2020 Practical Farmers of Iowa Conference

Broccoli Production

Featherstone Farm
Featherstone Farm
Rushford, MN

135 acres veggies
13-14 acres of broccoli

Spring:
- Two or three one acre successions of green magic.
- Plant every ~10 days starting May 1

Fall:
- Five two acre plantings
- Plant every 7-10 days starting the very end of June
- Diplomat (68 days) & Imperial (71 days)
Propagation

Featherstone Farm
Bed Prep
• Oats and Peas before spring crop
• Rye & Vetch before fall crops
Chisel Plow
Finish Disc
Rain-Flo 2600 Bed Maker

Plastic mulch used for
- all spring plantings (black)
- one fall planting (white)
Rain-Flo 2600 Bed Maker
5000 Mechanical Transplanter
Crop Maintenance
Kubota 245H
Ford 1710
Super C
More than half of our broccoli is grown “dry”
Drip tape under plastic
-all spring plantings
-one fall planting

Traveling gun for emergencies
Disease Issues at Featherstone

- Black Rot
- Alternaria

Head Rot (bacterial? Alternaria?)
Prevention

- Hot water treat seeds
- Variety selection (more rounded heads to shed water)
- Crop rotation
- Avoid moving through fields when wet
- Sanitation after moving through diseased areas
- Enter diseased areas last if possible

- SOIL HEALTH – Healthy plants are much more likely to produce during times of high disease pressure.

- Plastic mulch can help
Dipel (Bt)
Cabbage loopers
Imported Cab Worms

Entrust
-flea beetles
Harvesting & Yield
Marketing
- CSA
- Direct to store grocery
- Wholesale through a distributor (CPW and Whole Foods)
Thank you! Questions?