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New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

The Blueberry Bulletin

A Weekly Update to Growers

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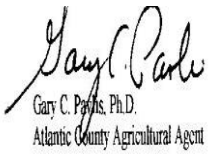
- *Visit the Blueberry Bulletin webpage at njaes.rutgers.edu/blueberry-bulletin*
- *The 2022 Commercial Blueberry Pest Control Recommendations for New Jersey is available on njaes.rutgers.edu*
- *The Blueberry Bulletin will now be emailed to those who request it. We will no longer be mailing hard copies out. If you are not on our current list and would like to receive a copy, please call the office at (609) 625-0056.*

BLUEBERRY CULTURE

Dr. Gary C. Pavlis, Ph.D
Atlantic County Agriculture Agent

During visits to farms this week I was struck by the fact that a few fields that had been looking very weak a couple of years ago due to grub damage had come back very well due to the application of proper control. It brought home the need to observe problems in the field, get them diagnosed, and apply the recommended treatment as early as possible. Without early diagnosis the field slowly goes down, yield decreases, and money is lost. In the end a once productive field has to be replanted at considerable expense. I always feel good when a field that was on the brink of decline is brought back to be productive. It must be also mentioned that I saw a few fields with plants that have set fruit but no leaves. Sometimes it is just a few canes on the plant, sometimes it is the entire plant. Either way, it spells trouble. I have written many columns in this newsletter about plants with no leaves. This is usually due to a root problem, most of the time due to grubs and sometimes due to root rot. Both can be reversed but it takes an observant eye in the field to notice the problem before it gets too advanced. This is the time of the year when we are most likely to see this problem and growers are advised to stay observant. If a plant has a full crop but does not have any leaves, the first thing that should be done is to strip the fruit off the plant. In this way, once the problem is solved the plant is able to recover. With a full crop load, it will probably die.



PEST MANAGEMENT

Dr. Cesar Rodriguez-Saona, Extension Specialist in Blueberry Entomology, Rutgers University
Ms. Carrie Mansue, Senior Program Coordinator

Lepidoptera larvae – leafrollers, spongy moth: Numbers of leafrollers and spongy moth larvae decreased in the last week compared to the previous week of scouting.

Plum Curculio (PC): During this past week of scouting, adult PC (Figure 1) numbers have remained low, averaging 0.017 PC per bush, with a high of 0.2. This could be due to the cooler temperatures. Treatment must be on hold until bees are removed.

Figure 1. Plum curculio adult and oviposition scar. Photo–Dean Polk.

Scouting and Control. To monitor for PC, look for the semi-circular scars on the fruit (Figure 1). Sampling should be biased towards field edges or infields that border woods and hedgerows. This pest is more of a problem on early maturing varieties. No threshold has been established, so treatment is mainly based on past history and an estimate of injury to fruit. Chemical controls targeting the adults should be applied soon after bees are removed. Best post-bloom control options are Avaunt and Imidan. The entomopathogenic nematode *Steinernema riobrave* has shown promise for controlling PC larvae in the soil. Future studies will be conducted to test the efficacy and persistence of this beneficial nematode against PC larvae in commercial blueberry farms.

Cranberry Fruitworm (CBFW) and Cherry Fruitworm (CFW) Traps: CFW traps counts have increased in Atlantic County but decreased in Burlington County. There is still no activity of CBFW adults.

Insect Sampling Count Summary

	LR/Tray	SM/Tray	PC/Tray	Thrips/Tray
Average	0.114	0.131	0.017	2.37
High	0.5	1.5	0.2	96
LR = Leafrollers, SM = Spongy Moth, PC = Plum Curculio				

	AC CFW	BC CFW	AC CBFW	BC CBFW
Average	1.6	0.5	0	0
High	7	1	0	0
AC = Atlantic County, BC = Burlington County, CFW = Cherry Fruitworm, CBFW = Cranberry Fruitworm				