

The Need for a More Accurate Crop Estimate

Mario Miranda Sazo

Cornell Cooperative Extension,

Lake Ontario Fruit Program



The Problem? Opportunity?

- We experienced an over-estimation of crop size earlier this past season
- By July 25 2014, the NY crop was estimated at 30 million bushels
- At harvest some experienced growers miscalculated their own crop and were off by a minimum of 15% to 40% in some cases
- Estimates generally came from only a small number of growers and packers
- There was a relatively high cost to some growers (or to the overall industry) of reporting inflated crop estimations which may have had negative effect on prices



Why should a more accurate NY crop estimate matter?

- Because **NY growers, packers/shippers, marketers** have all greatly **improved** their productivity, fruit quality, and marketing expertise which now require a more **refined crop estimate** to remain **competitive and profitable**
- Early and accurate estimations are important for **planning purposes** for **H2A workers**, for **picking & packing supplies**, for housing repairs, trucking arrangements, etc
- Because NY crop production have the **greatest impact** in the East
- Because there are several non-bearing blocks that will be in full production in the near future and we should start **getting ready**
- It matters because we can give to **buyers and consumers good information** about variety offerings, potential fruit size, color development, fruit quality, and even level of sugars
- We can properly **“buzz” our crop** and confidently bring buyer and consumer **attention** every year



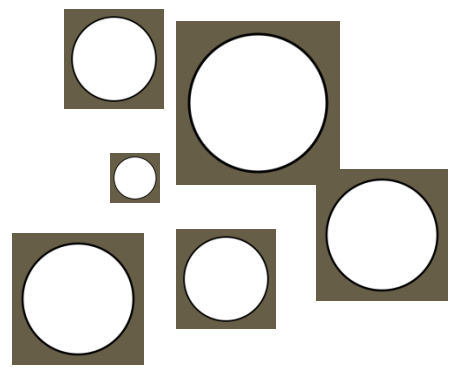
Could a crop estimate system (or a tool, protocol) be implemented to improve the situation?

- The Cornell fruit team (Lake Ontario, Champlain, Hudson) could **contribute** along with NYAA, consultants and grower cooperators to give a more accurate estimate of the crop by the middle of July 2015 (a more realistic /objective view or crop scenario)
- There is a **risk** of backlash if we are wrong in 2015
- However, it may **fulfills a service** to give more accurate information to the entire NY apple industry in 2015 and following years

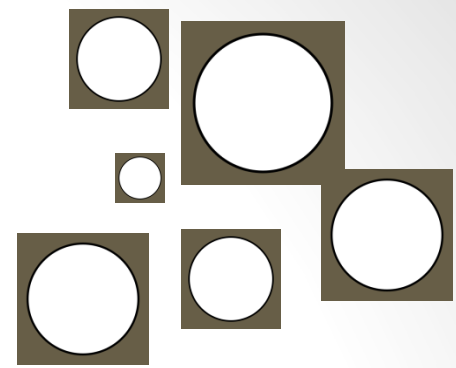


Fruit Counts @ June and a Statewide Electronic Survey

- Choose varieties based on: acreage, processing/fresh, and bloom date period

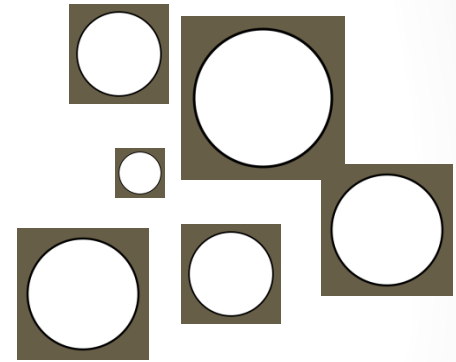


Niagara/Orleans Team

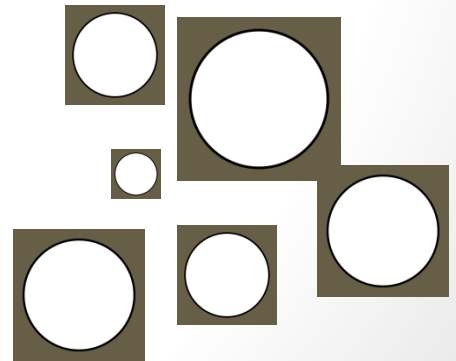


Wayne Team

VARIETY	BLOOM DATE
Empire	Early
Macs	Early
Idared	Early
Honeycrisp	Medium
Cortland	Medium
Gala	Medium
Red Del.	Medium
Golden Del.	Late
Fuji	Late
Romes	Late



Champlain Team



Hudson Team



IDEA in BRIEF

The Problem

In 2014 we experienced an **over-estimation of crop size early in the season**. By July 25 2014, the NY crop was estimated at 30 million bushels

The estimates generally came from only a small number of growers and packers and did not fully represent the NY apple crop

As a result, there was a relatively high cost to the overall health of the NY apple industry of reporting inflated crop estimations which may have had negative effect on prices

The Benefits

NY growers, packers/shippers, marketers have all greatly **improved their productivity, fruit quality, and marketing expertise** which now require a better crop estimate to remain **competitive and profitable** the following years

The Proposed Solution

To **collaborate and put in practice a practical crop estimate methodology** (fruit counts of some strategically important cultivars @ June and an electronic survey) that involves the participation of CCE personnel, NYAA, consultants, and growers from the three main production regions in NY State

Discussion...

Ideas...



2015 CCE LOF Winter Pruning and Orchard Mechanization Tour

- Thursday Feb. 12 (8:30am-2pm, lunch included)

