

The Blueberry Bulletin

A Weekly Update to Growers

May 24, 2019

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AT A GLANCE...

BLUEBERRY GROWER TWILIGHT MEETING

**Thursday, May 30, 2019 @ 5:30 p.m.
Atlantic Blueberry Company
7201 Weymouth Rd.
Mays Landing, NJ 08330**

Visit the Blueberry Bulletin webpage at
www.njaes.rutgers.edu/blueberry-bulletin

CULTURE

Dr. Gary Pavlis, Ph.D.

Atlantic County Agricultural Agent

Fertilizing Newly Planted Fields: Growers putting in a new field have requested information on fertilization. First, no fertilizer should be placed in the planting hole. When the plants are set out in the fields, usually in April or early May, the fruit buds should be rubbed or pruned off. With no crop present and only a small area of soil requiring fertilizer, about 125 lbs/A of 10-10-10 is sufficient (1 1/2 oz./bush). Sidedressing with a fertilizing spreader will require higher rates to compensate for open areas between plants. Special caution should be observed as to the time of fertilizing after planting.

Fertilizer should not be applied until a second growth starts. For example, if plants are set out while dormant, do not fertilize while the first crop of leaves is unfolding and changing from light green to dark

green, wait for new growth. Making the first field application too soon has frequently caused reddened foliage and a delay of several weeks in the starting of new growth. Keep the fertilizer at least 2 inches away from the crowns of the young plants. In late-June, the application of fertilizer is usually made.

Note: Never put leaves, chips, sawdust and etc. in the planting hole unless it has been composted for at least 2 years. Fresh organic matter ties up all nutrients and starves the blueberry plants.

INSECTS

Dr. Cesar Rodriguez-Saona, Extension Specialist in Blueberry Entomology, Rutgers University

Mr. Dean Polk, IPM Agent – Fruit

Ms. Carrie Denson, IPM Program Associate – Fruit

Plum Curculio (PC) – Over the past week PC adult captures remained close to those of the previous week, but recently started to decline late this week. Last week's injury levels averaged 0.29% of fruit with egg scars. One sample site had 1.8% injury. Late last week and early this week, cutting injured fruit showed live larvae inside. Most of this fruit was cut prior to the first post-pollination insecticides being applied. Imidan and a few other materials have the ability to also kill young larvae just under the skin. It is common for those fruit with older larvae to drop off prior to the first picking, which is about 2 ½ weeks away for 'Duke' in Hammonton. Note size of young larva compared to fingertip (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Small PC larvae dug out of berry on 5/22. Photo – Nick Freeman

Cranberry Fruitworm (CBFW) – Trap captures have been sporadic, but eggs have been laid and larvae are emerging and entering the fruit in non-sprayed areas. This is earlier than during most years. Insecticides applied for PC control should also control CBFW. Do not use insect growth regulators (Intrepid or Esteem), or diamides (Altacor, Exirel) at this point, since those materials need to be applied early when egg laying occurs. While there may still be some egg laying, emergence and larval growth are present. See internal larva below (Figure 2). There is also a smaller larva on top, which may be a parasite.

Leafroller (LR), Other Lep. and Gypsy Moth (GM) Larvae – Numbers of leafroller larvae and other non-gypsy moth remained close to the same levels as during the previous week, averaging 0.04 per bush, with a maximum of 0.6 larvae per bush. Average fruit injury from leafrollers and non-gypsy moth Leps was only 0.07%. A low number of gypsy moth larvae are also present in Burlington County.



Figure 2. Young CBFW larva inside berry. Photo –Chelsea Abegg

Aphids – Aphid activity increased slightly, with just over 2% of lower terminals infested with small colonies. We call a 'colony' – 1 or more aphids in separate locations, and all our colonies consist of only single wingless aphids, meaning there aren't very many and they can't yet move from bush to bush to spread the scorch virus. This is not the insect primary target yet. Most applications going on now should primarily target CBFW and residual PC.