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Cooperative Extension

Lake Ontario Fruit Program
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“Fruit Facts” – Wednesday, July 17th, 2024
Mario Miranda Sazo and Janet van Zoeren

Next Week: Tree Fruit and Small Fruit Twilight Meeting on Thursday, July 25th at Simpelaar Fruit Farms in Mexico NY, 6:30pm start for Food Safety Q&A

Time: Thursday, July 25, 2024, 6:30PM – 8:30 PM

Location: Simpelaar Fruit Farm, 6018 State Rte 3, Mexico NY

Join specialists Anya Osatuke, Janet Van Zoeren, and Robert Haddad for a conversation about fruit and berry phenology and pest management and food safety.

This series of monthly meetings will examine seasonal changes in tree fruit and berry crops, demonstrate scouting techniques, and discuss integrative pest management solutions to maximize the health and productivity of berry and fruit plantings. Robert Haddad joins us to cover food safety for berry and fruit growers, from water testing to food packaging.

Meetings will now be held from 6:30PM – 8:30PM on the last Thursday of every month, from April through July. Attendees are encouraged to bring pictures or descriptions of pests they are concerned about on their farm.

1.5 DEC credits will be offered in categories 1a, 10, and 22. Please arrive at 6:30PM to sign-in for DEC credits.

This event is free to attend, and no pre-registration is required. Pizza and refreshments provided by Valent.

Questions? Please contact aco56@cornell.edu.

Registration Is Now Open for our 2nd Annual Western NY Fruit Grower Tour!
Tuesday, August 13th, 2024

Co-Sponsored by the Cornell Cooperative Extension Lake Ontario Fruit Program & Lake Ontario Ag Consulting LLC.

Register Here: <https://lof.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=1915>

Sponsor Opportunities: Please contact Craig Kahlke at cjk37@cornell.edu, 585-735-5448.

The tour will be conducted in Orleans County and will feature the following fruit farms: Toussaint Farms, Zingler Farms, Circle R Fruit Farms, and Orchard Dale Fruit Farm

Stay tuned for more details coming soon!

Announcing the 9th CCE LOF Hispanic Summer Fruit Tour
to be Hosted by Dobbins Farms on Saturday August 17

The Hispanic fruit tour will be hosted by Dobbins Farms at the orchard located close to the following home address: 11647 Alps Rd, Lyndonville, NY14098.

The entire **3-hour tour** will be conducted at this orchard location and will include three educational stops in the Spanish language (see more details for registration ‘On the Horizon’ section below): (1) Horticulture by Mario, (2) IPM by Janet Van Zoeren and Sandra Lizarraga, (3) and labor efficiency by Mary “Bess” Lewis of Cornell Agricultural

Workforce Development.

The tour will start at **3pm and will finish at 6pm**. The tour will finalize with a dinner celebration at the nice Russ Martino pavilion of the Town of Yates from **6pm to 7:30pm**. Mexican food and drinks will be catered by the Mariachi Restaurant of Medina with a generous financial support provided by Farm Credit East.

To Do Today

- **Last hand thinning reminders:** We recommend that you count total fruit per tree on 5-10 representative trees in each block and reduce fruit number (via hand thinning, ideally with a platform) to the most profitable crop load (your targeted fruit number per tree). Hand thinning will be necessary in blocks where final fruit set (desired number of fruit/tree at harvest) is still relatively high in the tops of the trees.
 - Early hand thinning will help somewhat to mitigate biennial bearing in Honeycrisp, where floral initiation is earlier than the rest of the cultivars. Please review the recommendations for return bloom sent in previous Fruit Facts.
 - Early hand thinning will also improve fruit size in small-fruited varieties like **NY-1 and Gala**.
 - Take advantage of your platforms to get hand thinning done quickly and more efficiently this season.
- **Avoid the common mistake of excessive crop loads in years 2 to 4 which leads to too little tree growth** (varieties differ in their biennial bearing tendency and this must be incorporated into the crop loads allowed on young trees).
- **Sudangrass and buckwheat have different properties, so the management goal and field condition will determine which is the right for you:**
 - **Sudangrass** is often chosen for **improving soil organic matter**. It produces a strong root system and lots of biomass. The deep root system helps reduce subsurface hardness. Sudangrass is also a good choice for reducing root-knot nematode pressure.
 - Sudangrass is suitable for short, 8-10 week plantings. Seeding rates are 30 lbs/acre for biomass and nematode control and 50 lbs/acre for weed control.
 - Seeding rates are June through mid-August (for sudangrass)
 - Seeding rates are July through mid-August (for sorghum-sudangrass)
 - This grass grows very fast, so keep an eye on it. Mow the first time when it reaches 3 feet and the second time while the flail mower can still chop it well.
 - If sudangrass gets too big to control, it will be killed by frost and make a nice winter mulch. However, the biofumigant effect will be lost.
 - Sudangrass needs a final flail mowing and immediate incorporation to suppress nematodes.
 - Please notice that we have seen good results with the additional strip-seeding of radish tillage (by around August 10-15) in the future in-row spacing of an orchard to be planted the following spring.
 - **Buckwheat** is best known for **weed suppression and mellowing the soil**. It covers the ground earlier than sudangrass, especially if seeded in early June, and outcompetes weeds that may establish in sudangrass. Sudangrass requires a higher seeding rate for effective weed suppression.
 - Both cover crops should be mowed after about 40 days. This is the end of the season for buckwheat, but the beginning of major root growth for sudangrass.
 - To avoid volunteer buckwheat seed, kill the crop before there are filled green seeds on the plant. This takes about 40 days from a July planting or 50 days from a June planting.
 - Buckwheat seed is available from some local farm seed retailers and is relatively cheap. The variety does not matter, and many suppliers don't identify any variety. A bag is enough to seed an acre.

- **In previous Fruit Facts, we have mentioned that there is an opportunity to mix the sorghum sudangrass with cowpea or sunnhemp to get some nitrogen into the soil and maximize the sudangrass biomass this 2024 season.**
 - If you have any doubt about this new recommendation and/or how to get the best use of cover crops during pre-site preparations this summer, don't hesitate to contact Dr. Deborah Aller (Cornell soil health specialist for tree fruit perennial systems) to da352@cornell.edu and/or call 631-902-1582 (cell phone).
- **We are getting to the end of the window for leaf sampling collection for Honeycrisp in WNY (don't collect/submit leaves with severe leaf chlorosis):** In the last four years we have recommended that growers collect Honeycrisp leaf samples for nutrient analysis about one month earlier than traditionally suggested dates for other apple varieties in early to mid-August. This season the optimal timing for leaf sampling collection is finishing **this week** in WNY. There are two reasons for this early leaf sampling:
 - Honeycrisp trees typically stop their shoot growth by the third week in June, earlier than many other apple varieties.
 - Development of zonal leaf chlorosis affects leaf nutrient concentrations, particularly leaf nitrogen status.
- **Growers should start implementing mechanical summer pruning of 2-D Tall Spindle and start first Premier Honeycrisp trees:** We encourage growers to target their mechanical summer pruning time based on the fruit size characteristics of the apple cultivar instead of the exact number of leaves per shoot at a particular time during the growing season. This timing approach to mechanical summer pruning has become a more practical method. Therefore, for large fruited varieties like **Honeycrisp** (where we intentionally want to control or reduce an excessive fruit size at harvest) we recommend an "early" timing for mechanical summer pruning. Under current WNY weather conditions, a mechanical summer pruning program should be started for Premier Honeycrisp this week (after the summer solstice).
 - A "late" timing should be used for small fruited varieties like **NY-1** and **Gala** to avoid a negative effect on crop size reduction before harvest. Varieties like Gala, Ambrosia, NY-1, and NY-2 should be done approximately 2 to 3 weeks before harvest to facilitate the use of platforms and/or equipment for harvest.
 - Medium fruited varieties should be mechanically summer pruned after Honeycrisp and before Gala to have the same controlling effect on fruit size (from about July 15 until early August).
- **Woolly apple aphid** populations have been expanding rapidly with the heat the past couple of weeks! They are now easy to see in the leaf axils of affected blocks. Manage WAA problem blocks now, before they have time to build up large colonies that can protect the center aphids from any contact with a spray. WAA can be controlled by Beleaf (21day PHI), Sefina (7day PHI), Sivanto Prime (14day PHI), Versys (7day PHI) at this timing. **Coverage is critical** so drive slow and use a high gallons per acre.
- **Summer diseases** such as **sooty blotch and flyspeck, black rot, white rot and bitter rot** are now a main focus as we move into mid-summer.
 - Products that are effective for SBFS, and black, white, and bitter rots include Flint Extra (14day PHI), Inspire Super (14day PHI), Luna Sensation (14day PHI), Merivon (0day PHI), and Pristine (0day PHI).
 - **In general, fungicide covers for the rots go on every 14 days**, but remember that 1.5" of rainfall would trigger a re-cover (rule of thumb, varies some by product).

Stone Fruits and Berries

- **Spotted wing drosophila numbers continue to increase!** SWD does not mind the rain, and will hunker down during active rainfall and then thrive after rains let up. However, your insecticides do not fare so well in the rain. Re-cover susceptible blocks asap! View the [quick guide of products used for cherry fruit flies and swd](#) and remember to rotate modes of action.

On the Horizon

Plan to register your Hispanic employees for the Hispanic summer tour on Saturday August 17:

Registration for the tour (including food and beverages to be offered at the end of the tour at the Russ Martino pavilion of Town of Yates) is **FREE** thanks to funds provided by Farm Credit East.

IMPORTANT - Registration process for the 2024 CCE LOF Hispanic summer fruit tour:

Pre-registration will be required for attendance of your Hispanic employees (55 participants is the limit!) for the CCE LOF Hispanic tour this year (the last day for pre-registration will be Wednesday August 14, 2024 by 5pm). It is especially important for food counts/seating, and handouts.

We encourage all growers to register their Hispanic employees EARLY (again, there will be a limit for registration of 55 people!) by **emailing a list of participants** with first name(s) and second last name(s) plus a phone number from your organization to Mario (mrm67@cornell.edu) or Janet (jev67@cornell.edu). Please contact Mario or Janet if you need more specifics about the tour or have any doubt.

Good to Know

Did you know that the 2024 Virtual Orchard Meetup (VOM) Series Recordings Are Now Available?:

If you missed these meetings or just want to review, you can now find them on this YouTube playlist. The fourth VOM series focused on *'Water Wisdom: Navigating Tree Fruit Production Through Drought and Deluge'* resulted in four successful meetings, packed with informative presentations, conversations with growers, and viewers asking questions and sharing solutions. Over the past decade, growers have experienced unpredictable rainfall, water availability challenges, droughts and deluges. The explored methods for adapting to these challenges and discuss alternatives for efficient irrigation practices, including advances in irrigation technologies that help growers produce high quality fruit. Recording YouTube Playlist:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bL21tyyTmZI&list=PLYLbxsK4pTXUFzj_F5Lx4dXoVeodWLLxX&pp=iAQB

Every effort has been made to provide correct, complete, and up-to-date pesticide recommendations. Nevertheless, changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly, and human errors are still possible. These recommendations are not a substitute for pesticide labeling. Please read the label before applying any pesticide. Copyright 2024. All rights reserved. No part of this material may be reproduced or redistributed by any means without permission. Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.

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