



# Fruit FAX

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

From FAX: 585-798-5191

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**The weather forecast** is for a high temp today in the low 60's, with showers and very windy! Tomorrow will be cooler as the winds turn back from the north to the 40's but mostly sunny and not so windy – another good spray day. Then back to hi 60's – low 70's for Thursday and Friday with more showers in the forecast and very windy for those 2 days. Another cool down for the weekend.

**Meeting Notice:** As a follow up to the in-depth school, Terence Robinson and Mario Miranda Sazo will conduct a series of "Precision Orchard Management" field workshops this year.

**Tuesday April 23, 3-5pm: Precision Nutrient Management** - Field meeting activity for all WNY fruit growers and consultants at Lamont Fruit Farm (12703 Stillwater Rd., Waterport, Orleans County)

**Wednesday May 1, 3-5pm: Precision Chemical Thinning** - Training class offered at NYSAES in Geneva (Jordan Hall) on for all consultants and WNY growers interested to implement the "Precision Thinning" approach. This is an improved method of conducting chemical thinning that utilizes both the carbohydrate model as a tool for predicting response prior to application of chemical thinners and the fruit growth rate model for early assessment of thinning response immediately after application.

## **Pest Management Notes...**

**Apple scab:** Now that we have reached green tip in most locations on McIntosh, primary scab season has begun and the warm temperatures today with showers will likely result in the first scab infection of the year. Yesterday was a great day for copper applications in varieties with fire blight established and where there was some green tissues starting to poke out of the buds – this is your first scab spray and it should be good for about 5 days this week. But the showers in the forecast will likely force you to look for another spray window to protect the rest of the varieties that will push to green tip later this week. Wednesday looks great! You can tell I have changed my philosophy about spraying for apple scab – I will not wait to see if a scab infection has occurred to start to apply fungicides in a post-infection mode. With the weaknesses in our fungicides and the fungicide resistance situation, it is more critical to apply scab fungicides on a protectant basis before a possible infection. A protectant program is often more rigorous on a 5-7 day interval, but more effective and less expensive in the end.

Your options after copper include mancozeb, captan or combination of captan + mancozeb. But you will still get into some situations when you need to add some alternatives early in the season where you are fighting a lot of overwintering scab such as Syllit at 2 pt/acre (if no resistance detected on your farm) plus mancozeb (3 lb/a) or Captan 80 (2.5 lb/a), that will only reach back 18-24 hours. (Do not mix Syllit with copper or chlorpyrifos insecticides because nozzle clogging may result.) But if intervals get stretched early in the season, Vanguard or Scala with mancozeb and/or captan will reach back about 48 hours (do not stretch it to 72 hours!). As we get a bit more green leaf tissue at half-inch green, your options expand to include the DMI's (Inspire Super, Indar, Rally, etc) or the strobilurines (Flint, Sovran, Cabrio) with a focus on controlling both powdery mildew and scab. Sulfur continues to be effective for control of powdery mildew when started early by tight cluster.

**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 24-48 hour REI has expired. The REI will depend on the copper formulation you are using. Leave pruning stubs about 6-8 inches long especially if pruning branches on the central leader and larger branches of sweet cherry trees.

**Pears:** Pear psylla adults have been active. We scouted a couple orchards yesterday, finding 40 - 90 egg in 10 spurs. Psylla have just begun in pears closer to the lake but we have had a few more warm days in inland sites. There is no frost in the forecast. Tomorrow will be better to apply oil at 2 gallons per 100 gallons dilute 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; use 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. Insecticide options pre-bloom for pear psylla include Esteem, Actara, Assail, Calypso, Centaur, or Delegate but read the labels for the higher rates generally needed for pear psylla control and any adjuvant that may be needed.

### ***Horticulture Notes...***

**Getting ready to plant?** 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.

**Planting Depth for Tall Spindle Systems** (Mike Fargione, Hudson Valley Lab.): Proper rootstock depth is a critical task in planting trees in the Tall Spindle System (TSS). Planting too deep could leave you fighting excess vigor for years to come. The recommendation for the TSS is to plant so that the graft union is 6" above the ground level once the soil has settled. Several growers have indicated that they are planting "NY1" slightly deeper than this because of the cultivar's low vigor. We are still developing experience with this cultivar, and this is the first year when significant numbers of trees are being planted. However, I suspect this deeper planting depth may be a good strategy, but be careful not to go too far. I would leave at least 3-4" of rootstock exposed on this cultivar.

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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