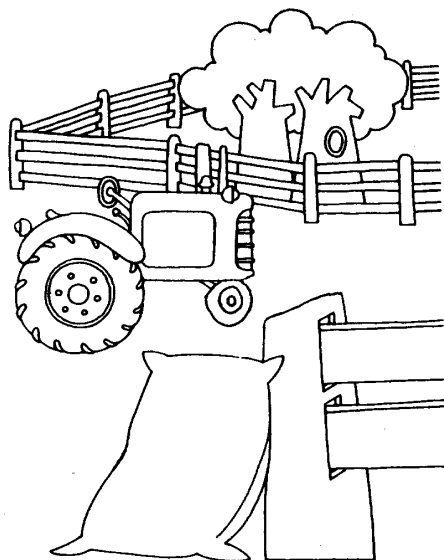


PLANT & PEST ADVISORY

FRUIT EDITION \$1.50

AUGUST 17, 1999



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\$20 Million Grant to Assist Farmworkers

Excerpted from USDA Press Release, Washington, Aug. 3, 1999

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman today announced that USDA will provide \$20 million in grants to provide emergency services to low-income migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Grants will be made available in areas experiencing a local emergency or a state or national disaster declaration.

"USDA has a long history of responding to farm owners who have seen their crops and farmland suffer from natural disasters and local emergencies," said Glickman. "With this funding, USDA now will be able to bring relief to the many migrant and seasonal farmworkers who have lost their sole source of income because there are few or no crops left to harvest."

Grants will be given to tax-exempt public agencies or private organizations that have experience in providing emergency services to low-income migrant and seasonal farmworkers. The type of service could include payment assistance for: rent or mortgage, utility bills, child care, transportation, school supplies, food, construction of new farmworker housing units, repair or rehabilitation of farmworker housing and construction of facilities related to farmworker housing, such as health clinics or child care facilities.

"Farmworkers and their families are some of the poorest people in our nation, and they are among those hardest hit by the depressed farm economy," said Jill Long Thompson, under secretary for USDA Rural Development. "It is sad to see that the American workers who ensure food is available to all of America are finding it difficult to feed or house their own families."

USDA will accept proposals for grant assistance from interested state and local non-profit community development organizations. Procedures for submission were published in the Aug. 2 Federal Register. Proposals must be sent to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service by 5 p.m., Aug. 15, 1999.

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to finance affordable rental housing for farm workers and are the only national source for farm labor housing construction funds. Rural Development also provides funding to finance essential community services, such as childcare centers and health care facilities.

For more information about Rural Development programs, contact your local USDA Rural Development office or USDA Service Center, call the Rural Development national office at (202) 720-4323, or check the web page at: www.rurdev.usda.gov □

Deer Fencing Remains Available

Deer fencing remains available from the joint distribution of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture/Division of Fish Game and Wildlife deer fence program.

This program will provide up to 30 rolls of fence, 165 feet in length, to New Jersey farmers who generate in excess of \$10,000 of income from production agriculture and own the land on which the fence is to be erected.

Despite the recent drought which has adversely affected many New Jersey farmers, farmers are encouraged to participate in this program to mitigate the damage they have incurred, and may continue to incur, as a result of deer feeding on their crops.

The fence offered is six foot high, woven wire, high tensil fence with two additional strands of wire to be provided making for an eight foot high fence. Posts and labor are not provided.

If you are interested in receiving an application, please contact the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife at (609) 292-6685 or the NJDA, Division of Rural Resources at (609) 292-5802. □

Drought Survival Strategies for Fruit Growers

Robin G. Brumfield, Ph.D., Farm Management

With the current drought, fruit farmers are facing reduced income. Here are a few tips that may help you manage financially.

Talk to your lender immediately. Many farmers are facing similar cash flow problems, so lenders will be aware of the situation. You may want to consider converting some short-term loans into long-term loans. You will probably need additional operating capital as well. Lenders don't make money by foreclosing, so work with them to restructure your debt to survive the drought. The worst mistake you can make is to ignore the problem until it is too late.

Anticipate your financial needs by showing short-term and long-term repayment capacities. Prepare projected cash-flow statements, balance sheets, and income statements. If you have difficulty with these reports, check with your accountant, lender, or county agent for assistance with these reports.

Consider off-farm employment opportunities for yourself, spouse, business partners, or other family members to generate enough cash flow to survive the drought. With unemployment at an all-time low, these opportunities should be available.

Reduce machinery costs. This is a good time to look at your capital assets and decide if you really need all of them. Sell machinery and equipment that you don't need, and consider postponing any planned purchases. You may find leasing or custom-hire is more economical than owning.

If you will not get as much for your crop as it will cost to harvest it, abandon the crop. Before abandoning a crop, check with your FSA office and your crop insurance agent. You need to report losses to be eligible for crop insurance or any low interest loans available if a disaster is declared. For the NAP (non-insurable crop program), you must report losses within 15 days to FSA. Be sure to take pictures of your crops showing the drought damage.

Decide if you want to take some fruit trees out of production, and don't water those. Don't give up on the whole orchard, however. Reducing you orchard size will reduce your cash flow which could make financial survival more difficult.

Check with your accountant to investigate any special considerations that may be used in reporting income, expenses, and losses occurring as a result of the drought. While no taxes may be due in a net farm operating loss, the tax code has provisions to help minimize this loss. The tax code also has provisions for reporting income from drought forced sales of crops. Certain criteria must be met to qualify for deferring taxes.

Liquidate if there are no other options. If your farm was already facing financial problems before the drought, there may be no way out financially. The best option may be to call it quits before you lose any more equity. Too many financially distressed farmers keep farming past the point of no return, and erode the farm assets. While liquidation is an option no one wants to face, it may be the best option. Talk to your lender and your county agent if you feel you need to call it quits. □

Harvest and Handling Pears

The following article is adapted from *Fruit Notes*, published by Cornell Cooperative Extension Western New York Fruit Program, Volume 99 (*Pyrus Communis*) Issue 16

The selection of proper harvest date is an important concern for pear growers. If pears are harvested too early, they may fail to ripen normally and shrivel in storage. In addition, the yield of pears increases at a rate of nearly two percent per day (about twice the rate of apples). Therefore a premature harvest is at the sacrifice of considerable yield, fruit size, and profit. Conversely, a late harvest risks shortened storage life, increased susceptibility to internal breakdown, and uneven ripening in storage. Oriental pears will hang longer and are not as susceptible to maturity disorders as *Pyrus Communis*. (J.L. Frecon notes)

The primary maturity index for pears is the pressure test. The recommended range of pressure test at harvest for specific varieties appears in Table 1. Bartlett pears decline at a predictable rate. When initial firmness is 2 lbs., they can be expected to reach the minimum acceptable harvest pressure of 16 lbs. in approximately 4 weeks. Once firmness declines to 18 lbs., the orchard should be expected to reach the minimum 16 lbs. approximately 10 days later.

Growers are reminded that these average pressures WILL vary among individual orchards and seasons. It is extremely important to check EVERY fruit block frequently before and during harvest.

Additional observations which guide harvest decisions for pears include changes in ground color, corking of lenticels (lenticel color changes from white to brown), development of waxy and smooth fruit finish and the ease of separation of stem from spur. It is recommended that average soluble solids reach a minimum of 10% to provide resistance to freezing in storage. Some researchers suggest that Bartlett be near 11 % soluble solids at maturity.

Like other tree fruits, pears are easily bruised during harvest and transportation. Bartlett pears dropped just four inches onto a hard surface will result in over 40% bruising and stem puncturing. The importance of harvest bruising and stem puncturing is magnified because of the susceptibility of pears to post harvest rots and decays.

Variety	Recommended Pressure Test At Harvest (lbs.)*
Clapp's Favorite	13-16
Aurora	12-16
Bartlett	16-18
Flemish Beauty	10-13
Gorham	12-13
Seckel	11-13**
Bosc	12-15

Source: GD Blanpied
 * 5/16 inch tip
 ** Source: USDA Circular 627 (Haller, 1941)

Submitted by Jerome L. Frecon, Agricultural Agent

Horticultural Research

Twilight Meeting

August 31, 1999

6-8:30 p.m. rain or shine

Rutgers Snyder Research and Extension Farm, Pittstown, NJ

Participate in informal tours and discussions of the following research projects led by: Peter Nitzsche, Morris County Agricultural Agent, Win Cowgill, Hunterdon County Agricultural Agent, Martha Maletta, Hunterdon County Research Associate, William Tietjen, Warren County Agricultural Agent. Extension Specialists cooperating on projects will be on hand.

Fruit

- ❖ Apple and peach cultivar showcase - over 50 cultivars of apple and peach will be on display
- ❖ NE-183 apple cultivar trial
- ❖ NC-140 Rootstock Projects-Gala Cultivar
- ❖ Promalin VS Typy plant growth regulator trial
- ❖ Procure trial for apple sizing
- ❖ Accell PGR for apple sizing trial
- ❖ BASF-125 (Prodigy) trial on apple for tree size control and fireblight suppression
- ❖ Azoxystrobin Fungicide (Quadris, Abound) sensitivity to apple trial

Vegetable

- ❖ Fresh market tomato cultivar trial
 - ❖ Pumpkin fertilization trial
 - ❖ Fungicide evaluation and IPM trial on pumpkins
 - ❖ Presidedress soil nitrate test for fall cabbage trial
 - ❖ Winter squash spacing trial
 - ❖ Cole crop cultivar trial
 - ❖ Potato cultivar trial
- Discussion of drought issues
 Worker Protection Standards Update - Speaker to be announced

Pesticide credits will be available. For more information contact: Peter Nitzsche (973) 285-8300, Win Cowgill (908) 788-1339, or William Tietjen (908) 475-6505

Calendar of Events

August 31, 1999 - Horticultural Research Twilight Meeting, 6-8:30 p.m. rain or shine, Rutgers Snyder Research and Extension Farm, Pittstown, NJ. Contact: Peter Nitzsche (973) 285-8300, Win Cowgill (908) 788-1339, or William Tietjen (908) 475-6505

September 9, 1999 - Fruit Variety Showcase and Tour, Rutgers Fruit Research and Extension Center, 283 Route 539, Cream Ridge, NJ. For information or to RSVP call Rutgers Fruit Research & Extension Center **(609) 758-7311, ext. 10.**

Notice to Fax Subscribers: We are sending the newsletter via mail because our fax broadcast system is currently down.

Federal EQIP and State Conservation Cost Share Programs

Source: USDA Press Release, August 12, 1999, Somerset, NJ

New Jersey producers can sign up for cost-sharing assistance through October 15, 1999 for funding in Fiscal Year 2000 under USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the New Jersey Conservation Cost Share Program (CCSP). EQIP and CCSP are authorized to address agriculture's priority natural resource and environmental concerns.

Under these voluntary programs, USDA and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture provide cost-share assistance to family-sized farms for 50 to 90 percent of the costs of implementing conservation systems which also provide environmental protection and enhancement. Approved practices include grassed waterways, filter strips, manure storage facilities, pesticide containment facilities, and capping abandoned wells. Producers may also receive incentive payments for applying such land management practices associated with nutrient, manure, irrigation water, wildlife, and integrated pest management. EQIP, administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency, also provides farmers with technical and educational assistance.

EQIP and CCSP applications will be evaluated for funding approval based on environmental benefits and other factors. Proposals in New Jersey's priority areas will receive the majority of the USDA funding. The remaining cost-sharing funds will be allocated throughout the state. Priority areas are chosen because of their environmental sensitivity and significant natural resource concerns, such as manure management, soil erosion control, and water quality.

Wayne Maresch, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist explains, "The Environmental Quality Incentive Program offers New Jersey's agricultural producers many financial incentives to improve water quality, conserve soil, and reduce water use. New Jersey's priority areas and the conservation practices for EQIP and the State program were determined locally by farmers, soil conservation districts, area residents, local government officials, environmental groups and other interested parties."

Samuel R. Race, Executive Secretary of the State Soil Conservation Committee, which is providing the state funding, emphasizes, "The committee is pleased to provide a major increase of cost-share assistance for farmers in New Jersey. Our farmers are strong advocates of conservation, and now by combining EQIP with CCSP, more producers can invest in conservation practices which will help them maintain productive lands while also improving water quality."

Gerard Hlubik, USDA Farm Service Agency Programs Chief, points out, "Interest among farmers in participating in cost-share programs to improve water quality, save water, and reduce soil erosion has been increasing. The Farm Service Agency works closely with producers to determine their eligibility for these conservation programs."

Producers may sign-up for EQIP and CCSP at any USDA Service Center or soil conservation district. Producers can also work with NRCS to develop their own conservation plans without cost sharing. □

Fruit IPM

Dean Polk, Fruit IPM Agent

Peach

Oriental Fruit Moth (OFM): Adult trap captures have peaked, but are still at high levels overall. In most cases counts are above 6 moths per trap, with an average of just over 23 in southern counties and 16 in northern counties. This means that growers should still maintain insecticide covers through the flight. Be aware of pre-harvest intervals on all late varieties.

Catfacing Insects and Ground Cover: Very low numbers of true bugs are being found. In most cases these insects are not a problem. Much of the ground cover has been burned off due to drought, leaving little host plant material for true bugs.

Apple

Tufted Apple Budmoth (TABM): Spray timing should be as follows: In southern counties where TABM is a problem, the 2nd Confirm spray should have just been applied. If not, then as soon as possible. Regular sprays of organophosphate or carbamate materials should be applied by the end of the week or early next week. This should be the last application for TABM. According to degree day counts, applications in northern counties should be applied about 5 to 7 days later.

Insect Trap Captures

Tree Fruit - Southern Counties

WEEK END:	RBLR	STLM	TABM-A	CM	AM	OFM	TABM-P	LPTB	PTB
2-Jul	51.33	1755	31.51	2.21	0.00	12.62	44.34	37.30	7.00
9-Jul	98.67	2131	15.63	4.39	0.00	13.41	19.08	42.83	12.27
16-Jul	8.67	1203	12.50	4.81	2.00	11.72	14.94	33.94	10.18
23-Jul	4.00	1547	22.06	4.06	0.10	8.42	17.13	25.05	5.00
30-Jul	9.00	1155	25.13	6.89	0.27	24.12	23.30	23.07	13.40
6-Aug	4.00	1552	33.47	5.22	0.14	43.38	34.48	21.94	10.41
13-Aug	2.50	1504	25.84	2.88	0.09	23.24	29.98	33.28	8.25

Tree Fruit - Northern Counties

WEEK END:	RBLR	STLM	TABM-A	CM	AM	OFM	TABM-P	LPTB	PTB
2-Jul	42.21	1599	15.10	2.86		18.31	12.00	0.06	1.76
9-Jul	82.66	1677	9.89	1.45		29.12	8.47	0.00	5.38
16-Jul	48.19	810	2.17	2.21	0.00	17.73	1.62	0.00	4.74
23-Jul	12.24	1122	2.24	4.18	0.00	20.06	2.90	0.00	4.25
30-Jul	6.76	1323	2.13	6.98	0.00	23.75	2.43	0.00	2.21
6-Aug	11.13	1339	2.93	8.77	0.00	20.46	3.99	0.00	1.54
13-Aug	15.60	1225	4.03	3.07		16.58	5.31	0.00	1.23

Blueberries - Atlantic County

WEEK END:	RBLR	OBLR	CBFW	SNLH	BBM
2-Jul	42.21	0.24	0.04	0.86	0.02
11-Jul	45.86	0.30	0.07	0.55	0.29
18-Jul	11.79	1.36	0.00	0.38	0.88
25-Jul	6.11	0.88	0.00	0.14	0.98
1-Aug	19.52	3.87	0.00	0.02	0.67
8-Aug	19.11	3.24	0.36	0.57	0.27
15-Aug	10.91	1.19	0.00	1.01	0.13

Codling Moth (CM): Trap counts are above 5 moths per trap on many farms, both in northern and southern counties. These numbers represent populations that are above treatment thresholds. Therefore, insecticides should be maintained where populations are high. We are seeing increased damage (up to 6%) where sprays have not been applied for several weeks. Where counts are less than 5 moths per trap, then the last treatment for TABM should also be the last treatment for codling moth.

Dogwood Borers: Dogwood borer adults are in peak flight in northern counties. Lorsban 50W should be applied as a trunk spray with a hand gun as soon as possible. If an earlier spray was applied several weeks ago, then a second spray will help. Be aware of the 28 day PHI for Lorsban 50W on fruit. A backpack sprayer can also be used in order to avoid contacting the fruit, and perhaps being more efficient in covering the target area around the graft union. At 3 lb/100 gal, it may only take 6 oz. of spray solution per tree.

Blueberry

Sharpnosed Leafhopper (SNLH): Adult trap captures have increased since last week, and are being found on more farms (see trap capture graph). As more adults emerge and move around, the likelihood of transmitting stunt disease increases. Growers should plan on treating this insect in about 2 weeks as trap captures increase.

Burlington County

WEEK END:	RBLR	OBLR	CBFW	SNLH	BBM	OB	RBLR	OBLR	CBFW	SNLH	BBM	OB
2-Jul	42.21	0.24	0.04	0.86	0.02	325.5	48.70	1.17	0.00	1.06	0.41	588.8
11-Jul	45.86	0.30	0.07	0.55	0.29	300.0	33.33	0.57	0.38	0.49	0.74	621.0
18-Jul	11.79	1.36	0.00	0.38	0.88	114.9	8.20	0.86	0.22	0.43	1.66	120.6
25-Jul	6.11	0.88	0.00	0.14	0.98	61.8	1.50	0.14	0.11	0.10	2.18	90.6
1-Aug	19.52	3.87	0.00	0.02	0.67	28.62	0.50	0.43	0.00	0.00	2.36	10.63
8-Aug	19.11	3.24	0.36	0.57	0.27	4.92	0.50	1.25	0.00	0.00	0.29	0.71
15-Aug	10.91	1.19	0.00	1.01	0.13	3.75	0.25	0.25	0.00	2.46	1.07	0.00

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