loss from water damage, and applied nitrogen rates. My presentation will delve into these factors and offer strategies to enhance nitrogen use efficiency in vegetable production amidst wet climates.
- 10:45-11:30      **Corn Earworm, Dr. Amber Vinchesi-Vahl:**  
This presentation will cover corn earworm biology and management, especially related to the mechanisms of insecticide resistance and how to develop an insecticide resistance management program for sweet corn with available chemistries, insecticide rotation, and other IPM practices, like cultural controls.
- 11:30-12      **Updates**  
Commissioner of Agriculture, NHDAMF-- Shawn Jasper  
Director, Division of Agricultural Development, NHDAMF – Joshua Marshall  
Director, Division of Pesticide Control, NHDAMF - David Rousseau  
NRCS Programming Update – Todd Guerdat  
Commercial Member Update – Gold Member Appreciation
- 12:00-1      **Lunch and Visit with Commercial Members**
- 1-1:30      **What's New with Dr. Becky Sideman:** Update on her new position and current research.
- 1:30-2      **Business Meeting and Elections**
- 2:00-3:00      **Frost Protection and The Science Behind It, Laura McDermott:**  
Frost protection proved to be critical for growers during the 2023 season. Laura will present on the science of frost protection for small fruits, including the critical temperatures, different frost protection methods, and tips and tricks for growers. She will also moderate a grower-driven discussion on vegetable frost protection while sharing successful frost protection strategies.



## Speaker Bio's:

### **Dr. Bo Liu**

Dr. Liu has over 20 years of experience working on disease diagnosis and integrated disease management of vegetables, small-fruits, fruits, tree fruits and field crops, Bo has had the particular emphasis on development of cost-efficient modern disease diagnostic methods and provided diagnostic services to growers and stockholders, on study of etiology, population biology and genetics, molecular ecology and epidemiology of most economically important pathogens and diseases on horticultural and field crops, and providing disease control strategies to growers with integrated management approaches.

### **Laura McDermott**

Laura McDermott has long been interested in horticulture, completing her undergrad degree at Cornell University and her master degree at the University of Florida. Laura joined Cornell Cooperative Extension in 1990 and, through the years, has fine-tuned her expertise in commercial small fruit and vegetable production including pest identification and management, soil fertility, food safety, and season extension techniques. Today, Laura leads small fruit outreach efforts in our area, serves as a liaison with grower organizations, and regularly participates in applied research and demonstration activities.

### **Dr. Amber Vinchesi-Vahl**

Dr. Amber Vinchesi-Vahl has spent the last several years as a Vegetable Crops Advisor for University of California Cooperative Extension, developing a research and extension program for vegetable farmers and pest control advisers in northern California. Originally from Pepperell, Massachusetts, Amber is looking forward to moving back to New England and working with local farmers and diversified cropping systems. She holds a B.S in Entomology from Purdue University and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Entomology from Washington State University.

### **Dr. Renuka Mathur**

Dr. Renuka Mathur is an Extension State Soil Health Specialist at the University of New Hampshire with more than 25+ years of experience in soil science, specifically in soil fertility, nutrient management, and soil analytical chemistry. After obtaining her PhD degree from Texas A&M university, College Station, Texas, she expanded her experiences in extension, research, and teaching from her careers at University of Florida-Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Cornell University, and Iowa State University. Renuka leads the state of New Hampshire's soil health program. Her research and extension projects are geared towards combining soil health and crop production practices for improving soil and farm resilience to climate change while achieving long-term agriculture and climate sustainability. Her goal is to integrate soil health testing and assessment tools with on-farm fertility management and decision-making practices that will advance the overall crop productivity with a goal of minimizing carbon footprint.