



Our House to Yours

As the fall season begins, and with Thanksgiving right around the corner, it is a historical time of year to reflect on all that we can be thankful for. As we slowly move to more traditional-style celebrations, it is also a good time to reflect on how as a country we are fortunate to have access to safe, fresh, and nutritious food. This is something that many Canadians might have grown to take for granted. An ever-increasing number of Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Farmers grow fresh local vegetables all year round...even in Canada's harsh winter climates.

As the days become shorter, many vegetable greenhouses utilize lights in the fall and winter months to mimic the longer days of summer. In the farming sector, this technology is called supplemental lighting. It allows plants the opportunity to continue to thrive, while also extending the growing season throughout the winter months. This affords Canadians a local and secure food system with ever-increasing volumes of fresh Ontario-grown produce on grocery shelves even in the cold winter months. In the past, 52-

week supplies on the supermarket shelves required produce to be trucked up to Canada from countries and places much further away.

From May through September, most farms do not need to utilize any supplemental lighting, but the orange glow from the farms during the winter months is used to mimic the light from the sun, allowing the plants to remain healthy and strong as the days grow shorter. Without the use of these technological innovations, the plants within the greenhouse would not thrive and produce the fresh produce at a reasonable cost that consumers have come to expect.

According to the national light resource calendar; as the most southern region of the country, Leamington and the surrounding area have some of the longest summer days in Canada. This ensures that supplemental lighting is used as little as possible and as such improves overall efficiency. Other technologies have also been developed to contain the light, via black-out curtains. This again improves efficiency and limits the amount of

light that escapes as well. Your local Greenhouse growers are looking forward to soon being able to contain much of the light which currently escapes into the sky. The Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers(OGVG), continues to work together with our local partners to ensure that Canadians have access to fresh vegetables and fruits. At the same time, we need to find a balance in utilizing lighting technology such that we can continue to grow fresh produce year-round, while also committing to being good neighbors in the communities that we live in and serve.



THE ADVENTURES OF

Lady Bug

While leaves are the powerhouses of photosynthesis in a plant, developing tomato fruit can contribute up to 20% of the photosynthesis, resulting in higher sugar and nutrient levels in the fruit. Photosynthesis is the process by which plants use sunlight, water, and carbon dioxide to create oxygen and energy in the form of sugar.

When the sun is not available, supplemental lighting can be added to allow more fresh fruit to be grown to mimic the input, even as the days get shorter.



Commodity Spotlight

Eggplant

Did you know?

Eggplants are another vegetable that can be grown in greenhouse farms. Although Ontario's greenhouse vegetable growers are well known for their tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers, many grow a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. In the future expect to see even more local vegetables available all throughout the year thanks to innovations in Ontario's greenhouse farms!



A Thanksgiving Wish



From your Ontario Greenhouse Growers have a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

Look to OGVG and our member farm sites for recipe inspiration for all your holiday needs.

<https://www.ogvg.com/village-salad>

