

Working Smarter, Not Harder with Innovative Tools at Pleasant Valley Farm

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Having efficient systems is as important as efficient tools to running a profitable farm. Labor is a farm's number one expense, so working to keep all employees getting as much done in a day as possible requires the right tools, systems and equipment. We have always run our farm as a business and strived to tweak all areas year after year to get more done in a day with less effort. We have visited farms all over the country and incorporated new pieces of equipment, ideas and gadgets.

Starting with greenhouse production, many techniques and tools can help get the job done quickly and have healthier plants, such as seeding techniques, seeders, tray poppers, specialized labeling, rolling benches, radiant heated benches, and automation.

In the field, transplanting techniques, tips for laying down plastic, and using a bale chopper for mulching will be shown, as well as cultivation techniques with hand tools and a specialized Lely tine-weeder we modified to be like a Williams tool.

Harvesting efficiencies include use of golf carts, home-made wheel barrows, specific crates and techniques to keep the workers earning us the maximum amount per hour possible while they are on the clock, as harvesting is our biggest payroll expense for our farm.

Finally, the newly revised washing station will be reviewed showing the 200-gallon bubbler (milk tank) to wash greens, spinner system, crates on dollies, special switches to operate the barrel washer, hose reels, and other gadgets.

There is no one thing that makes a farm efficient and profitable....all the systems, the tools, how you lead your employees, and what equipment you choose will make the difference.