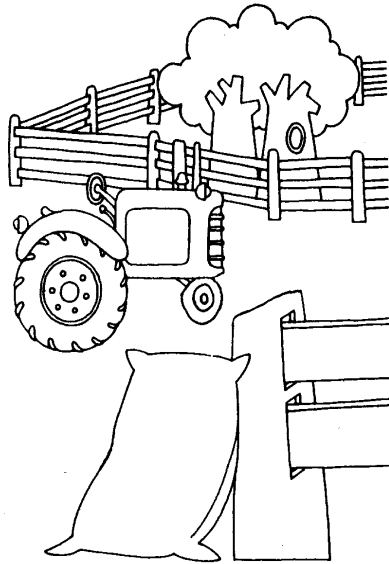


PLANT & PEST ADVISORY

FRUIT EDITION \$1.50

SEPTEMBER 2, 2008



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Resources for Organic Transition and Certification

Joseph Heckman, Ph.D., Specialist in Soil Fertility

Developing an appreciation for and understanding of organic farming concepts and philosophy can be a helpful and practical guide to soil fertility management both during the period of organic transition and in operating a certified organic farm. Classic organic writings of Albert Howard and Eve Balfour are useful texts on organic foundational principles (Heckman 2006), but modern certified organic farming requires consultation with organic certifying organizations. Some soil fertility materials and practices, such as sewage sludge, that were once considered acceptable are now prohibited. In the United States, the USDA National Organic Program Rules must be followed to produce products labeled USDA Certified Organic (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2007). The Organic Materials Review Institute, or OMRI, is a nonprofit organization that supports the organic community by determining the suitability of materials and products for use in organic farming under the USDA National Organic Program Rule (Organic Materials Review Institute, 2007).

When transitioning to organic farming it is important to consult with an organization skilled in providing organic certification for your farm. Although federal law serves to standardize the methods and materials that are acceptable in organic production in the United States, many details are at the discretion of the local organic certifying organization. Before certified organic crops can be produced on land previously used in conventional agriculture, a three year transition period away from the use of prohibited chemical fertilizers and pesticides is required. The transition years may be an economic challenge because yields may be reduced in the interim while the farm products must be marketed as conventional. Working closely with your certifying organization can help to avoid any misunderstandings of organic farming requirements that could otherwise result in an extended transition period. Organic farming requires careful record keeping. All communications about soil fertility recommendations and practices with the certifying organization should be in writing.

Organic production for international trade is another consideration that may influence soil fertility inputs and practices. Although USDA-NOP standards are in agreement with most European Union standards there are some notable differences. In the E.U., for example, manure

SEE TRANSITION RESOURCES ON PAGE 2

from 'factory farms' is not allowed for use on organic farms. In the USA, manure from conventional farms is allowed as long as it is applied 120 days before horticultural crop harvest, and 90 days before grain harvest.

Organic Information Resources

Organic certification in New Jersey contact Eric Bremer, Supervisor, Organic Certification Program, New Jersey Department of Agriculture, PO Box 330, Trenton, NJ 08625, phone 609-984-2225. email: erich.bremer@ag.state.nj.us

Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey
nofainfo@nofanj.org
60 S. Main St.
P.O. Box 886
Pennington, NJ 08534
Phone 609-737-6848

Pennsylvania Certified Organic
<http://www.paorganic.org/>
106 School Street
Suite 201
Spring Mills, PA 16875
phone: 814-422-0251

Organic Materials Review Institute. 2007. OMRI product list. http://www.omri.org/crops_generic.pdf

U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007. The National Organic Program. <http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOP>

Heckman, J.R. 2006. A History of Organic Farming: Transitions from Sir Albert Howard's War in the Soil to USDA National Organic Program. Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems. 21:143-150. A longer version was published by Wise Traditions. It can now be found on line: <http://www.westonaprice.org/farming/history-organic-farming.html>. □

Appalachia Strawberry Field Day

September 18, 2008 5:30 pm

Joseph A. Fiola, Ph.D.

Professor and Specialist in Viticulture and Small Fruit

Join us for an evening field day that will feature research being conducted for a three year Northeast SARE Research and Education Grant entitled "An Integrated Approach to Developing a Day-Neutral Strawberry Production Industry". Research conducted through the grant has focused on propagation and production of day neutral strawberries in an annual system. The system is designed to produce fruit during the summer months when local fruit is typically not available. The production system is a great fit for the Appalachian Mountains as strawberries require cool summer temperatures. The goal of the project is to develop a system of propagating, growing and marketing high quality fruit throughout the summer months.

Topics:

- Variety Trial – Participants will be able to a variety trial with 13 different day neutral varieties
- Plastic Mulch Colors for Day Neutral Strawberries
- Post Planting Flower Removal
- Spring versus Fall Planting of Day Neutral Strawberries
- Production on 2nd Year Plantings
- Fertilization of Day Neutral Strawberries
- High Tunnel Production with June Bearing Plants

Speakers:

Dr. Harry Swartz, Associate Professor – Horticulture, University of Maryland

Kathy Demchak, Sr. Extension Associate – Horticulture, Penn State University

Dr. Lewis Jett, Extension Specialist – Horticulture, West Virginia University

Willie Lantz, Extension Educator, Maryland Cooperative Extension

Sherry Frick, Extension Program Assistant, Maryland Cooperative Extension

Location:

The field day will be held at the newly established farm of Dr. Harry Swartz. The farm is located south of Oakland along Rt. 560 and the address is 4771 Gorman Road, Oakland, MD 21550.

Registration:

The cost of the field day is free and includes a barbeque meal afterwards. If you are planning to attend, please call the extension office to register at 301-334-6960.

Submitted by Jerome L. Frecon, Agricultural Agent. □

Horticulture Research Twilight Meeting and Tree Fruit Variety Showcase September 16, 2008

*Sponsored by Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Rutgers Cooperative Extension
In cooperation with the Northeast Organic Farming Association of NJ*

Location: Rutgers Snyder Research and Extension Farm, 140 Locust Grove Rd Pittstown, NJ 08867

Time 5:00-8:30
Fruit Variety Show Case 5:00 - 5:45 PM
Field Tour: 5:45 - 7pm
Inside Program: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Pre-Registration is required by calling Pat at 908-788-1338 – RCE of Hunterdon County

Registration is \$5.00 per person payable at the meeting.

Participate in informal tours and discussions of the following research projects.

Tree Fruit

Apple and Peach cultivar showcase

Over 60 peach and 20 apple selections

Note - these trays of fruit will be on display beginning at 4:30 pm

Win Cowgill

2002 Super Slender Spindle System Apple Trial - (2000 Trees/Acre)

Win Cowgill, RCE of Hunterdon County

2008 Tall Slender Spindle System Apple Trial (1037 Trees/Acre)

Win Cowgill

2006-NC-140 Apple Rootstock Trial for Apple Replant Disease

Win Cowgill

Regional Wine Grape Variety Trial - NE1020

Dr. Dan Ward, NJAES/RCE Extension Pomologist

Specialty Crops - New Crops including Basil and other Herbs

Dr. Jim Simon, Professor, SEBS - Rutgers University

Crop Insurance - Major Changes in the Farm Bill affect Crop Insurance

Updating Your Crop Insurance Program

George Stenson, American Crop Insurance and Win Cowgill

Vegetable

Preliminary Observations from 2008 Fresh Market Tomato Variety Trial

Peter Nitzsche, RCE of Morris County

Fresh Market Specialty Pepper

Bill Tietjen, RCE of Warren County

Controlling European Corn Borer in Bell Peppers with Companion Plantings

Dr. George Hamilton, RCE Specialist in Pest Management

Update on Pesticide Safety for 2008

Dr. George Hamilton

PESTICIDE CREDITS WILL BE AVAILABLE

For more info contact: Pat Davino or Win Cowgill (908) 788-1338.

Note - Coffee and light refreshments will be served inside following the tour, no meal will be served.

Directions to Rutgers Snyder Research Farm

(140 Locust Grove Road Pittstown NJ 08867, 908) 730-9419

From North: Take I 78 West to Exit 15, (next exit past Clinton) go left at bottom of exit ramp at the light on Rte, 513/Pittstown Rd.(under Rte. 78), travel for approx. 5 miles through the town of Pittstown (don't turn on Rte. 513 or Rte. 579 in Pittstown go straight through Pittstown and make no turns.) Travel about 1.5 miles out of Pittstown on Pittstown Rd. until you reach Locust Grove Rd. on the left. After exiting from Rte. 78 you make no turns until you reach Locust Grove Rd. (There is a big Rutgers Sign on the left). Turn left on Locust Grove Rd., go 1/4 mile or so, Snyder Farm is on left. (2 gates and another BIG Rutgers sign in front of a white house.)

From South: (Trenton Area) -Take Rte. 202 & 31 North to Flemington traffic circle. Take Rte. 12 West at circle toward Frenchtown. Go halfway around 2 additional circles, staying on Rte. 12, go through two traffic lights and travel approx. 5 miles until you reach Pittstown Rd. (airport sign, and Leon's Sod Farm sign on right). Make a right turn onto Pittstown Rd. and go 3.5 miles to Locust Grove Rd. (big Rutgers sign on corner) Turn right, the farm is 1/4 mile on left. □

Apple Maturity Update for North-Central New Jersey

Win Cowgill, County Agricultural Agent

Rutgers NJAES -CE of Hunterdon County

North and Central New Jersey remain extremely dry. We had one rain of 0.6 inches in August, but still one of the driest on record. Of concern are tropical storm Hanna. A big influx of rain can cause Gala's to crack. High winds on overloaded trees can cause issues as well. We are expecting temperatures in the high 80's this week that will hasten fruit maturity.

On the positive side cool crisp nights in the fifties have promoted good color development. Bright sunny days have made for high quality apples.

North Jersey growers are moving into Gala harvest. McIntosh is ready to spot pick in central NJ (Hunterdon County) especially where no irrigation has been available. Cool night temperatures have greatly enhanced red color in Macs, Cortlands and Gala. Honeycrisp has still been slower to color and it is ready for spot picking.

Gala

Background color has historically been one of the best indicators of maturity for Gala. Fresh market Galas should be harvested when the background color is turning from a yellow to a cream color. SI index with the Gala Starch chart can be a guideline as well. I like to harvest Gala at above 12% brix and over 16 lbs pressure. Multiple pickings must be used on Gala to get consistent fruit quality and size the first pick is usually a skim of the ripest fruit.

Note: Keep your eyes on the storm path and wind predictions for this coming weekend. Even a one -inch rain fall after dry weather can cause Galas to crack. If we get 2-10 inches of rain from Hanna, Galas will surely crack if allowed to stay on the tree.

The high colored strains are showing good color. Fruit has sized extremely well in most blocks even with the drought throughout August.

Note the dates on each line of when sampled- in some cases I included 2 weeks of data for comparison when fruit was from the same block.

Warren-Hackettstown-	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
Gala	8/24	yes	21.3	11.8	2.8
Gala	9/1	yes	18.1	12.2	4.8
Hunterdon- Snyder	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch
Buckeye Gala	8/26	yes	24.7	11.8%	1.5
Buckeye Gala	9/1	yes	19.7	12	3
Imperial Gala	9/1	yes	21	13	2.8
Morris -Harding Twp	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
Fulford Gala	8/30	yes	19.7	11.5	3

McIntosh

Growers in North Jersey should watch their Mac's closely for maturity development and drop. Applications of NAA can be used instead for stop drop. Many blocks in North Jersey have colored nicely, sugars are developing ranging between 9-12 brix. Central Jersey Mac harvest has may begin with some spot picking this week.

Hunterdon-Snyder Farm	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
McIntosh-Rogers Red	8/25	Yes	15.	11.8%	2.5
McIntosh-Rogers Red	9/1	Yes	15.5	12	4.6
Warren-Hackettstown-	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
McIntosh- Marshal Mac	8/24	yes	18.5	11	2.25
McIntosh- Marshal Mac	9/1	yes	16.4	12.4	3.4
MacSpur McIntosh	9/1	yes	15.5	11.8	4.5
Morris -Harding Twp	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
Red Max-McIntosh	8/30	yes	15	12	4.1
Rogers Red McIntosh	8/30	yes	16.2	12.1	3.5
Morris -Myersville	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
Mac Spur-McIntosh	8/30	no	16	11	4.8
JonaMac	8/30	no	15	12.1	3.8

SEE APPLE MATURITY REPORT ON PAGE 5

HoneyCrisp

The Honeycrisp blocks I visited are developing color **and should be** spot picked by color. Varietal flavor is necessary to command the premium prices and is coming slowly this season. Keep your eyes on the storm path and wind predictions for this coming weekend. If fruit was not treated with Retain consider NAA to hold fruit on for flavor and color development. Trees that are drought stressed have looser fruit.

This appears to be a year with significant variability in fruit ripening, even on individual trees. Growers should be picking Honeycrisp 4-5 times this year in order to adequately harvest mature, highly colored fruit.

The recommended maturity for the harvest of Honeycrisp in NJ is starch=7.0, internal pressure > 13.5 pounds, soluble solids > 13 brix, and the presence of good varietal flavor. A lousy eating Honeycrisp is a lousy apple.

However, monitoring varietal flavor and background color change from green toward cream may be more useful when timing the harvest of Honeycrisp. Late harvest of Honeycrisp will increase the incidence of soft scald during storage but most of our NJ growers do not store Honeycrisp.

Hunterdon- Snyder Farm	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch
Honeycrisp	8/25	Yes	17.7	12	1
Honeycrisp	9/1	yes	13.6	11.9	5
Warren-Hackettstown-	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
Honeycrisp	8/24	yes	18.5	12.2	3
Honeycrisp	9/1	yes	14.8	12.2	5.7
Morris -Myersville	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
Honeycrisp	8/30	no	14.2	12	8
Morris -Harding Twp	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
Honeycrisp	8/30	yes	16	13	3.8

Cortland

Cortland is an apple that has increased in popularity with newer strains being highly colored. Cortland is usually picked one week after Macs (remember Macs can be picked over 3 weeks if stop drop is used. Normally around mid-September at the Rutgers Snyder farm. They do not starch test well but SI testing can be used as guideline, target a starch of 5-6.

Morris-Harding Twp	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch
Cortland-RedCort	8/30	yes	16.2	11.5	1.2

Mollies Delicious

Mollies Delicious- is a Northern NJ favorite at roadside markets that came out of the NJAES breeding program. It was first introduced in 1966 as a cross between Golden Delicious and Gravenstein by Drs. Hough and Bailey. It has excellent eating quality. Mollies was harvested last week in Morris/Hunterdon, and is quite ready in Warren.

Warren-Hackettstown-	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
Mollies Delicious	8/24	yes	17.2	12.5	2.1
Mollies Delicious	9/1	yes	15.4	13	5
Morris -	Date	Retain	Pressure	Brix	Starch-Iodine
Paula Red	8/24	yes	16.5	11.9	5.4

Retain®:

Timing Retain Applications

The correct timing for applications of Retain to Empire fruit is expected to be the week of September 4th if you would normally pick fruit without Retain during the week of September 25th.

Reminder Retain® should be applied 21-28 days before anticipated harvest on alter varieties, with a 7 day Pre Harvest Interval (PHI). If blocks were not treated with Retain®, it is not too late this season to apply for late September apples like Red Delicious and Empire, and too early for October maturing apples such as Suncrisp, Fuji, Stayman. □

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Pesticide User Responsibility: Use pesticides safely and follow instructions on labels. The pesticide user is responsible for proper use, storage and disposal, residues on crops, and damage caused by drift. For specific labels, special local-needs label 24(c) registration, or section 18 exemption, contact RCE in your County.

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