

The Blueberry Bulletin

A Weekly Update to Growers

July 16, 2020

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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

This year's harvest is coming along without too many problems. Growers have told me that the lack of labor has been a problem and undoubtedly the Duke crop was down, some say 20%, some say as high as 40%. Bluecrop as usual seems to have weathered the cold and the poor pollination and has a normal crop. I visited a few newly planted fields this week and once again I must stress the point that late applications of nitrogen, meaning after July 1, can be disastrous. This is especially true on Duke. I visited a farm that was planted last year and was given a dose of nitrogen in late July and early August. This year the field has developed stem blight on 50% of the plants. Some will live, most will not. I believe Duke is especially sensitive to late applications of nitrogen. Bottom line; don't give Duke a late application of nitrogen. I also visited a second young field that was planted this spring. The entire field looks poor. Leaves are reddish yellow, growth is poor, and there were berries on the plants. I did a pH of the field and it was in the high 5's. First, why do a planting if the pH is not optimum? Growth will definitely be poor. Secondly, why leave fruit on one year plants, again, this retards growth. The solution here was to add sulfur ASAP and strip all the berries off, also ASAP.

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. Bluecrop is being machine picked and SWD are starting to slow down for the mid-season varieties. Remember that the later the season gets, then the higher the population gets, thus increasing the chances for fruit infestation. Elliott and other later season varieties should stay on a 7-day program.

Aphids: Average aphid infestation levels remained at similar levels as during the previous 3 weeks. We had an average of 3.6% of terminals infested with colonies. Some fields did show higher infestation rates with 58% of lower shoots infested. With the increased incidence of scorch virus over the last 2 years, it is difficult to accept aphid populations staying the same over several weeks, and even increasing in some

fields. It is very likely that some of the higher populations are in fields where the insecticide is just not getting to the target site. The target site in most of these cases is the lower part of the bush where new canes are developing. Anything you can do to reduce aphid populations in these parts of the plants is to your advantage.

Putnam Scale: Scale infested fruit is still present but at very low levels. We will be putting out new crawler traps over the next week to monitor for the second generation. Growers who had fields with infested fruit should gear up to treat the second generation of crawlers. This should be in early August. More on this when we start seeing them.

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
7/11	0.005	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.02	0.5	0.0	0.0

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
7/11	0.11	1	0.25	1	5.8	27	6.6	22	1093	5000	1997	6075

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				
7/11	0.12	1	1.82	6	0	0	0	0				

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



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PHILIP D. MURPHY
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SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

DOUGLAS H. FISHER
Secretary

URGENT REQUEST

July 13, 2020

Dear Farm Owner/Operator,

As you are all aware, New Jersey is still under a Public Health Emergency as we try to contain and prevent the spread of COVID-19, a contagious and, at times, fatal disease transmitted mainly through close contact with infected people, such as an infected person's coughs and sneezes. The Department of Health has identified farm workers as one of the most vulnerable populations in the State for potentially contracting COVID-19 because such employees often work and live near each other.

Over the past several months, the Department of Agriculture has been closely coordinating with the Departments of Health and Labor to assist farm operators and farm workers to minimize and control the spread of COVID-19 during this pandemic. One program that is being implemented FREE OF CHARGE for all farms is a COVID-19 testing and education program through Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and local health departments. Along with free testing, the program provides education and other related support services. The Department of Health has also created [guidelines for seasonal farm labor camps](#), a "[Quick Facts](#)" infographic, and prevention signs on [face coverings](#), [hand cleaning](#), [social distancing](#), and [helpful hotlines](#).

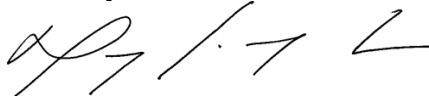
The Commissioner of the Department of Health has broad powers under the Emergency Health Powers Act to take all reasonable and necessary measures to prevent the transmission of infectious disease, which can include mandated testing for COVID-19 as part of the above-mentioned program (N.J.S.A. 26: 13-12; 13-13). At this time, the Commissioner strongly urges farm workers and staff to be tested by an FQHC or another county testing site. This will help reduce the risk of spreading the virus to others.

Although many farms have been cooperating and thousands of farmworkers have been tested to date, our goal is to work together with every farm in the State to reach the best possible outcome for everyone. Thus, workers can cohort or assemble into groups based on the test results. As a last resort, they can continue to work even if they test positive for COVID-19 but do not exhibit symptoms. Also, workers tested through the program that require medical attention will be assisted with housing options and provided medical treatment at no cost to the operator or the worker. In addition to the above, FQHC staff are available and more than willing to discuss other options/solutions/concerns with you.

For all these reasons, it is critical that you welcome FQHC staff to your farm to educate you and your workers about the virus, how to reduce the potential for transmission through best practices, and to provide testing services.

Let's stand together and demonstrate the agricultural community's responsible reaction in confronting this unprecedented situation with emphasis on the safety of workers and farm families across the state.

Sincerely,



Douglas Fisher
Secretary, NJ Department of Agriculture

Sincerely,



Judith M. Persichilli, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Health