



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources  
Conservation Service **Maine**

# High Tunnel System



## Overview

High Tunnels are steel-framed, polyethylene-covered structures for crops that can extend the growing season by several weeks in Maine. High Tunnels create a protected environment that provides warmer temperatures for heat-loving crops or early- and late-season crops.

The micro-climate produced inside the High Tunnel tends to produce crops of higher quality and can produce higher yields than field-grown crops. Crops must be planted in the ground in High Tunnels, not in containers.

**High Tunnels are not greenhouses.** While both can depend on plastic covering and often use heaters to raise temperatures within the structures, plants in the High Tunnel Systems grow directly in the soil. Also, unlike a greenhouse, a High Tunnel System is considered a temporary structure.



## Benefits

High Tunnels Systems may assist producers in addressing a resource concern by:

- Improving Plant Quality
- Improving Air Quality through  
Reduced Transportation Inputs
- Reducing Energy Use by providing  
Consumers with a Local Source of  
Fresh Produce



For more information on High Tunnel Systems or eligibility, call NRCS-Maine at **(207) 990-9100**, visit your nearest NRCS field office, or visit us online at [www.me.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.me.nrcs.usda.gov)



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