

# Late July Iowa Produce Update

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

crop, japanese beetle, cedar rapids, plant, eastern iowa, places, irrigate, year, rain, field, area, dry, colorado potato beetle, raspberries, beans, day, drive, podcast, tunnel, aerial roots

## SPEAKERS

Patrick O'Malley, Speaker 3, Christa Hartsook, Joe Hannan

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- C** Christa Hartsook 00:15  
Hello, and welcome to the small farms podcast, a prediction of the small farms program at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. Our podcast covers the opportunities and challenges associated with rural life.
- J** Joe Hannan 00:29  
I am Joe Hannan, Commercial Horticulture Field Specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, and welcome to the small farm sustainability podcast. With me today is my counterpart in eastern Iowa Patrick O'Malley. Patrick, welcome to the podcast again today. Glad you're back. How are things going in your neck of the woods?
- P** Patrick O'Malley 00:48  
Pretty good. It's currently we've been getting a little bit more rain than you have.
- J** Joe Hannan 00:52  
Yeah, I guess been getting a fair bit more rain I think than us.
- P** Patrick O'Malley 00:56  
Basically things are progressing well. We went from I'd say earlier in the season we were like two weeks behind to now I think a lot of things are catching up to normal.
- J** Joe Hannan 01:05

Yeah, I feel kind of in the same boat that we're we've kind of gotten back to a more of a normal crop growth stage here. But we are bone dry, whereas it sounds like you guys have been getting an inch or plus kind of on a weekly basis. Right?

P Patrick O'Malley 01:22

Well, it's kind of been spotty on locations here in eastern Iowa. There's a few places here they're starting to get a little bit dry.

J Joe Hannan 01:30

Gotcha. So I guess a couple weeks ago you guys got a fair bit of flooding and hail over in kind of the Iowa City Cedar Rapids Waterloo area is that correct?

P Patrick O'Malley 01:41

It was a pretty extensive area it was a couple Saturdays ago there was hail a quite a bit around they had to arrange some crop meetings for farmers that had hail damage because it was it was pretty extensive.

J Joe Hannan 01:55

I saw some pictures and things oh corn and soybeans, but hadn't seen or heard anything from specialty crops other than from one orchard.

P Patrick O'Malley 02:03

Yeah, well, I mean, it was it was pretty widespread hail but at least a lot of it wasn't real dense. You know where I saw a picture from a few years ago where like cornfield was just totally decimated. There was nothing left. There was there was obviously damage in many places, but it wasn't quite that bad.

J Joe Hannan 02:22

Okay, that's good promising anyway. So how are things looking, I don't know from a disease standpoint over there.

P Patrick O'Malley 02:31

Not too different from a normal year. I guess because we've had a little bit more rain you know, we're seeing some maybe more aphids and we're seeing spider mite. So of course in the high tunnels you seem like you always have spider mite there.

J Joe Hannan 02:44

Yeah, I definitely found those the other day in my tunnel over here and with us being warm and dry was not surprised it was right after Japanese beetles. So I got done with Japanese beetle and then turned around and had spider mites.

P Patrick O'Malley 02:58

And I don't know if it's if there's much to this or not, but at least for me personally I got a lot more questions on Colorado potato beetle this year that I have in past years

J Joe Hannan 03:08

Hmm no I haven't gotten hurt anything from Colorado potato beetle over this way so a lot of cucumber beetle this over here this way it seemed like the spring

P Patrick O'Malley 03:20

Yeah, they seem to be a pretty routine problem.

J Joe Hannan 03:22

Yeah routine problem. So I did actually come across some of them out in my high tunnel here just the other day must be a second generation or late first straggler out there.

P Patrick O'Malley 03:33

We did they happen to be spotted spotted instead of striped? Yeah, let's find it. Yeah, like because that spotted stone over winter here. They blow up from down south.

J Joe Hannan 03:43

Yeah. And I've had plenty of southern winds here to bring them in so I had it's just a couple so it wasn't wasn't worst thing in the world.

P Patrick O'Malley 03:50

They don't have resistance to chemicals like the Colorado potato beetle has true.

J Joe Hannan 03:54

J Joe Hannan 03:34

True, they're a little easier to deal with that said there was only a couple of them so I just smashed them and went about my day. Well, I've seen some definitely some unique things out here this year actually came across white flies out in the vineyard,

P Patrick O'Malley 04:11

or do I see white flies, but normally I don't see those until fall.

J Joe Hannan 04:15

Yeah, and don't normally even see that many outdoors. But this was kind of south central back in kind of the end of June when we're running 90 plus degrees every day. And I've gotten a call and sure enough, white flies out flying around in the vineyard. Because I came across another one that doesn't happen all the time. But does happen came over from your side of the state where somebody had aerial roots starting to form on some of the grapes after some of the I think they must have gotten some heavier rainfall.

P Patrick O'Malley 04:46

Oh, that's not good cuz that sometimes also can be related to a growth regulator herbicide.

J Joe Hannan 04:52

Yeah, and I didn't see any herbicide damage or anything on the plants for seen it on the leaves. Yeah. Yeah, and then the laser crystal clean. It was literally just some aerial roots.

P Patrick O'Malley 05:06

Must have been pretty wet spot.

J Joe Hannan 05:07

Yeah, must have been so and it had sounded from conversations that they had quite a bit of rain over the last couple of weeks.

P Patrick O'Malley 05:13

So did you happen to know were they on a heavy soil?

J Joe Hannan 05:16

I don't know the soil type offhand. That was kind of my assumption that they're on a heavier, heavier soil, a little higher organic matter. Any other insects or diseases that you're seeing floating around over there?

**P** Patrick O'Malley 05:28

Well, you mentioned the Japanese beetle already. They do seem to be heavier in my area this year than they've been the last few years.

**J** Joe Hannan 05:34

Okay. So it's a pretty widespread heavy or patchy, heavy,

**P** Patrick O'Malley 05:38

let's say it was pretty widespread, heavy and it's amazing in some places, never had them before it got them this year.

**J** Joe Hannan 05:44

Really surprised over in Eastern I was to places that have not had them.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 05:49

To be specific. There was a place in southern Louisa County. They claim they had them for the first time. It was some 80 year old guy and I know that in Louisa County, you go eight miles to the north, they've had it for 10 years.

**J** Joe Hannan 06:04

Yeah. We had them down in Muscatine. When I was down there, that's been 15 years ago now or something like that.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 06:10

Donald Lewis has got the chart of the state of Iowa that shows the counties where it's been reported, and there's still a few counties that there hasn't been an official report.

**J** Joe Hannan 06:20

Yeah, like some of them are kind of over my my neck of the woods kind of north north central Northwest. Iowa seems to be kind of a spotty area. I was out doing a few site visits here. Just

saying a couple of orchards during Japanese beetle season and again, honey crisp was clear as day.

P

Patrick O'Malley 06:38

Yep. I don't know why they really prefer honey crisp. In fact, I've seen with honey crisp trees. You have enough you have a couple of honey crisp trees. It'll keep them almost off the raspberries.

J

Joe Hannan 06:51

Yeah, and actually one orchard I was out I mean, they were row for a row there in the honey crisp and then there'd be a different cultivar our next next to it and there would not be any out there. It was absolutely crazy.

P

Patrick O'Malley 07:02

And that's one way that I judged it's kind of a heavy Japanese beetle year is I mean, they always do the honey crisp trees, but this year they're doing the other apples a little bit.

J

Joe Hannan 07:11

Yep. And I've I've kind of seen the same at one of the other orchards where they are in the high Kurth, but they're awful and other other cultivars just not as heavy. I actually found it interesting. I've got strawberries at my place, and they are in the strawberries, but they were not in the raspberries of all things.

P

Patrick O'Malley 07:29

So that's unusual because I always thought they'd like raspberries more than strawberries.

J

Joe Hannan 07:33

That's always been my experience too that the raspberries is like a trap crop form and I have trouble even finding any chewing damage in my raspberries versus strawberries? I'll knock on wood and count myself fortunate there poking around some of the other orchards I am seeing a little bit of Fireblight from the season definitely a lot of scab and rust that outside in from our early season wetness over this way, seeing the same thing over there?f

P

Patrick O'Malley 08:03

Yeah, especially conditions must have been right or something is I'm seeing a lot more rust this year. It was mainly unsprayed trees of course but but it does seem to be more prevalent this

year.

**J** Joe Hannan 08:14

Yeah, I'm just seems like it was hard to get in and necessarily find a time to put something on to keep things arrested and under control. And it was either rainy or it was windy here under a rough inspection.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 08:27

Yeah, same here. That was it was hard to get the sprays on.

**J** Joe Hannan 08:29

Yeah, things don't look terrible, but it's definitely present. I guess I have that same note from what I'm hearing from folks over here that are using codling moth mating disruption. That seems like it seems it seems to be working this year for them. For the most part.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 08:44

That's good.

**J** Joe Hannan 08:45

Talked to one Archer that had had the mating disruption that I believe that they were going to still have to do a little bit of spraying but several the other orchards that I've talked to I don't think they've done anything. So seems like a good reasonable option for managing codling moth.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 09:01

But then most places you still have to deal with the Apple maggot.

**J** Joe Hannan 09:05

Still got to deal with that, yep, and Plunker Coolio and everything else. So you've got peaches over in eastern Iowa this year, I assume.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 09:13

Yeah, we've got a nice crop. Nice crop. I mean, there's only one big grower but he's, he's real hannv this year.

Happy this year.

J

Joe Hannan 09:20

Yeah, I bet so is this the first time he said peaches in a few years or?

P

Patrick O'Malley 09:24

Yeah, I know that last year and the year before he had basically nothing.

J

Joe Hannan 09:29

Okay

P

Patrick O'Malley 09:29

I think it was three years ago that he had a decent crop.

J

Joe Hannan 09:34

Gotcha I think western Iowa I know has peaches. I've seen some posts on Facebook and things and we should have beaches around here. So that's kind of a nice treat for the year.

P

Patrick O'Malley 09:45

Yeah, if worse comes to worse, you know, go for the Missouri ones or they're better than ones from California or other places.

J

Joe Hannan 09:51

Oh, by far. Yeah. I have a friend that usually goes down to Missouri and picks them up and brings me back half a box. I guess maybe switch gears to talk a little bit about high tunnels and fall planting on crops. And I'm assuming most of your tunnels over there have shade cloth on and trying to keep things cool or somewhat cool over there.

P

Patrick O'Malley 10:11

You know, for the most part, the ones are of crops and there's things like tomatoes that seems to help to cool them off a little bit. Because you get too high temperature and you've got things like tomatoes and peppers. They don't they don't pollinate real well.



J

Joe Hannan 10:24

Yeah, I think there are some few posts and stuff going around the hort group here that all and even in the high time I went visit it, you could see there was a week and 90 plus degrees in that high tunnel. And there's just a bare spot of no pollination there for about two clusters going up the tomatoes. So I don't expect to be any shortage of tomatoes, though. Have you seen that? I think beans can do the same thing. Have you seen any issues with beans out in the field?

P

Patrick O'Malley 10:51

Not so much and once again that the bean leaf beetle doesn't seem to be that bad. There was a time several years ago that you couldn't grow beans without spraying them constantly for Bean Leaf beetles.

J

Joe Hannan 11:03

Yeah, I haven't seen or heard anybody commenting about being leaf beetle. I didn't plant my beans here until late. So that was kind of a non issue for me anyway, but seems like you can really get away with beans just by planting them and weeding them. And in your case, probably not even having to water them, with the rain you guys been getting for the most part

P

Patrick O'Malley 11:21

Beans you know bush beans or a crop that you could still plant now and expect to get a harvest before for the first frost.

J

Joe Hannan 11:29

It's good because I got been going in tonight when I get off work. Yeah, got up this morning. And like oh my still got time to stick some beans in. So let's put some in. So we have something else go for market. So which is kind of funny with how dry we are here. You really got to plan ahead, I had to go out and turn on the overhead sprinklers on my field just to get the ground softened out so that I can go through and work the ground up and get a seed bed because otherwise it was rock.

P

Patrick O'Malley 11:58

Yeah, I've been through that before at least not this year. But in your particular area, are you are you past the are you at the moderate drought stage?

J

Joe Hannan 12:07

Yeah, I'm in severe most severe area stage for whatever we are currently here

P

Patrick O'Malley 12:13

You go from like, you know, abnormally dry to some lower level of drought to moderate drought and then severe drought or something like that. So you're in the severe drought the D2

J

Joe Hannan 12:24

Yeah, D2 I'm right on the border of the D1-D2, but I know I've watched storms go to the north, go to the south, or completely die out coming right at me from where I'm sitting. Well I put an auger down into the ground several weeks ago at this point. And I went down four feet with my auger and it was dry.

P

Patrick O'Malley 12:46

Wow,

J

Joe Hannan 12:46

Very dry.

P

Patrick O'Malley 12:48

And you can see a little bit at least abnormally dry is creeping into Dubuque, Jackson County over in eastern Iowa.

J

Joe Hannan 12:56

Yeah, it looks like it is definitely growing and spreading. But, you know, from a specialty crop side of things, I'd much prefer to irrigate. But someday it's just nice to take a day off from irrigating and let it rain. I keep telling my wife that we'll have a quiet day here as soon as it rains. And that was about eight weeks ago. Actually a little bit more. Now that was probably how we got an inch rain once in there. But otherwise, we haven't seen rain on our farm more or less since May 15. Give or take? It's it's been dry for quite a while.

P

Patrick O'Malley 13:28

Do the do the sweet corn fields over there have the ability to irrigate?

J

Joe Hannan 13:33

No, they don't.

P

Patrick O'Malley 13:34

Because I know the ones over here, most of them don't routinely irrigate the sweet corn. They have to do like a special, you know, set up everything because they just they don't plan on irrigating the sweet corn. It's not in the plans normally.

J

Joe Hannan 13:45

Yeah, no, we I don't know if any of the larger farms over here have irrigation on their, on their sweet corn dry by some of the fields and they're big open fields, but no irrigation.

P

Patrick O'Malley 13:56

So doing sweet corn with a center pivot.

J

Joe Hannan 14:00

Not that I'm more of over here. There's not a whole lot of center pivots floating around in my area, most of the time we get rain and most of the time we have you know, heavier soils. It's not a big deal. Some of the storms have been kind of spotty. So you know they may get enough rain to hit them as as pollinating and be okay, but I think some of our pumpkin folks are probably wishing the same thing that they had center pivot or had some sort of irrigation over here as well. Especially anybody that planted late.

P

Patrick O'Malley 14:28

I think they'll still get pumpkins, but they may not have quite the weight.

J

Joe Hannan 14:31

Yeah, I think they'll they'll be there. They'll just be a lighter weight pumpkin and most of them over here seem to be selling by the weight. So they're selling by the pound. Yeah, I guess even planting new crops I was talking to I did sunflowers last week on the last podcast and we were talking about having to plant those down an inch and a half inch and three quarters just to make sure you get them down into some moisture to get them germinated and up and going.

P

Patrick O'Malley 14:56

When did they plant the sunflowers?

J

Joe Hannan 14:58

Ah, let me see. I think it was, actually probably closer to two weeks ago at this point,

**P** Patrick O'Malley 15:04  
that gives them enough time to mature?

**J** Joe Hannan 15:07  
Yeah, some of the pro cut series and things are a little bit shorter days to maturity. Like more in that 60 to 70 days.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 15:16  
I didn't realize it was that fast.

**J** Joe Hannan 15:18  
Yeah, some of the newer programs, they don't get as tall. They're like 36 inches tall, maybe. And they have a pretty high or pretty fast turnaround. So like they were trying to plant them for one of their larger pumpkin festivals.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 15:34  
So they're growing them for the flowers and not for the seed, right?

**J** Joe Hannan 15:38  
Yeah. Yeah, everybody over here, it's growing either. For the flowers, either for crop flowers, or for the photo opportunity type deal. I don't think anybody's growing them for oil or anything, oil or food. People or bird food, or whatever food I'll eat them every once in a while, but they make a mess. When I came across the other day was alfalfa leaf hopper floating around here. You guys seen much leaf hoppers over there?

**P** Patrick O'Malley 16:08  
That's a pretty consistent thing to see around here on the apples, including the apples and some of the vegetables and just like the potato leafhopper.

**J** Joe Hannan 16:15  
Yeah, I just I don't know why it caught me off guard. I have a large alfalfa field right next to it. And they just mowed it so I should have.

P

Patrick O'Malley 16:22

Oh, yeah, that's that's the common scenario is Yeah.

J

Joe Hannan 16:26

Yeah, I'm in Washington for that one a little bit. But it was brand new tunnel. I've not been in there very often. And yep, sure enough, alfalfa leaf hopper. It's just like, ah, give me a break. Yeah, I mean, that's kind of what I'm floating around and seeing over here, nothing too overly out of the normal. So anything new or weird or abnormal over there?

P

Patrick O'Malley 16:49

Just maybe not plant related so much. But another confirmation that there's copperheads in Van Buren County.

J

Joe Hannan 16:56

Oh, you didn't discover this on the hard way did you?

P

Patrick O'Malley 17:01

No no, but there's another confirmation from some people.

J

Joe Hannan 17:04

Yeah, lots of wildlife. Oh, you know what, maybe we should talk a little bit markets to our most of your farmers markets open up now and things.

P

Patrick O'Malley 17:13

Some of the smaller ones are to take Cedar Rapids, for instance, they've got this no reach farm market that's now operating somewhat normally, you know, in person with vendors, but of course everybody's social distancing. But like the main Cedar Rapids farmer market, that one's just to drive in only. The Iowa City one is just online only. It's kind of a mixture. There are some that are actually going forward and some that are doing it in different methods.

J

Joe Hannan 17:43

Yeah, more or less same here. A lot of our smaller markets are open to the public with social distancing in place. And I think that downtown Des Moines farmers market is going to go to an

online order drive up process downtown. I haven't had a chance to look at all the details there yet.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 18:04

That's what Cedar Rapids is doing. I think you order online and you drive through and get it.

**J** Joe Hannan 18:09

Yeah. So I'm still waiting on more specifics. Email came through and I haven't read it yet. And then I think a new one opened up in Boone at the Farm Progress Show, it must have been in a couple of years ago, but they are doing drive thru. So you just drive through and pick up your stuff there. So on that's a well set up location for being able to social distance and being able to drive through with their roads already in place.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 18:32

Do they have to pre order that one? Or they can just pull them that day and go through and get stuff?

**J** Joe Hannan 18:37

I don't think that one is preorder. I don't know, I need to go scope it out. Because I, for me, it's a fairly close market. And so I'm kind of considering it. But yeah, I don't think there's any pre order on that one. I think you just drive for I was talking to I was talking to somebody yesterday, I think and they were talking about Rinehart's there are a big market vendor down in at the downtown market. And this year because of not having the downtown market. They're doing drive thru direct right on their farm. And I think from what I heard yesterday is as when you pull in as a car, you have a specific person that just walks you through the entire drive thru market, and they're grabbing the product and bagging it up for you and taking it down to the cash register as you as you drive through with your vehicle. So I thought that was kind of cool, definitely unique, good way to handle it.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 19:26

The other thing is like pick your own places, what they've been doing is at least some of them have people need to call ahead and schedule an appointment at a certain time where they're allowed into the field. And in the case back when we had strawberries, you know, they're different, different rows and so forth. But, I mean, it's still being done. It's just with more caution.

**J** Joe Hannan 19:47

Yeah. And I think pick your own is a really good opportunity to social distance and still go out

and get your produce and you know, as long as you're not overwhelmed with 1000s of people in a day, it might make it a little trickier. Well Anything else you want to talk about Patrick? Otherwise, maybe we can wrap up here.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 20:05

I just bring it up. You know, normally we have a fruit and vegetable Field Day at the hort Station North of Ames, usually in early August. And apparently that's still going to happen but not not as a live event, but it's going to be virtual. And I'm not quite sure the details and when it's going to be available, but something to look forward to, I guess.

**J** Joe Hannan 20:25

Yeah, I haven't heard any details yet other than they're going virtual wit. I think they're gonna go out and record things and get things posted up for folks to watch. So, yep, should be fun.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 20:36

So some interesting projects out there at the Horde station in particular. So

**J** Joe Hannan 20:40

there is well, Patrick, like thank you for joining me for 20-30 minutes here today. And of course, thanks to Krista Hartsook and Olivia Hanlon at the ISU small farms sustainability program for editing and hosting all these podcasts. If you've been listening, you know that we're starting to bring some farmers in for guest host. So if you'd like to come on and be a guest host and talk about your specific crop or your specific farm operation. Shoot me a note. Let's do it. Again. Patrick, thank you very much for coming on and having a chat here today. It's always good to catch up on what's happening over in your neck of the woods.

**P** Patrick O'Malley 21:13

Thanks for inviting me.

**S** Speaker 3 21:14

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