



Overview: One would expect the first quarter of the year to be a time to catch up and slow down after the long growing season. However, the pace does not change just the types of activities that the team works on. The primary “winter” activities include hosting educational meetings, writing publications, attending conferences and developing research projects for the upcoming season. (Highlighted below are the major educational meetings that the team developed this past winter.)

Team Update: After 30 years as an extension agent, Debbie Breth retired on March 30 as the Integrated Pest Management Specialist and Team Leader. The team is excited to have Tess Grasswitz join the LOF team on April 18 as Debbie’s replacement. Tess will be based out of the Orleans County Extension office. Tess is a native of the United Kingdom with undergraduate and master’s degrees from the University of London and a PhD in entomology from the University of California (Riverside). She worked at both Washington State and New Mexico State Universities as an Entomologist/IPM Specialist serving the fruit and vegetable industries, establishing a solid record of applied research and extension. She is passionate about IPM, has worked on a variety of pests in different crops and growing systems, and has a particular interest in biological control.



Matt Wells, Production Economics and Business Specialist has assumed the team leadership responsibilities.

260 growers attended the LOF Winter Fruit Schools, Feb. 1-2. The annual fruit schools were held in Wayne and Niagara counties, each with a full day of educational presentations on fruit production. Cornell Researchers, LOF educators and industry experts gave 13 presentations on various aspects of fruit productions. 3.5 DEC credits were available to growers who attended the meeting.

130 fruit growers from across the state participated in the Tree Fruit Sessions at the Producers EXPO, Jan. 19-21. The tree fruit specialist from both the Lake Ontario Fruit Team and the Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Team developed and chaired seven sessions and 23 presentations over three days. Fruit Farmers learned the latest information and best practices on orchard systems, pest management, marketing, and mechanization.

80 Spanish speaking fruit workers and growers participated in a full day educational session, Feb. 23-24. Attendees were introduced to basic and applied pomological and pest management concepts and modern apple pruning practices in the Spanish language. This year the educational program included the

use of dissecting microscopes to learn to dissect and differentiate vegetative and floral buds of Honeycrisp and Gala. The horticultural “hands-on” pruning sessions were well received and continued emphasizing the science behind pruning and basic tree plant physiology.



By The Numbers:



Education:

| Educational Meetings: | Attendance | Notes: |
|---|------------|-------------------------------|
| Winter Fruit Schools – English | 260 | Wayne, Niagara (each one day) |
| Winter Fruit Schools – Spanish | 80 | Wayne, Orleans (each one day) |
| NY Producers EXPO | 130 | Syracuse (3 days) |
| Niagara Fresh Mkt Veg and Small Fruit Meeting | | Lockport, Niagara CCE |

| Publications: | Editions: | Articles: |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| Fruit Notes | 4 | 17 |
| Fruit Fax | 2 | 4 |

| Publications by LOF Team | Periodical | Author |
|--|--------------------|--------------------------|
| MBR: The End of Easy Money? | Fruit Notes | Wells |
| MBR: Is Noodling Enough? | Fruit Notes | Wells |
| MBR: The Best Way to Predict the Future | Fruit Notes | Wells |
| NPV Payback Calculator for New Orchards (Excel Tool) | LOF Website | Wells |
| State-wide Crop Estimate | NY Fruit Quarterly | Wells, Miranda-Sazo |
| Chilling Requirements Have Been Met | Fruit Notes | Miranda-Sazo (co-author) |
| Precision Pruning | Fruit Notes | Miranda-Sazo |
| Finish Pruning and Be Ready for a Potential Early Start | Fruit Notes | Miranda-Sazo |
| Winter Damage in Sweet Cherry Flower Buds | Fruit Notes | Miranda-Sazo |
| Growth Habit Implications for Pruning NY1 and NY2 | Fruit Notes | Miranda-Sazo |
| Selecting a Good Site for a Blueberry Planting is Critical | Fruit Notes | Miranda-Sazo |
| Spring it Will Come Sooner than Later | Fruit Notes | Breth |
| Product and Registration Update | Fruit Notes | Breth (co-author) |
| Weed Control Options for Spring 2016 | Fruit Notes | Breth |

| Presentations by LOF Team | Periodical/Meeting: | Author/Presenter: |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Orchard Removal and Strategic Planning | LOF Fruit School | Wells |
| Useful Business Metrics | LOF Fruit School | Wells |
| FSMA and the Impact to Fruit Producers | LOF Fruit School | Kahlke |
| How to Avoid Mistakes in Tall Spindles (2x) | NY and Wisconsin EXPO | Miranda-Sazo |
| How to Get More out of Low Vigor Varieties | LOF Fruit School | Miranda-Sazo |
| Introduction to Floral Anatomy | LOF Fruit School (Spanish) | Miranda-Sazo |
| Working Smarter not Harder | Wisconsin Fruit/Veg Conference | Miranda-Sazo |
| Basic Principles of Managing Apple Cultivars (Spanish) | Mid-Atlantic Hort Show | Miranda-Sazo |
| Steps to Managing Tall Spindle (Spanish) | Mid-Atlantic Hort Show | Miranda-Sazo |
| Optimizing Tall Spindle for Fuji, Gala, Honeycrisp | IFTA Annual Conference | Miranda-Sazo |
| Mechanical Hedging and Pruning in the East | IFTA Annual Conference | Miranda-Sazo |

Research:

| Activity/Proposal/Grant | Person | Approved (Y/N) | Funding |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Submitted Mechanical Blossom Thinning (ARDP) | Miranda-Sazo | No | |
| Submitted Quantifying Efficiencies/Harvest Platforms (ARDP) | Wells | Yes | \$11,940 |
| Rootstock Trials: Dormant pruning (Kast, VanAcker, VanDeWalle, Peters) | Miranda-Sazo | On-going | |
| Precision Harvest (ARDP-NYFVI): Sensory testing | Kahlke | On-going | |

Business Consultation:

| Specialist | Site Visit | Phone/Email |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Breth | | |
| Kahlke | | |
| Miranda-Sazo | 17 | |
| Wells | 3 | 18 |

Professional Development and Training:

| Activity | Team Member | Comments: |
|--|--------------------|--|
| IFTA Winter Educational Meeting (Grand Rapids) | Mario, Matt, Craig | 5 day meeting on tree fruit |
| NE PGR Meeting (Wilkes-Barre, PA) | Miranda-Sazo | 2 day |
| Global GAP V5 Training | Kahlke | 1 day, 3 rd party audit scheme used by many growers |
| Ontario Fruit and Veg Conference | Kahlke | 1 day |
| FSMA: Irrigation Water Regulations, Traceability, and Recall Meeting | Kahlke | 1 day |
| CTAG Annual Meeting | Kahlke, Wells | 1 day |
| AGRO Fresh Apple Quality Management Summit | Kahlke | 2 day |

2016 Fruit Team Enrollment by County:

| County | Enrolled |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Wayne | 118 |
| Orleans | 51 |
| Niagara | 47 |
| Monroe | 22 |
| Oswego | 11 |
| Satellite | 30 |
| Total | 279 |