



Vermont Apple IPM News

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February 7, 2008

ReminderDeadline for Early Registration is Feb. 15.

The program for the **VTFGA annual meeting** has been approved for **2 recertification credits** towards your pesticide application license. In addition to having **Dr. Art Agnello** of Cornell University and **Jon Clements** from UMass as guest speakers, **Bill Suhr, Andrea Darrow and Barney Hodges** have kindly agreed to discuss “Diversification & Marketing” — what they are doing to address customer needs and interests. The meeting should be very interesting and informative !

Just a quick reminder that if your registration is received by Feb. 15, the registration fee to attend the Vermont Tree Fruit Growers’ Association Annual Meeting is reduced to \$21.00. Afterwards, the registration fee is \$26.00. The VTFGA will be held on February 26 at the American Legion Hall in Middlebury. Enclosed in this mailing is a letter from **Glen Schreiter**, President of the VTFGA, and another copy of the program and registration form.

Hope to see you there ...

The 2008 New England Tree Fruit Management Guide ...

The 2008 edition of the New England Tree Fruit Management Guide is currently in the last stage of completion. Similar to last year, the Guide has been developed through a collaborative effort of New England extension specialists and Cornell University.

I have submitted an order for Vermont and copies will be available for purchase through the Vermont Apple IPM Program. I will let you know the details on cost of the publication and how to order copies in the very near future.

Value-Added Agricultural Grants Available

The following is a notice about a “value-added” grant program that might be of interest to you. Grant writing is a very time-consuming and difficult task, but it can pay off at times.

“USDA Rural Development is soliciting applications for \$18.4 million in competitive grant funds to help independent agricultural producers enter into value-added market activities. Last year, 162 recipients from 42 states received \$22.6 million to implement innovative projects, including four from Vermont totaling \$397,017 for projects including manufacture of cheese, feasibility for an on-farm woodchip gasification system, wine production and marketing, and on-farm processing of organic foods. The maximum grant amount for economic planning activities is \$100,000 and the maximum grant amount for working capital expenses is \$300,000. Vermont farmers, farmer groups, farmer cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures are invited to apply to the Montpelier State Office not later than March 31, 2008. The Notice of Solicitation for Applications is attached. Eligibility requirements, an application guide, and other materials may be obtained online at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/coops/vadg.htm>, or by calling 802-828-6031.

Grant funds are available for either economic planning activity to develop feasibility studies, marketing plans and business plans that will help identify new markets and expanded uses for agricultural products; or, if an independently prepared feasibility study and business plan specific to the value-added venture already exist, then funds may be available for working capital expenses related to operating a viable value-added agricultural business venture, including inventory, salaries, utilities, marketing campaigns, and other expenses directly related to the processing and marketing of the value-added product. The desired outcomes of this program are to expand markets for, and increase financial returns to, the agricultural producer-owners of the value-added venture.”

Contact Information: If you have any questions, please call or write:

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