

2018 | By: Rhode Island Agricultural Council



Increasing Regional Awareness of Rhode Island Specialty Crops

Increasing Regional Awareness of Rhode Island Specialty Crops

A Product of the Specialty Crop Enhancement Program 2016-2018

Acknowledgements

This publication was made possible with funding from a 2016-2018 Rhode Island Farm Viability Specialty Crop Block Grant.

The Rhode Island Agricultural Council would like to extend their thanks to Farm Fresh RI for permission to include their RI Harvest Calendar in the Annex.

Unless otherwise noted, all photos courtesy of **Heather Faubert**, URI Cooperative Extension & RI Fruit Growers' Association.



Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	1
INTRODUCTION	3
SPECIALTY CROPS IN THE OCEAN STATE.....	4
BOLSTER OUR ECONOMY	4
PERPETUATE OUR HERITAGE	4
PRESERVE OUR RESOURCES	5
FEED OUR COMMUNITIES	5
SUPPORTING SPECIALTY CROPS IN RHODE ISLAND	6
THE RIAC	6
STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES	7
ANNEX 1: RIAC MEMBERS.....	8
EASTERN RI CONSERVATION DISTRICT.....	8
COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND LIFE SCIENCES, URI.....	8
LITTLE RHODY POULTRY FANCIERS.....	9
FARM CREDIT EAST.....	9
RHODY FRESH	10
NORTHEAST ORGANIC FARMING ASSOCIATION OF RI	10
RI 4-H CLUB FOUNDATION.....	11
RI AGRICULTURE EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION	11
RI BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION	12
RI AYRSHIRE CLUB.....	12
RI DAHLIA SOCIETY	13
RI CHRISTMAS TREE GROWERS' ASSOCIATION.....	13
RI DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE, DEM.....	14
RI DAIRY GOAT ASSOCIATION.....	14
RI FARM BUREAU	15
RI ENVIROTHON	15
RI FOREST CONSERVATORS' ORGANIZATION.....	16
RI FARM INCUBATOR	16
RI FFA ALUMNI & ASSOCIATION.....	17
RI FRUIT GROWERS' ASSOCIATION	17
RI NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION	18
RI MAPLE SYRUP PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION.....	18
RI RAISED LIVESTOCK ASSOCIATION	19
RI RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT AREA COUNCIL	19
RI STATE GRANGE	20
RI SHEEP COOPERATIVE	20
SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST	21
SOUTHERN RI CONSERVATION DISTRICT.....	21
ANNEX 2: RI HARVEST CALENDAR.....	22
NOTES.....	27
REFERENCES	27

What *is* a "Specialty Crop" Anyway?

"Section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note) and amended under section 10010 of the Agricultural Act of 2014, Public Law 113-79 (the Farm Bill) defines specialty crops as 'fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops (including floriculture).' Eligible plants must be cultivated or managed and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops." (2012 Census of Agriculture: Specialty Crops, 2015)



NURSERY, GREENHOUSE, AND FLORICULTURE PRODUCTS ARE GROWN ON 294 FARMS IN RHODE ISLAND.

PHOTO BY KRISTEN CASTRATARO

Introduction

Specialty crop producers serve many valuable roles in our communities. They provide healthy food, support the local economy, and enhance our quality of life through scenic views and open spaces. On the one hand, RI agriculture is enjoying recognition it has not had for decades.

On the other hand, there are many factors working against a thriving agricultural sector. The primary of these is economic. Many members of the Rhode Island community are struggling financially. When deciding where to spend purchasing dollars, price is often the determining factor. Therefore consumers will often buy cheap over local, even though local purchases result in greater economic benefit to their state and, by extension, themselves.

This problem was highlighted in the 2012 Census of Agriculture that recorded an 11% *decrease* in the average market value of products sold *per farm* from 2007.¹ If we continue to increase the number of farms and the number of acres in farms without also increasing per farm income, we are *not* building a sustainable agricultural community.

The Rhode Island Agricultural Council (RIAC) undertook this project to enhance the visibility and viability of specialty crop production in Rhode Island. A secondary goal was to reinvigorate the RIAC and transform it into a vibrant source of communication, encouragement, and education for everyone interested in RI agriculture and specialty crop production.

This publication serves as an introduction to specialty crops in Rhode Island and the organizations that support and produce them. Our hope is that you will find within these pages a renewed appreciation for the diversity of agriculture in the Ocean State and will be inspired to become a part of it by exploring local farms and consuming local food.

Specialty Crops in the Ocean State...

Bolster our Economy

Rhode Island's specialty crop producers play an important role in our state's economy, ethos, and aesthetics. The 547 farms that identified as growing specialty crops in the 2012 Census of Agriculture sold a total market value of \$48,073,000 in agricultural products and provided employment for 1,501 hired workers (not counting the primary operators themselves).ⁱⁱ

The total economic impact of specialty crops cannot be measured by those numbers alone, however. As farmers purchase soil amendments, equipment, and fuel from local businesses, they multiply the economic impact of their presence.

Perpetuate our Heritage

Rhode Island has historically displayed what might be described as a split personality, desperately trying to walk a tight-rope between opposing values and beliefs. Today's specialty crop producers perpetuate that tradition, both consciously and unconsciously.

When Roger Williams decided to settle in present-day Rhode Island in 1636, he purchased his land from the native Narragansett Indians, a tribe who subsisted primarily by farming, fishing, and hunting. The white settlers employed those same activities to turn the area into a bustling shipping center, with all its accompanying benefits and struggles.

In 1776, Rhode Island was the first state to officially renounce its allegiance to England, despite the fact that it had operated under a degree of self-rule uncommon in the colonies for 180 years.

In an equally contradictory fashion, Rhode Island was the first state to prohibit the importation of slaves even though much of its financial success came through participation in the slave trade. Later, RI led the Industrial Revolution.ⁱⁱⁱ

Increasing Awareness of Rhode Island Specialty Crops

What is "Economic Impact" Anyway?



In 2013, the University of Rhode Island (URI), the RI Nursery and Landscape Association (RINLA), the RI Turfgrass Foundation (RITF), the RI Agricultural Partnership (RIAP), the RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM), and the RI Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC) completed the first economic impact study of Rhode Island's plant-based industry.

An industry's economic impact takes into account a variety of factors including:

- Revenues generated;
- Jobs created;
- Supplies purchased; and
- Services utilized.

FOR A DETAILED LOOK AT THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE GREEN INDUSTRY—INCLUDING AGRICULTURE—ON THE RI ECONOMY, SEE *THE 2012 ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY OF RHODE ISLAND PLANT-BASED INDUSTRIES AND AGRICULTURE* AND ITS COMPANION UPDATE COMPLETED IN 2015 (SPROUL & ELSNER, 2013; SPROUL 2015).

Preserve our Resources

The struggle to maintain balance—both between principle and profit and between agriculture and industry—continues today. One need not travel far in Rhode Island before running into the hallmarks of "progress": acres of arable land are constantly being leveled, paved, and developed.

Undoubtedly construction projects are an important part of modern society and economy. People need homes in which to live and stores in which to shop. It is equally certain that each of these projects comes with a cost, a price tag for which there is no rebate, refund, or return: **Land**.

Scenic views, wildlife habitat, clean air and water, even our tourism industry depends upon the presence of open *land*. Specialty crop producers steward 7,902 acres of farmland.^{iv} To get an idea of how impactful that is, imagine 8,000 football fields laid end-to-end, and you have an approximation. That is just the number of acres actively growing *specialty crops*. It does *not* include the additional acreage that our diversified farmers plant to non-specialty crops, use for livestock pasture and feed, or leave open as forests or buffer zones.

Feed our Communities

Specialty crop producers enter agriculture from a variety of backgrounds. Some are former FFA members right out of high school; others are retirees fulfilling a lifelong ambition. Some call the city home; others live in nearly-forgotten corners of the state. Some come from families that have lived and farmed the same land for generations; others are refugees struggling to learn a new language, culture, climate, and diet.

Our farmers' diversity is reflected in the crops they grow, the methods they use, the markets they utilize, and the amount of land they farm (see Table 1). Organic, biodynamic, chemical-free, Integrated Pest Management, conventional tillage...farmers across the state successfully use each practice.

As community members, we are right to value specialty crop producers' contributions to our economic, cultural, and environmental well-being. We would be remiss, however, if we were to ignore the most basic benefit they offer: nourishment for body and soul.

Table 1: The Distribution of Specialty Crops in Rhode Island

Information taken from Table 8 of the 2012 Census of Agriculture (2012 Census of Agriculture: Specialty Crops, 2015).

Crop	Number of Farms	Number of Acres
All Specialty Crops	547	7,902
Orchards	74	378
Berries	110	339
Vegetables	243	2,217
Nursery, greenhouse, and floriculture	294	4,395
Cut Christmas Trees	68	549
Short Rotation Woody Crops	6	2
Maple Syrup	18	2,572

RI consumers can now access local specialty crops in some surprising places: hospitals, schools, restaurants, chain supermarkets, and—naturally—farm stands and farmers' markets. At the right time of year, a visitor to—or resident of—the Ocean State can purchase bok choy at a farmer's market, pick apples at a local orchard, select mums for their front step, and sip tea sweetened with local honey all on the same day.

The diversity of our specialty crop producers and their products contributes greatly to the physical and emotional health our communities.

Supporting Specialty Crops in Rhode Island

No industry exists in a vacuum, particularly agriculture. Farmers are part of a mutually-reinforcing system of producers, consumers, and service providers who all work together to enhance—or diminish—agriculture. In Rhode Island, that interaction is more personal and visible than in many places.

Rhode Island is not an easy place in which to farm. The state has the highest-valued farmland in the country, making buying and keeping land a challenging proposition at best. Development pressure remains very high as well, leading many farmers to view their land as their retirement fund, an investment being held until a large influx of cash is required.

As the pressures upon farmers have increased, however, so have the number of individuals and organizations committed to supporting agriculture. Dozens of non-profit and for-profit groups offer farmers access to a wide variety of resources in the areas of finance, marketing, business, advocacy, and production.

The RIAC

One of the oldest of these organizations is the Rhode Island Agricultural Council (RIAC). The RIAC was formed in 1924 as the RI Agricultural Conference—the name was changed in 1958—to discuss the needs of agriculture in Rhode Island.

The role of the RIAC was validated by the State Legislature when it was granted annual funding to undergird its agriculturally-focused activities.

In the intervening decades, the RIAC has struggled to sustain and reassess its role amid reduced funding and the proliferation of organizations with paid staff committed to meeting specific agricultural needs. Indeed, the decision to pursue this project partially arose from that process of internal redefinition.

Increasing Awareness of Rhode Island Specialty Crops

What *is* the RIAC Anyway?



The mission/objective of the RIAC is to:

- Stimulate development of an interest in agriculture, horticulture, forestry and allied interests;
- Create an interest in rural life and the improvement of the rural community in Rhode Island;
- Effect a close relationship between representatives of agriculture with its allied interests and with commerce and industry;
- Develop and carry out a complete program for efficient production and economical distribution of farm products in Rhode Island, and;
- Coordinate all agencies interested in the welfare of agriculture in Rhode Island into one association from which unified efforts toward education, legislation and representation of agricultural interests of the state may emanate.

How does RIAC Support Agriculture Anyway?



The RIAC is committed to finding ways to support and advocate for agriculture in the Ocean State. Some ways in which we are doing that include:

- Writing letters to local, state, and national officials in support of beneficial legislation and in opposition to negative policy;
- Testifying before hearing committees on relevant legislation, in person and in writing;
- Creating license plate frames expressing support of RI agriculture;
- Petitioning for a RI charity plate to simultaneously promote RI agriculture and augment the resources available to the RIAC for its activities; and
- Awarding grants to member organizations to assist them in their service to and on behalf of local agriculture.

The RIAC is an organization composed of other member agricultural entities. Nearly three dozen member organizations send delegates to our triannual meetings and share updates on their respective activities.

As an organization, the RIAC has a defined mission and objectives (see box entitled "What is the RIAC Anyway?") as well as specified responsibilities. Perhaps the most significant is the RIAC's role on the state Agricultural Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group is consulted on an as-needed basis by the Chief of the Division of Agriculture, often to help determine whether certain activities can be considered "normal agricultural practices" or "ancillary activities." The Advisory Group also meets annually (dependent upon Farm Bill funding) to review and recommend for funding Farm Viability/Specialty Crop Block Grants. (The RIAC recused itself when this proposal was under discussion.)

Strengths and Challenges

The key strength of the RIAC is its diversity. Member organizations span all areas of agriculture. Commercial growers, hobbyists, FFA members, fruit farmers, vegetable growers, livestock producers, incubator sites, and more all have a seat at the table.

Because the backgrounds of the member organizations are so different, actions taken by the RIAC tend to serve agriculture as a whole, not just a particular segment.

A major challenge for the RIAC in recent years is the fact that many of our delegates are volunteers in their home organization, so their participation in RIAC is also voluntary. Three meetings a year is a reasonable time commitment for most delegates, but additional time is often difficult or impossible.


The RIAC's leadership is currently exploring ways to meet its function of facilitating agricultural endeavors while minimizing additional time commitments for delegates (see box "How does RIAC Support Agriculture Anyway?").

It is our hope that you will join us in that mission. Get engaged in local land use discussions. Stay abreast of policies and programs that could have unintended negative impacts on RI farmers and their farm businesses. Learn all you can about local farmers and their livelihoods.

Ultimately, however, the best way for you to support local agriculture is to buy from local farmers. They'll be glad you did...and so will you.

Annex 1: RIAC Members

<p style="text-align: center;">THINK BIG  WE DO</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">College of the Environment and Life Sciences, URI</p>
Contact Information
<p>Phone: (401) 874-2957</p> <p>Email: cels@uri.edu</p> <p>Website: https://web.uri.edu/cels/</p>
Agricultural Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training the next generation of leaders in agriculture and the natural sciences Providing community outreach (Extension) on current agricultural research/practices
Summary of Activities
<p>With a community of approximately 100 faculty members and 2,200 total students, the University of Rhode Island (URI) College of the Environment and Life Sciences (CELS) fosters cross-disciplinary relationships that enrich student educational experiences and create impactful solutions for today's global challenges.</p>

<p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">Eastern RI Conservation District</p> 
Contact Information
<p>Phone: (401) 934-0842</p> <p>Email: info@easternriconservation.org</p> <p>Website: http://www.easternriconservation.org/index.htm</p>
Agricultural Focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preservation, stewardship and conservation of farmland and open spaces Providing information and technical assistance to residents of Newport and Bristol Counties on conserving natural resources and generating farm viability
Summary of Activities
<p>The Eastern RI Conservation District (ERICD) is dedicated to protecting and enhancing our open spaces, encouraging agricultural enterprises, and improving both our inland watersheds and our marine bay system.</p>

Farm Credit East



Contact Information

Phone: (860) 774-0717

Email:

FarmCreditEast_Dayville_Admin_WCMS@farmcrediteast.com

Website: <https://www.farmcrediteast.com/>

Agricultural Focus

- Crop insurance
- Farm loans
- New farmer financial services

Summary of Activities

Farm Credit East is dedicated to serving the agricultural credit and financial needs of those in the business of agriculture, including farmers, nursery and greenhouse operators, forest products producers, fishermen, lobstermen, part-time growers, agribusiness owners and country home owners.

Since 1916 the Farm Credit System has supplied the nation's agricultural industry with nearly one-third of its credit needs.

Little Rhody Poultry Fanciers



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 647-2211

Email: LittleRhodyPoultry@yahoo.com

Website:

<http://www.littlerhodypoultryfanciers.com/>

Agricultural Focus

- Poultry

Summary of Activities

The Little Rhody Poultry Fanciers are committed to perpetuating the care and showing of poultry in the Ocean State. Twice a year (on the third Sundays of May and October) they host shows at the Washington County Fairgrounds. Their members also show at a number of regional and national shows.

The active participation of both novice and experienced poultry keepers is encouraged.

Northeast Organic Farming Association of RI



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 523-2653

Email: NOFARI@live.com

Website: <http://nofari.org/>

Agricultural Focus

- Organic production
- Organic land care

Summary of Activities

NOFA/RI fosters a healthy relationship to the natural world through educational workshops, advocacy and participation in local and regional events. NOFA/RI works to increase the acres of sustainably- and organically-managed land and to provide access to local, organic food for all Rhode Islanders. NOFA/RI is affiliated with other NOFA chapters through the NOFA Interstate Council.

Rhody Fresh Rhode Island Dairy Farm Cooperative



Contact Information

Phone: 401-490-0701

Email: orders@rhodyfresh.necoxmail.com

Website: <http://www.rhodyfresh.com/index.html>

Agricultural Focus

- Viability of dairy farms
- Dairy products

Summary of Activities

Faced with an uncertain future, the few remaining dairy farmers in Rhode Island decided to band together. Their idea was to create a locally-produced, home-grown brand of milk. They would call it Rhody Fresh.

Rhody Fresh brand milk, cheese and butter are now available in grocery stores across the state.

RI 4-H Club Foundation



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 874-7143

Email:

<http://www.ri4hclubfoundation.org/contact.htm>

Website: <http://www.ri4hclubfoundation.org/>

Agricultural Focus

- Supporting the youth programs of URI Cooperative Extension

Summary of Activities

The RI 4-H Club Foundation, Inc. funds scholarships, awards, recognition, and travel opportunities for students (aged 5-19) involved in the youth programs of the URI College of the Environment and Life Sciences. 4-H programs highlight science, technology, healthy lifestyles and citizenship.

RI Agriculture Educators' Association

Contact Information

Phone:

Email: laa56@cox.net

Website:

Agricultural Focus

- Agricultural education

Summary of Activities

The RI Agriculture Educators' Association is composed of active or retired ag educators across the state of RI. They are committed with providing a quality agricultural education for middle and high school students.

RI Ayrshire Club

Contact Information

Phone: (860) 774-5378

Email: ns06234@sbcglobal.net

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/New-England-Ayrshire-Club-769671833091450/>

Agricultural Focus

- Ayrshire cattle

Summary of Activities

The RI Ayrshire Club provides a venue for aficionados of the Ayrshire breed of cattle to participate in educational and showing opportunities.

RI Beekeepers' Association



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 992-4233

Email: ribeekeeper@ribeekeeper.org

Website: <http://ribeekeeper.org/>

Agricultural Focus

- Educating on bees and beekeeping

Summary of Activities

The RI Beekeepers' Association is committed to educating new and established beekeepers and the public about the practice and benefits of beekeeping.

To this end, the Association is breeding queens and studying the effects of different types of queens on overwintering success, the latter as part of the "DEM/RIBA Honeybee Colony Improvement Project."

PHOTO COURTESY OF WATER WAY FARM

RI Christmas Tree Growers' Association



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 624-4119

Email:

<http://www.richristmastrees.com/contact-us/>

Website: <http://www.richristmastrees.com/>

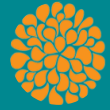
Agricultural Focus

- Supporting the production and sale of Christmas trees

Summary of Activities

The RI Christmas Tree Growers' Association educates the public on the benefits local Christmas tree farmers provide to the environment, economy, and ethos of the state.

RI Dahlia Society



Contact Information

Phone: (781) 733-0849

Email:

membership@RhodeIslandDahliaSociety.org

Website:

<http://www.rhodeislanddahliasociety.org/>

Agricultural Focus

- Dahlia cultivation

Summary of Activities

The Rhode Island Dahlia Society promotes dahlia cultivation through public seminars and shows, informational meetings, tuber sales, and presentations by its members to garden clubs and other organizations. Educational opportunities include workshops on such topics as tuber division and winter storage, bloom preservation, show staging, and dahlia judging.

PHOTO BY KRISTEN CASTRATARO

RI Dairy Goat Association

Contact Information

Phone:

Email: kljarret153@gmail.com

Website:

<http://www.ridairygoatassociation.org/home.html>

Agricultural Focus

- The education of RIDGA members
- The promotion and improvement of the dairy goat and its products

Summary of Activities

RIDGA provides its members with notice of workshops on goat husbandry and free listings of goats for sale or goat services. Perhaps the greatest benefit, however, is the opportunity to network and share information with local goat owners and veterinarians.

RI Division of Agriculture, DEM



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 222-2781 ext. 4500

Email: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/contact>

Website:

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/agriculture/>

Agricultural Focus

- To sustain, promote and enhance Rhode Island's agricultural viability today and for generations to come

Summary of Activities

The Division of Agriculture is located within the RI Department of Environmental Management. They are responsible for overseeing pesticide use, animal health, agricultural marketing and promotion, organic certification, agricultural concerns, mosquito abatement, and more.

RI Envirothon



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 500-0399

Email: president@rienvirothon.org

Website:

<http://www.rienvirothon.org/index.htm>

Agricultural Focus

- To develop knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated citizens who are willing and prepared to work towards achieving and maintaining a natural balance between 'quality of life' and 'quality of the environment'

Summary of Activities

Throughout the year, RI Envirothon students attend hands-on workshops on our natural resources. They apply that knowledge in the spring at a one-day, outdoor competition addressing aquatics, forestry, soils & land use, wildlife, and an annual special topic. The winning team goes on to represent Rhode Island in the North American Envirothon competition held each summer.

RI Farm Bureau



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 385-3339

Email: rifarm@rifb.org

Website: <http://www.rifb.org/index.html>

Agricultural Focus

- Analyzing the problems of farmers and ranchers
- Formulating action to achieve advancement of agriculture and the nation as a whole

Summary of Activities

RI Farm Bureau is committed to supporting policies and legislation that benefit agriculturalists and to opposing those which do not. Members can therefore expect Farm Bureau to serve as a resource on a variety of agricultural concerns. In addition, members of RI Farm Bureau are eligible for discounts from a variety of local vendors including Farm Family Insurance Companies, Case IH, CAT, Grainger, and John Deere.

RI Farm Incubator

Contact Information

Phone:

Email: RIFarmIncubator@gmail.com

Website:

Agricultural Focus

- Educating farmers on organic food production and distribution

Summary of Activities

The Rhode Island Farm Incubator is a nonprofit organization which has been formed to improve local food systems by educating new and mid-career farmers and value-added food producers in all aspects of organic food production and distribution. Partnering with USDA Rural Development to purchase a 91-acre property, they are currently erecting structures for personnel and produce. The farm will be certified organic, using well-researched and accepted regenerative agro-ecological methods to produce a variety of specialty crops. A multi-year program will prepare apprentices to run successful farm businesses and help them access farmland.

RI Forest Conservators' Organization



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 568-3421

Email: info@rifco.org

Website: <http://www.rifco.org/>

Agricultural Focus

- To promote equitable statewide assessment of farm, forest, and open-space land
- To promote forest products

Summary of Activities

RIFCO is a non-profit forest conservation organization made up of forest landowners and conservationists who are dedicated to the protection and wise use of RI's woodlands. They promote stewardship of woodlands and watersheds, provide educational opportunities, and encourage equitable statewide assessment of farm, forest, and open-space land.

RI Fruit Growers' Association



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 874-2967

Email: <http://www.rifruitgrowers.org/contact-us.htm>

Website:
<http://www.rifruitgrowers.org/index.htm>

Agricultural Focus

- Fruit production
- Promotion of RI fruit and fruit farms

Summary of Activities

The RIFGA, made up of over 30 local farmers, has grown high-quality fresh fruits and vegetables for Rhode Island for 100 years. The association began in 1913 with a group of dedicated apple orchardists from Providence and Kent Counties. Over the years, RIFGA has expanded to include growers of many tree fruits, as well as berries. Today, RIFGA continues the traditions started over a century ago.

RI FFA Alumni & Association



Contact Information

Phone: Gail Ashworth

Email: gashworth@cox.net

Website:

Agricultural Focus

- Agricultural education

Summary of Activities

The FFA Association provides life-changing experiences for its members and prepares them to embark on careers both within and outside of agriculture. Their motto is "Learning to do, Doing to learn. Earning to live and living to serve."

The FFA Association relies on the FFA Alumni for help recruiting students and raising funds for chapter activities and scholarships. FFA Alumni also assist at FFA camps and conferences, the National FFA Convention & Expo and other personal development programs.

RI Maple Syrup Producers' Association



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 651-7171

Email: unclebck@aol.com

Website:

Agricultural Focus

- Production and marketing of maple products

Summary of Activities

The RIMSPA, which started in 2012, provides advocacy, support, and education on all aspects of maple production including, but not limited to, history, improvements, tapping, forestry, and value-added products. Members range from interested learners to those who manage over a thousand taps.

RI Nursery & Landscape Association



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 874-5220

Email: executivedirector@rinla.org

Website: <https://rinla.org/>

Agricultural Focus

- Horticulture
- Landscaping business
- Environmental practices
- Agriculture

Summary of Activities

RINLA is dedicated to developing and implementing programs that contribute to the well-being of RI's communities and environment.

RINLA members take pride in their work and uphold the highest standards in horticulture, environmental practices, agriculture and landscape businesses.

PHOTO COURTESY OF UNCLE BUCK'S SUGARHOUSE

RI Raised Livestock Association



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 575-3348

Email: RIRaised@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.rirla.org/index.htm>

Agricultural Focus

- Livestock production
- Viability of livestock-based enterprises

Summary of Activities

The Rhode Island Raised Livestock Association (RIRLA) is a non-profit membership organization founded and directed by Rhode Island farmers. Established in 2005 to address the lack of USDA processing infrastructure in RI and the New England region, RIRLA now offers many benefits to its farmer members including trainings, networking and other educational events for farmers, technical assistance, grain discounts, a quarterly newsletter and more.

RI Resource Conservation & Development Area Council



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 500-0399

Email: rircd2283@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.rircd.org/contactinfo.htm>

Agricultural Focus

- Promoting the wise use of land and water resources for agricultural use

Summary of Activities

The RC&D undertakes strategically-focused, community-driven actions that affect regional resource conservation and economic viability. RC&D priorities are set by area residents and include: Identifying and solving area natural resource and economic development problems and needs and promoting the wise use of land and water resources for agricultural, municipal, and industrial use.

RI Sheep Cooperative



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 578-2012

Email: <http://www.risheep.org/contactus.htm>

Website: <http://www.risheep.org/index.htm>

Agricultural Focus

- Sheep
- Wool

Summary of Activities

The Rhode Island Sheep Cooperative links sheep producers with each other, promotes and encourages sheep husbandry and allied interests (with an emphasis on quality), and sponsors and encourages industry exhibits and shows. The cooperative also offers alternative markets for the state's wool supply.

RI State Grange



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 434-1491

Email: statemaster@rigrange.org

Website:
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/RIStateGrange/>

<https://www.nationalgrange.org/>

Agricultural Focus

- Agricultural advocacy

Summary of Activities

The mission of the Rhode Island State Grange is to develop and promote community betterment, the preservation of a strong family unit, abolishment of discrimination in any form, fraternal ties, and a strong voice for agriculture and human concerns.

The Providence County Pomona Grange and Washington County Pomona Granges are both State Grange members and RIAC members.

Southern RI Conservation District



Contact Information

Phone: 401-500-0422

Email: SRICD.info@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.sricd.org/index.htm>

Agricultural Focus

- Agricultural and Land Management Technical Services
- Mapping Services for Open Space Application

Summary of Activities

The mission of the SRICD is to promote and achieve a healthy environment and sustainable use of natural resources for the people of Kent and Washington Counties and the State of Rhode Island, now and for the future, by coordinating partners to provide technical, educational and financial resources.

Southside Community Land Trust



Contact Information

Phone: (401) 273-9419

Email: sclt@southsideclt.org

Website: <http://www.southsideclt.org/>

Agricultural Focus

- Farm apprenticeships
- Farmer training
- Farmers market promotion
- Farmland access

Summary of Activities

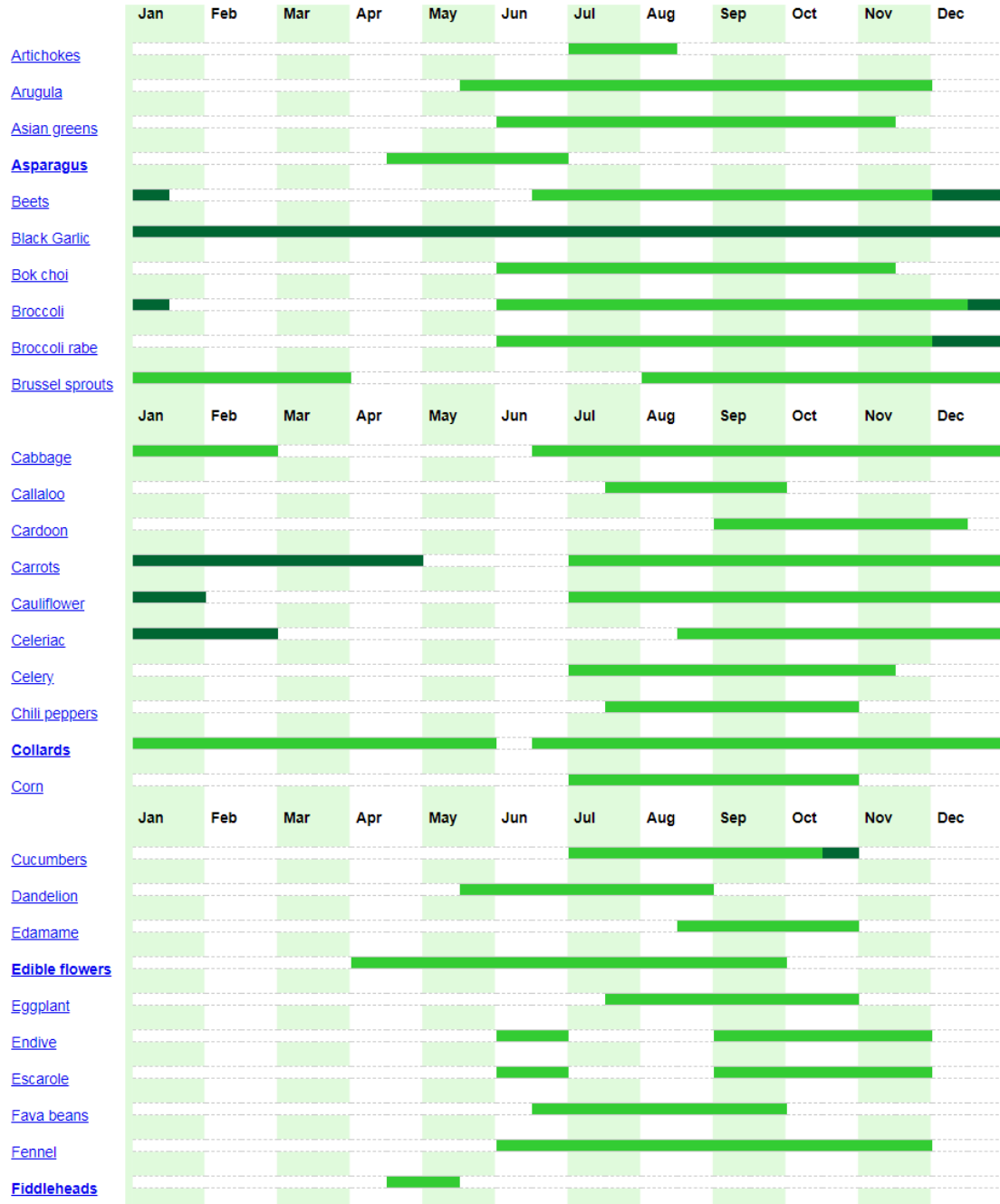
The SCLT provides access to land, education, and other resources so people in RI can grow food in environmentally-sustainable ways and create community food systems where locally-produced, affordable, and healthy food is available to all. They facilitate training through apprenticeships and hands-on workshops for beginning farmers and others seeking to learn about small-scale, sustainable farming in addition to operating three production farms, including Rhode Island's first urban farm, to demonstrate successful practices.

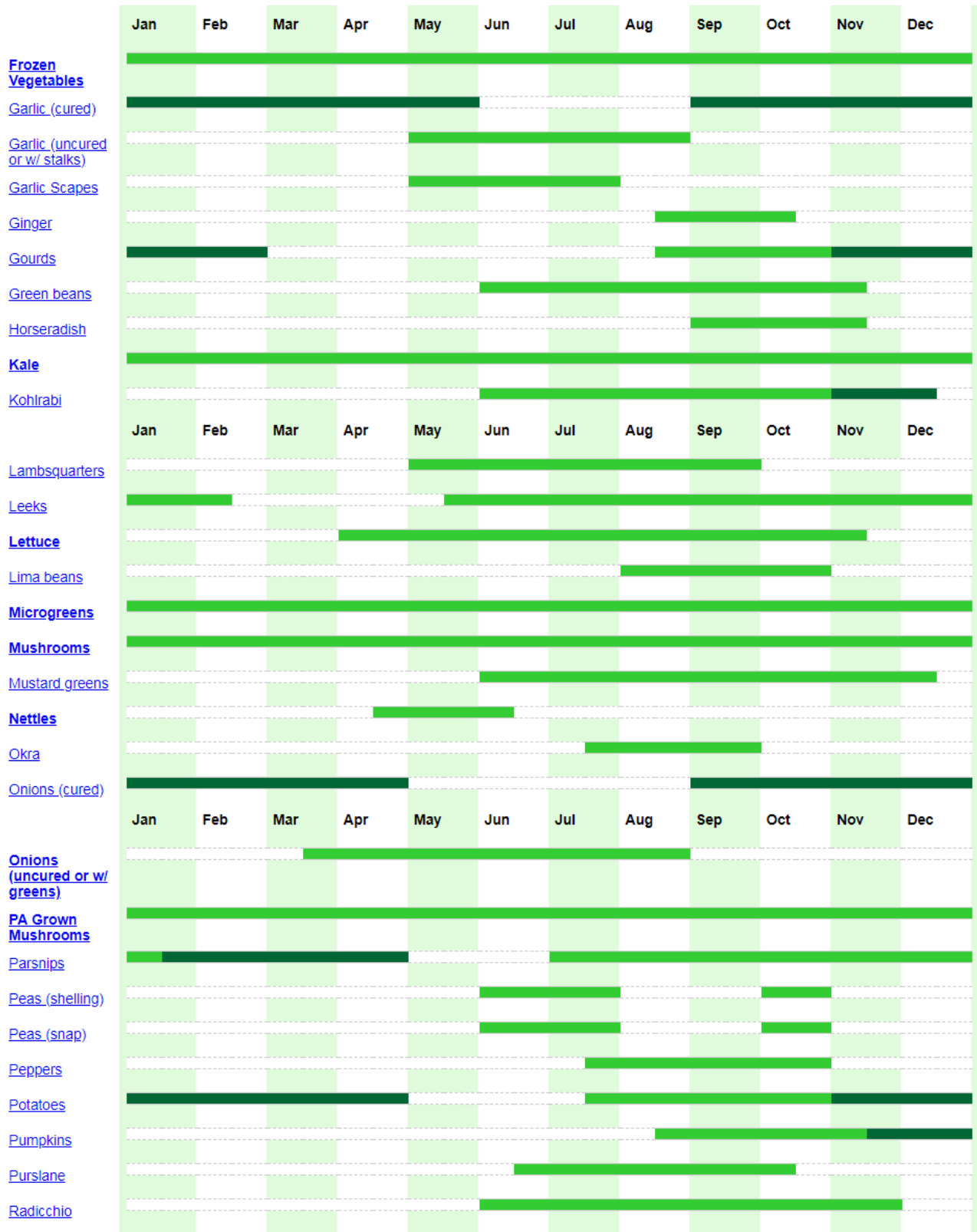
Annex 2: RI Harvest Calendar

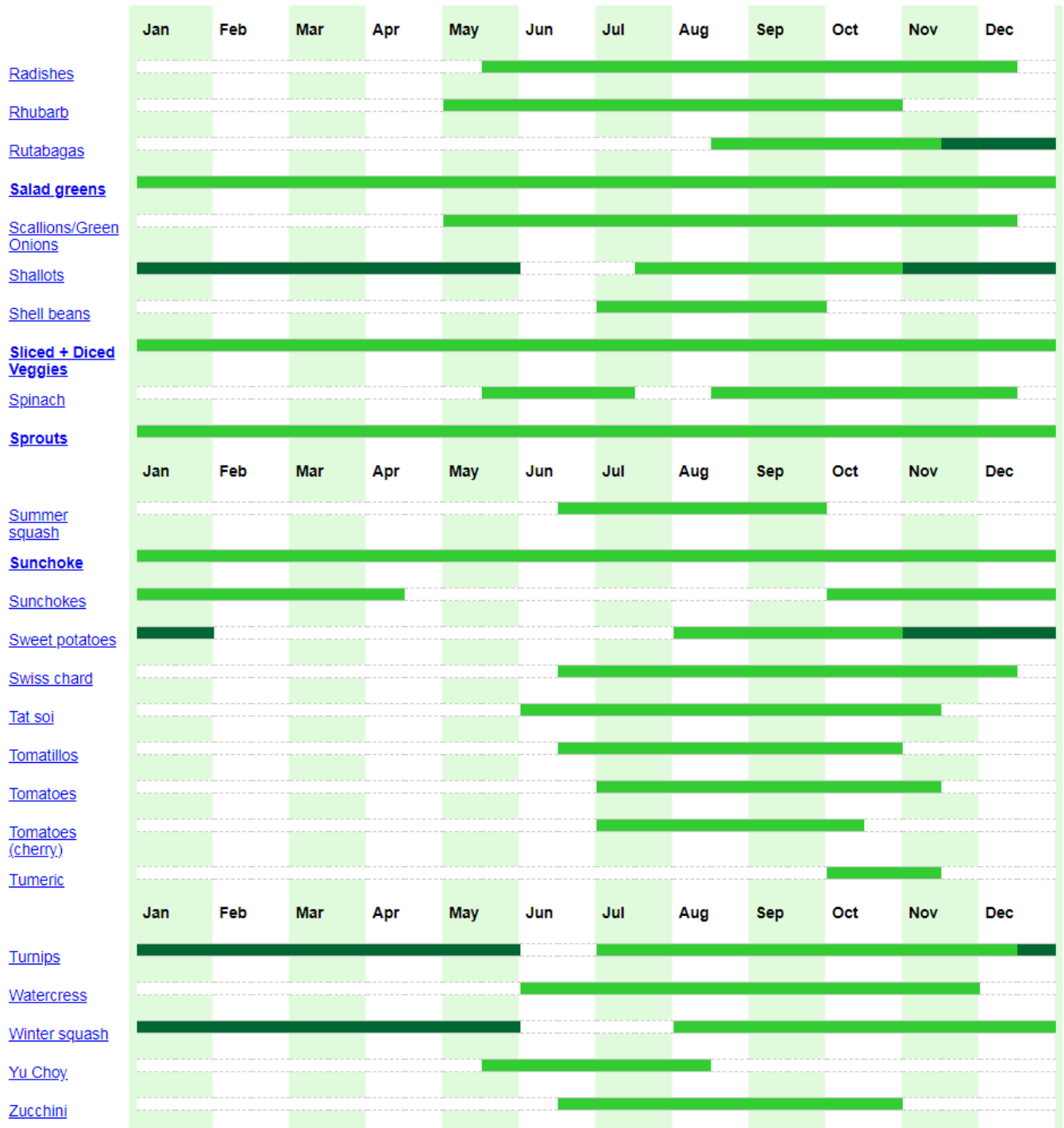
The Rhode Island Harvest Calendar appears courtesy of Farm Fresh RI and can be accessed on their website at: <https://guide.farmfreshri.org/learn/harvestcalendar.php?zip=02909>.

Rhode Island Vegetables

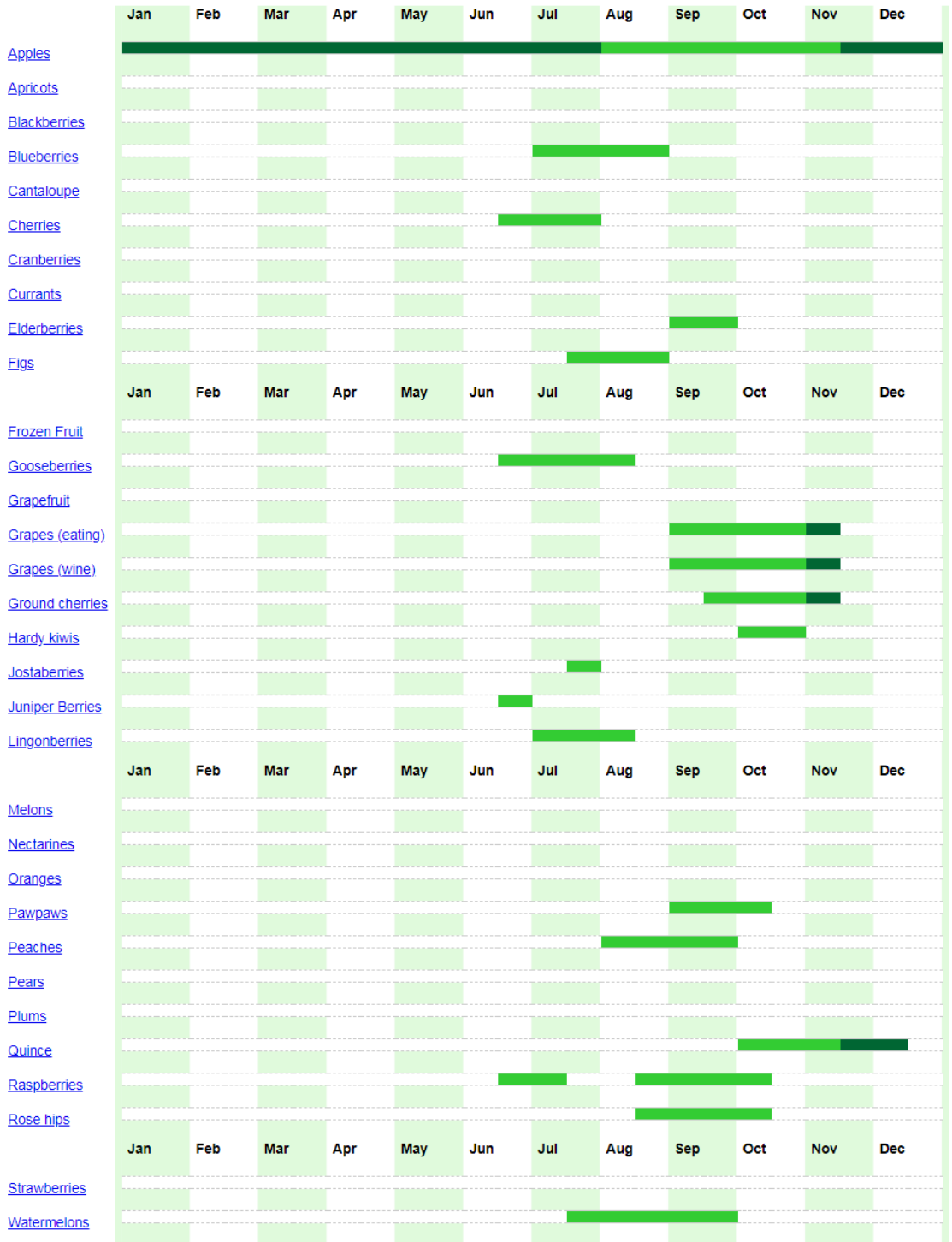
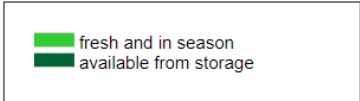
■	fresh and in season
■	available from storage





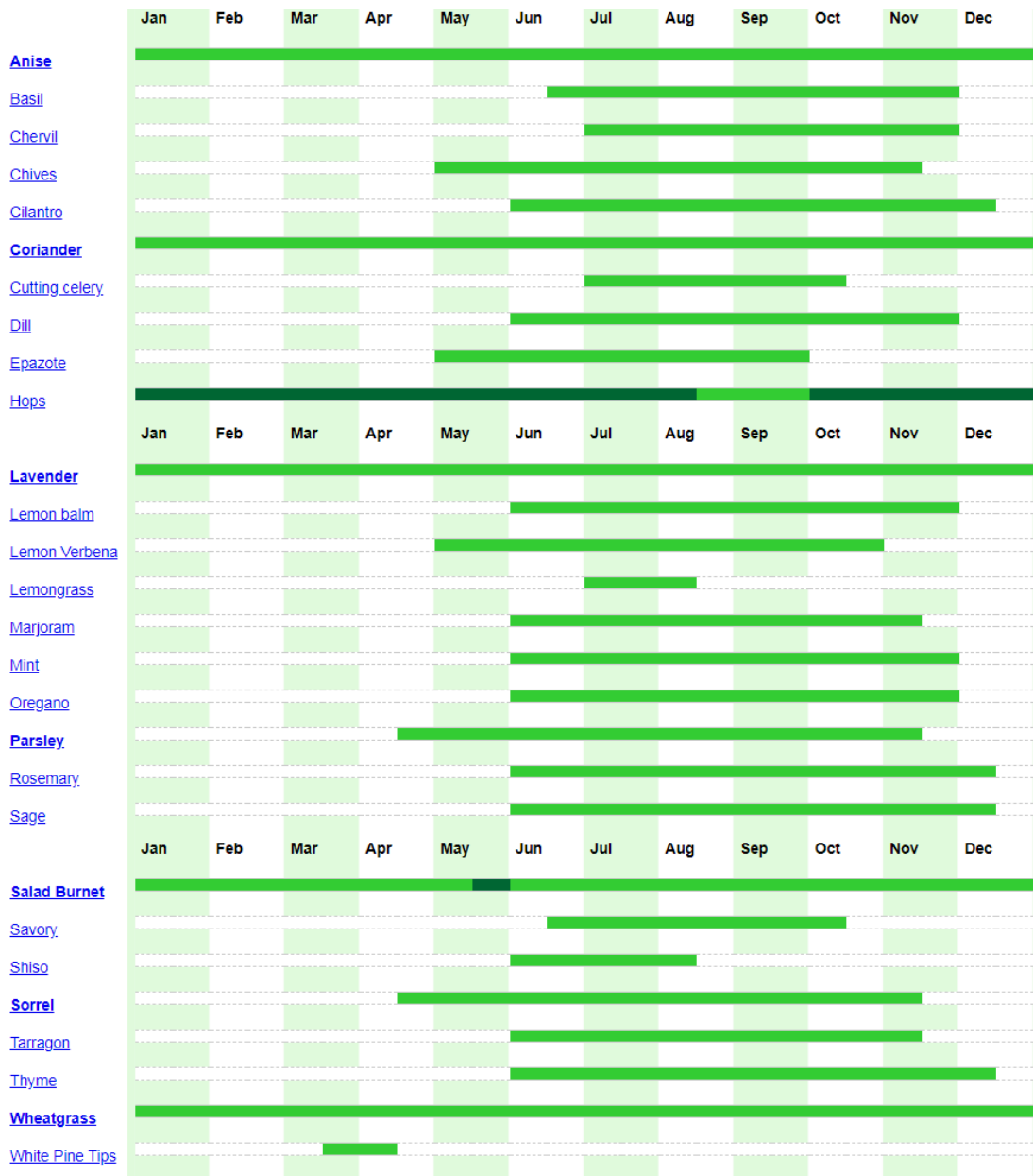


Rhode Island Fruit



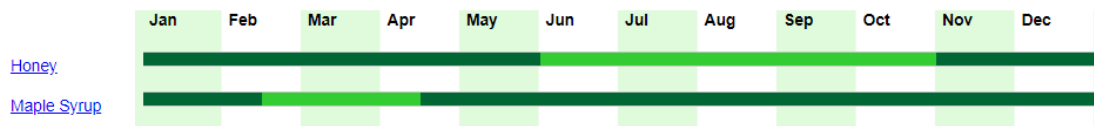
Rhode Island Herbs

■ fresh and in season
■ available from storage



Rhode Island Sweeteners

■ fresh and in season
■ available from storage



Notes

- ⁱ (2012 Census of Agriculture: Specialty Crops, 2015)
- ⁱⁱ (2012 Census of Agriculture: Specialty Crops, 2015)
- ⁱⁱⁱ (Rhode Island History, 2018)
- ^{iv} (2012 Census of Agriculture: Specialty Crops, 2015)

References

2012 Census of Agriculture: Specialty Crops. (2015). Washington, D.C.: National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Retrieved from https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/Specialty_Crops/SCROPS.txt

Rhode Island History. (2018). Providence: Secretary of State, Rhode Island Department of State. Retrieved from <http://sos.ri.gov/divisions/Civics-And-Education/RI-History>

Sproul, Thomas. W. & Elsner, Brandon. (2013). *The 2012 Economic Impact Study of Rhode Island Plant-Based Industries and Agriculture.* Kingston: University of Rhode Island. Retrieved from http://www.southsideclt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/RIDEM_EconImpactFoodBizRI.pdf

