



Fruit FAX

Horticultural and Pest Management Notes,
produced by Lake Ontario Fruit Program, CCE

From FAX: 585-798-5191

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The forecast is for one more day of temperatures in the upper 50's with sun today, followed by the cooler temperatures in the 40's with showers for the rest of the week, through the weekend.

Are you ready for green tip? Do you have your sprayers ready to go, calibrated, and the fungicide for your first spray which is imminent. One warm day does not green tip make, but who knows how reliable the forecasts are. Warm weather out of the southwest tends to be warmer than predicted. So get ready!

Pest Management Notes...

Copper –

- Wait for the next window of dry weather to prune sweet cherries. We used to recommend an application of copper before pruning but wait until after the 24 hour REI has expired. Juliet Carroll could not document bacterial canker control from copper applications before or after pruning, but she did show the importance of leaving pruning stubs about 6-8 inches long especially if pruning branches on the central leader and larger branches of sweet cherry trees.
- While you have the tank of copper mixed, touch up peaches for leaf curl before showers and where bacterial spot has been a problem. The bud scales are open now and susceptible to leaf curl infection. Apply copper or Ziram or chlorothalonil to prevent the fungal spores from washing into the open bud scales and infect the leaf tissue developing inside the bud scales. In peaches with a history of leaf curl, better choices will be ziram or chlorothalonil using the high rates as listed on the label.
- In fresh apples and pears, it will be important to apply copper no later than ¼ inch green to prevent fruit russeting. But as fire blight cankers will be active and oozing fire blight bacteria later especially in processing orchards, they would benefit from a later application of copper as late as half-inch green.

Just seeing some silver tip in Idared, but most other varieties are pretty tight even in inland sites. As soon as we get to 50% green tip in McIntosh in orchards that were scabby last season, it will be critical to get the copper and/or mancozeb application on to protect the susceptible buds. Kerik Cox has suggested that copper applications can help reduce the level of fungicide resistant scab in orchards. But the main benefit of copper is to kill fire blight bacteria that will ooze out of overwintering cankers. A copper application for fire blight will provide about 5-7 days of protection for scab as well. Do not mix copper with Syllit. Get fungicide in stock for the first apple scab spray – captan, mancozeb, copper, or sulfur (organic). These copper or sulfur need to be applied before any scab infection event. Captan and/or mancozeb can be applied within 18-24 hours of the start of the rain.

Pears: Pear psylla adults will be active when temps exceed 50F. They take a couple days to get ready to lay eggs. Then they will be actively laying eggs during the next warm weather likely next week.

Apply oil when first eggs are detected and follow up in 7 days with a second application because the buds do grow out of the oil coverage and eggs will be placed on untreated bud surfaces. The 2 sprays are more effective than 1 using a 2 gallon per 100 gallon dilute rate to inhibit egg-laying and compress the egg hatch period so you will not be fighting multiple life stages of this insect at one time using insecticides, unsuccessfully.

Strawberries weed control: The plants are no longer dormant and Chateau is no longer an option for control at this time unless you are only treating between rows. The alternatives now are Devrinol or Sinbar. Since the plants are not dormant, the application of Sinbar must be followed immediately by 0.5 – 1 inch of irrigation or rainfall to avoid severe burning of the plants. Devrinol must be watered in by rainfall or irrigation to wash into the weed seed germination zone. Stinger still has a supplemental label for strawberries at 1/3 pint per acre in spring application for control of dandelion, red sorrel, curly dock, Canada thistle, and other selected composite weeds. You do not want to wash off the Stinger!

Horticulture Notes...

Getting ready to plant? We had great weather and soil conditions for planting for some growers this past weekend. Don't plant if the soil is still too wet in your site, wait a few more days for better soil moisture conditions. Check your trees as soon as they arrive. Inspect them carefully. Open the boxes, including the interior plastic wrap, inspect the trees for trueness. This process also helps air them out and gives you a chance to water the roots if they appear to be drying. Keep the trees in a cooler, completely dormant while you prepare the field for planting. Do not store them in a cooler that was recently used for apples unless it was carefully aired out. Never allow the roots of the tree to dry out.

Pruning: Try and get all your young blocks pruned **before** bud break. The later you prune, the more stored nutrients you will remove with your pruning cuts, and the greater the negative impact it will have on subsequent tree growth. This is very detrimental to your goal of filling in tree space and reaching above the top trellis wire.

We still have time to remove as much wood as possible from the top of your trees so light can penetrate the interior of your trees. Remove large upper limbs through renewal pruning. For **mature high-density systems** you never remove more than 2-3 large branches per year to avoid shifting the tree into vegetative mode. However, some growers should break this rule this year. If you did not prune last year, or you have done a bad job the years before and have left too many big branches, you need to stretch this rule and **remove 4 (or even 5)** branches to enable light to reach the bottom of the tree.

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.

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