



“Fruit Facts” – Wednesday, April 23rd, 2025

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Twilight Meeting to be held **TOMORROW Thursday April 24th at Blue Barn Cider in Monroe county**

The Twilight Meetings are a series of monthly meetings, where we examine seasonal changes in tree fruit and berry crop phenology, discuss and demonstrate scouting and monitoring for insects and diseases, and provide integrated pest management solutions to maximize the health and productivity of berry and tree fruit plantings.

Our first **Twilight meeting** of 2025 will be held 7-8:30pm on **Thursday April 24th**. Please **arrive at 6:30pm** for pizza and soda. Thank you to Valent for providing refreshments!

Location: Blue Barn Cidery, 928 Manitou Rd, Hilton, NY

1.5 DEC credits will be offered in categories 1a, 10, and 22.

Feel free to bring pictures or descriptions of pests you are concerned about on your farm.

No pre-registration required; **event is free to attend**.

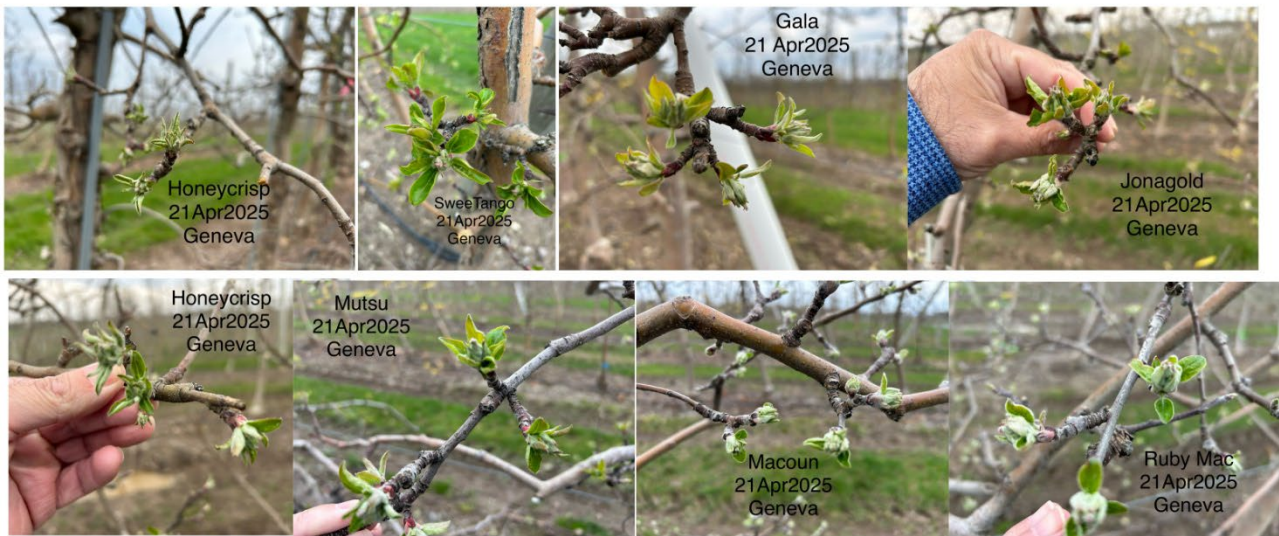
Twilight meetings will be held from 7:00PM - 8:30PM on the last Thursday of every month from April through July. Watch for new meeting locations every month, and keep up to date at our website (lof.cce.cornell.edu).

Phenology Updates

Phenology Update for Wednesday, April 23:

Yesterday and on Monday LOF visited several blocks located in Ontario, Niagara, Orleans, and Wayne Counties. Bud development continued progressing slowly with the nice temps close to 55-60°F of the last few days. After several visits we only found one cluster of Zestar at the very early stage of pink (only one bud/block at early pink in the entire LOF region!). Most of the buds photographed were 5/8-3/4 inch. There were different degrees of tight cluster from early tight cluster to tight cluster (review several pictures included this morning). The biggest at 7/8", but nothing of pink yet. We don't expect to be at the early stage of pink on Honeycrisp and Gala until next Tuesday or Wednesday in early sites.

Early apple bud phenology stages in Geneva experimental plots visited on Monday April 21.



Early apple bud phenology stages in Niagara blocks visited on Tuesday April 22.



Early apple bud phenology stages in Orleans blocks visited on Tuesday April 22.



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Photo credits: Elizabeth Tee

To Do Today

- **Scab infection predicted for Friday.** Most locations across the region have ~5-10% ascospore release predicted for Friday; **plan to put a scab protection spray (for example “Captzeb”, Captan, or Mancozeb) on all apple blocks on Thursday this week.** Growers in Oswego county are predicted to have <5% ascospore release (you could consider using a biopesticide instead).
 - Avoid Captan if you have applied or plan to apply oil within 10 days
 - Thursday looks like a good spray day.
- We saw pear psylla this week. **If you have historically high psylla populations** consider applying Actara, Centaur, Delegate, Esteem, Exirel or Sivanto Prime (or check the tree fruit recommends for other options).
- **Tarnished plant bug** was seen this week – if you had a history of economically important TPB damage in your blocks last year, consider a pink application this spring. Some highly effective products for TPB include many of the pyrethroids (i.e. Asana, Baythroid, Danitol, Mustang Max, Warrior II, etc) and Beleaf.
- **White prunicola scale insects** are prevalent in many stone fruit blocks. Scout by looking for white “shell-like” scale insects along scaffold branches and trunks.
 - Read your oil label – you may still be able to apply oil to manage scale populations in some crops and using some products.
 - Otherwise, Esteem, Centaur and Senstar can be applied as a cover spray when the nymphs (“crawlers”) are emerging later this summer.
- **Be ready to deploy mating disruptors!** Those need to go out before the flight of the target species begins, so for OFM (and the CM/ORM combo) the timing to deploy disruptors is **now**. DWB/PTB mating disruption can go out in a month or so.

- **Bud union height for new plantings established with Geneva® rootstocks:** When establishing a cultivar of medium vigor like Gala or a more vigorous cultivar like Fuji, please use a minimum bud union height of 6-7 inches above the ground (Figure 1). For weaker cultivars like Honeycrisp or NY-1, please use not less than 4-5 inches.



Figure 1: Medium and high vigor cultivars on Geneva® stocks should be planted with a minimum bud union height of 5-7 inches above the ground.

- **Prune out the big wood (the doggies!) and favor the production of more fine/open/shorter/flat fruiting units (the filete mignon!):** Several growers finished or are close to finish the pruning of Gala blocks. Some pruning crews have left big wood in the middle portion of mature canopies (Figure 2). If possible, please come back to some of those blocks and remove the ‘doggies’ before it is too late.



Figure 2. A large branch (a doggie!) removed via pruning.

- **The pruning for younger (future 2-D plantings spaced in-row around 24-26-28-32 inches), should be done by removing any branch that is too long, or too tick, or that has a very narrow crotch angle when compared to the main trunk (Figure 3):** Always leave a stub (at least 1-2 fingers length) and much longer (4-fingers length) especially for Honeycrisp and NY-1 trees to secure shoot renewal.



Figure 3: For younger plantings (years 1-3) you should always prune out any branch that outcompetes the main leader and favor the development of more **flat/open** fruiting units as seen in the left picture. Envision the production of a more ‘**tubular**’ or ‘**telephone post**’ tree filled a well textured/soft fruiting canopy (loaded with flower buds from top to bottom!).

On The Horizon

- **If you experienced a fire blight outbreak last year, consider an application of Kudos this year at pink.** This is especially important on farms where Strep Resistant *Erwinia* has been found in the past. A **pink application** of prohexadione-calcium (**Kudos, Apogee, etc.**) at 2 oz/100 gal mixed with 1oz /100 acibenzolar S-methyl (Actigard) will both slow vigorous growth of the tree, but maybe even more importantly will thicken the cell walls making it more difficult for *Erwinia* to colonize.
- **Mites** have been seen already this year. Consider applying an ovicidal acaricide (**Apollo, Savey/Onager, Zeal**), either just before or after bloom. Alternatively, you could apply a rescue-type product after bloom (i.e. Acramite, Carzol, Kanemite, Nexter, and Portal).
- You may also want to consider a **pink insecticide application** if you have a history of damage from **rosy apple aphid**. Some highly effective products for RAA include Exirel, Versys Inscalis, Sivanto Prime, Actara and Assail. If you apply a pyrethroid for TPB, that would also help control RAA. However, we recommend you target RAA with one of these other non-pyrethroid materials, in order to preserve all your beneficial natural enemies.
- **Time to start thinking and getting ready your frost protection devices:** Apple growers should check and test the use of frost protection devices (wind machines) next week. Typically, a wind machine can protect 10 acres or so. We emphasize that the best methods to reduce frost risk and prevent crop loss are through **orchard site selection** and the use of wind machines during frost events.
- **Site location matters for new plantings:** New stone and pome fruit plantings will be more prone to future frost events if located in low-lying areas where cold air settles, and in areas where wind and air movement are blocked by obstructions such as trees, hills, fences, and or buildings.
- **Do you have enough PGRs?**
- **Promalin use to improve shape (typiness) of Delicious and Gala:** Use promalin (concentration 25-50ppm; rate of formulated product 1/2pt/100 gal) early king bloom to 50% bloom (well before full bloom!). Apply as a fine mist using 50-100 gallons/acre. Don't apply more than 2 pt/acre. Fruit thinning may occur at high rates. Use of a surfactant increases both typiness and thinning responses.
- **Consider the use of Apogee at pink for suppression of bitter pit in Honeycrisp.**

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 2025. 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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