

Tarping for Reduced Tillage in Small-Scale Vegetable Systems

November 18, 2019 – Ontario County CCE - Canandaigua, NY

Lead Facilitator – Crystal Stewart, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Workshop Goals:

- 1) Learn how we can use tarping to overcome barriers to reducing tillage in vegetables while managing weeds and improving soil health
- 2) Identify specific changes we can make to farm management in the next year resulting in reduced tillage, better weed management, and greater profitability

9:00 - 9:45 am Welcome, Introductions, and Opening Discussion

9:45 - 10:30 am Tarping as a RT/NT management tool: substituting tarps for tillage

Goal - Share and learn RT and NT management practices using tarps for bed preparation and strategies in a rotation with different crop types

Presentation with Q and A (30 min) – Ryan Maher, Cornell Small Farms Program

10:30 - 10:45 am BREAK

10:45 - 12:00 pm Weed management: digging into weed problems and tarping tactics

Goal - Share and learn tarp methods for managing annual and perennial weed species, weed seed banks, and strategies for integrating with complementary weed management practices.

Presentations with Q and A (30 min)

- *Aaron Munzer – Plowbreak Farm - Hector, NY*
- *Mark Hutton – University of Maine*

12:00 – 12:45 pm LUNCH BREAK

12:45 - 1:45 pm Tarps and soil building: compost, mulch and/or cover crops for better soils

Goal - Share and learn tarp effects on soil processes and nutrients and strategies for combining compost, mulch and cover crops with tarps for additive soil benefits.

Presentations with Q and A (30 min)

- *Liz Martin – Muddy Fingers Farm – Hector, NY*
- *Ryan Maher – Cornell Small Farms Program*

1:45 – 2:00 pm BREAK

2:00 - 2:45 pm Putting it all together – tarping in your rotation plan

Goal - Synthesize information and lay out bed-level tarp management plans to integrate tarps in crop rotations, outline methods, and consider logistics

2:45 - 3:00 pm Wrap up – Next steps, evaluations

Workshop Leaders

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Mark Hutton is Associate Professor of Vegetable Crops for University of Maine Cooperative Extension and Associate Dean in the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry and Agriculture. mark.hutton@maine.edu

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