

The Blueberry Bulletin

A Weekly Update to Growers

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- ❖ Visit the Blueberry Bulletin webpage at njaes.rutgers.edu/blueberry-bulletin
- ❖ The 2020 Commercial Blueberry Pest Control Recommendations for New Jersey is available on njaes.rutgers.edu

BLUEBERRY CULTURE

Dr. Gary C. Pavlis, Ph.D.

Atlantic County Agricultural Agent

I see that the harvest of the 'Draper' variety has begun in Atlantic County. I have a research plot of this variety and was doing some harvesting of my own this week. This variety's yield is very good. The clusters are large and have uniform ripening. I saw very little disease evidence. The berries are firm, have an excellent texture, color, and flavor and are quite large. There was early concern that there would be a green fruit drop problem but that has not happened to any degree over that past three years and in my plots there was no drop at all this year. I believe the trick is raising the soil pH up to the mid 5's with a target of 5.5. This makes calcium more available and seems to eliminate any green drop problem. Until the pH is increased it may be necessary to apply weekly foliar applications of calcium. I have noted at past meetings and in this newsletter that many blueberry fields have a pH in the 3's and low 4's. This is not 'Draper' ground unless the pH is brought up. Bottom line, this variety may be a good alternative to 'Bluecrop' due to its decreased susceptibility to anthracnose.

BLUEBERRY INSECT

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

Mr. Dean Polk, IPM Agent – Fruit

Ms. Carrie Denson, IPM Program Associate – Fruit

Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD): This is still the main pest of concern for any ripening variety. Try to stay on a 7 day program if you are still picking. If you are picking Bluecrop, and neighboring fields still have Duke on the bushes, or piles of berries around the crowns, be aware that these areas can also serve as SWD breeding grounds.

Aphids: Average aphid infestation levels remained at similar levels as during the previous 2 weeks. We had an average of 3.4% of terminals infested with colonies, with a high of 40% on newly developing canes. If you have plenty of fertility and lush growth in the fields, remember that just because a field is completely picked, does NOT mean the aphids go away. We know that we have scorch present in numerous fields, so high aphid populations can move the disease around, creating more problems for next year. In addition, it is common that when aphid colonies get more dense (more aphids per colony),

they start to produce winged forms. These winged forms are of course more motile and can help spread infestations to additional plants. Check your new cane growth for the presence of aphids. If more than 10% of the terminals have live aphids, then a post-harvest aphicide may be justified. It would probably be helpful to make such an application with a high volume ground sprayer with the spray directed towards the lower part of the plant.

Putnam Scale: Some scale crawlers are still present, but should decrease over the next week to 10 days. Growers concerned about this pest should target the second generation crawler stage in early to mid-August.

By the Numbers:

% Injured Fruit								
Week Ending	% LEPS Injured Fruit		% PC Injury Fruit		% Scale		% CBFW	
	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max
5/11	0.05	0.1	0.2	0.3				
5/18	0.06	0.8	0.13	1.4				
5/25	0.122	1.1	0.43	3.8				
5/30	0.17	1.4	0.70	5.6				
6/6	0.122	1.1	0.43	3.8				
6/13	0.01	0.4	0.001	0.4	0.005	0.1		
6/19	0.003	0.2	0	0	0.02	0.5		
6/27	0.001	0.3	0.001	0.2	0.03	0.6	0.005	0.1
7/4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.03	0.5	0.0005	0.1

Trap Counts												
Week Ending	CBFW-AC		CBFW-BC		SWD-AC		SWD-BC		OB-BC		OB-AC	
	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max
5/11	0.1	1	0	0								
5/18	0	0	0	0								
5/25	0.1	1	0.25	1	0.8	7	0	0				
5/30	0	0	0.25	1	.75	5	.55	1				
6/6	5.5	34	0.75	3	2	8	2.1	5				
6/13	5.6	22	3.5	8	4	14	7.7	20	3.2	11	18	340
6/19	7.2	48	6.5	18	4.64	30	4.9	16	71.75	675	21.4	68
6/27	0	0	3.5	8	2.8	12	4.3	25	1834	13750	462	2025
7/4	0.22	1	1	3	4.17	16	11.3	46	2421	8775	976	5062

Week Ending	SNLH – AC		SNLH-BC		BBM-AC		BBM-BC					
	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max
6/27	0.14	3	0.8	4	0	0	0	0				
7/4	0.08	1	0.8	5	0.009	1	0	0				

Key: PC=plum curculio, Scale=Putnam scale, CBFW=cranberry fruitworm, SWD=spotted wing drosophila, OB=oriental beetle, SNLH-sharpnosed leafhopper, BBM=blueberry maggot, BC=Burlington County, AC=Atlantic County

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