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The Blueberry Bulletin

A Weekly Update to Growers

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- *Visit the Blueberry Bulletin webpage at njaes.rutgers.edu/blueberry-bulletin*
- *The 2024 Commercial Blueberry Pest Control Recommendations for New Jersey is available on* https://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/

BLUEBERRY CULTURE

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

Pruning timing - 'Bluecrop' harvest is finishing, and 'Elliott' has begun and it's only the second week of July. It appears that all berries will be off the bushes by late July, making this one of the earliest harvest years in a long time. Some growers who will still have labor are considering what this labor can be used for. One grower asked me if pruning could be started when harvest is finished. The answer is yes, but at what cost? It must be remembered that the objective of pruning is to remove old wood but also to stimulate new cane growth. New canes are where the money is. The ideal time to prune is late winter, after the worst of the winter is over. As a result, dead wood can be removed AND new canes are stimulated at a time when they have the entire season to grow. If pruning is done is mid-summer or early fall, the canes start to grow, usually only reach 10-12 inches of height, and then stop when the winter temps cease growth. The next season these canes do not continue to grow but put out laterals. Laterals at 12 inches high produce fruit that will never be picked. In addition, these canes are often killed back by the winter producing canes which will never amount to anything from a fruit standpoint.

Years ago, through our research we proved that cutting canes at 6, 8, 10 inches high result in that cane dying and often developing stem canker. This old practice of pruning has largely been abandoned. Pruning in the summer and early fall does not develop productive canes and is not recommended. I realize that labor is always an issue but remember that fully developed canes put money in the grower's pocket.

Gary C. Pavlis, Ph.D.
Atlantic County Agricultural Agent

PEST MANAGEMENT

Dr. Cesar Rodriguez-Saona, Extension Specialist in Blueberry Entomology, Rutgers University
Dr. Janine Spies, IPM Agent – Frui
Carrie Mansue, Senior Program Coordinator

During the week of June 30th to July 6th, 197 fields were scouted throughout Burlington and Atlantic Counties. As the picking season winds down, scouting efforts will shift focus more on trap counts.

% Injury to Infested Fruit. Injury to berries from lepidopteran larvae and plum curculio is insignificant.

Week End-ing	% Injury of Fruit by LR		% Injury of Fruit by PC		% Injury of fruit to CBFW		% Injury of fruit to CFW	
	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max
5/11	0.17	3.9	0.80	12.7				
5/17	0.23	3.0	1.25	13.20				
5/24	0.10	1.40	0.45	11.30				
6/1	0.02	1.10	0.06	2.90				
6/7	0.001	0.10	0.01	0.70	0.02	0.70		
6/15	0.002	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.003	0.20	0.004	0.10
6/21	0.004	0.30	0.01	0.20	0.003	0.30	0	0
6/29	0.01	0.30	0.004	0.20	0.001	0.10	0	0
7/6	0.004	0.40	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
LR = Leafroller, PC = Plum Curculio, CBFW = Cranberry Fruitworm, CFW = Cherry Fruitworm								

Scale Traps and Infested fruit. Scale activity in traps is decreasing, averaging 19.5 scales per trap, with a high of 68.

Week Ending	% Injury of Fruit by Scales	
	Average	Maximum
6/7	0.04	0.60
6/15	0.05	2.10
6/21	0.03	1.00
6/29	0.05	1.20
7/6	0.03	0.80

% of Infestation on Lower Shoots for Leafroller and Aphids. Average aphid infestation levels have significantly decreased to an average shoot infestation of 1.5%, with a high of 18% of shoots infested.

Week Ending	% Lower Shoots w/Leafrollers		% Lower Shoots w/Aphids	
	Avg	Max	Avg	Max
5/24	0.02	2.00	11.03	52
6/1	0.066	4.0	15.37	72
6/7	0.06	4.00	14.66	96

6/15	0.00	0.00	15.42	88
6/21	0.06	2.0	10.31	88
6/29	0.04	2.0	4.06	78
7/6	0.0	0.0	1.49	18

Insect Traps. Insect trap counts are similar to those in the previous week's report. Treatments for spotted-wing drosophila should continue on a 7-day schedule. For management recommendations, refer to the previous week's newsletter article.

Week Ending	SWD		OB		BBM		SNLH	
	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max	Avg	Max
6/7	19.75	64	300.81	2025	0.037	2	0.0173	0.2
6/15	28.31	100	707	4050	0.20	15	0.18	3.00
6/21	33	164	2986	15525	0.04	4	0.18	4
6/29	71.72	300	5800	16875	0.05	6	0.10	3.00
7/6	38.82	405	3239	16000	0.02	2	0.02	1.00
SWD = Spotted-Wing Drosophila, OB = Oriental Beetle, BBM = Blueberry Maggot Fly, SNLH = Sharp-nosed Leafhopper								

DISEASES

By Peter V. Oudemans, Ph.D.
Professor and Extension Specialist
Plant Pathology

Timing	Anthracnose	Scorch	Stem Diseases
Week of June 12	N/A	Last chance for scouting	Scout now
Material	N/A	N/A	N/A
Week of June 19	Assess disease pressure	N/A	Begin pruning and re-moval
Material		N/A	N/A
Week of June 26	Spray affected fields	N/A	Continue pruning and removal
Material	Quadris Top, Quash	N/A	N/A

Disease management choices: Evaluate first picking Duke for anthracnose or consult the IPM program. Fungicides used prior to second picking will help protect fruit from becoming infected. If fruit is already infected it will begin to express symptoms when conditions are conducive. The most conducive conditions are storage temperatures above 50F and high relative humidity or moisture on the fruit surface. Storage conditions are a critical part of maintaining fruit quality. Fungicides are beneficial when used together with optimal storage conditions.

Fungicides useful for anthracnose control	
Azoxystrobin (this is the active ingredient which is present in many fungicide formulations)	0-day PHI: REI 4hr Do not apply more than 0.75lb of the active ingredient per season. This includes all azoxystrobin containing products.
Phosphorous Acid	0-day PHI: REI 4hr Read the label for specific instructions on avoiding phytotoxicity.
Captan	0-day PHI: REI 48hr Do not combine with other pesticides or surfactants without consulting the technical rep or dealer.
Miravis Prime	0-day PHI: REI 12hr. Do not make more than 2 applications for anthracnose per year

Continued on page 5

Stem Blight: We are starting to see symptoms of stem blight appear in the field. This is the time to begin pruning out affected canes.

Scorch: Symptoms of scorch are diminishing, and plants should be marked for removal.