

**Stop the Spread of Invasive Weeds with Seedless Straw**  
CHARLESTOWN, NH

**July/Aug 2008**

Everyone likes surprises — just not in their straw.

When Bob and Polly Frizzell started using imported straw to mulch they were unpleasantly surprised to notice that they had introduced foreign weeds. “We started having problems with invasive weeds which are the hardest to deal with,” said Bob.

Most straw in New Hampshire comes from western New York or Canada. Even though it has gone through a combine there are still grain and weed seeds. “It’s impossible to get all the seeds out, there are always some left behind,” explained Frizzell.

About 10 years ago, Bob learned about seedless straw after talking to some farmers in Massachusetts and decided to give it a try. Since then, he has mastered the technique and produces 4,000 to 5,000 small square bales each year.

The Frizzells plant winter rye in the fall and cut it in the middle of June before the grain pollinates and the weed seeds mature. This is a sure way to get straw without seeds and reduce the risk of spreading destructive weeds.

The owners of the 110 acre Peachblow Farm in Charlestown, New Hampshire are also able to capitalize on two crops from the same fields each year. Once the rye has been cut and baled, they grow an additional crop of squash and pumpkins for the fall market.

Seedless straw has become a popular item for many Peachblow Farm customers. Most people use the straw to mulch strawberries, garlic, tomatoes and flower gardens. It is also acceptable for use by organic farmers as a mulching material or soil amendment.

Seth Wilner is a loyal Peachblow Farm seedless straw customer. As a Cooperative Extension Agent he is very familiar with other mulching options available and has made the mistake of using imported straw in the past. A couple of years ago Wilner used cheaper imported straw from Canada which resulted in an influx of invasive weeds. “Serves me right for not buying local,” said Wilner who now only uses Peachblow Farm seedless straw in his garden. “It’s an astounding product,” said Wilner who mulches over bare soil to reduce weeds, retain water and to reduce erosion. “It is a quality product with no weeds and I always get great customer service,” stated Wilner.

If you would rather not worry about introducing invasive weeds, consider local seedless straw and keep the elements of unwanted surprises to a minimum.



*For more information on Peachblow Farm seedless straw visit [www.peachblowfarm.com](http://www.peachblowfarm.com) or call Bob Frizzell at 603-826-3980.*

Maureen Duffy, Communications Director  
NH Farm Bureau Federation  
295 Sheep Davis Rd.  
Concord, NH 03301  
Ph: 603-224-1934  
[www.nhfarmbureau.org](http://www.nhfarmbureau.org)