



UMassAmherst Outreach UMass Extension

# Healthy Fruit

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Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Fruit Program

## Healthy Fruit, Issue 18, October 10, 2007

[http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/healthy\\_fruit/](http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/healthy_fruit/)

### Apple Maturity Report

Well the unusually warm fall weather seems to have put many apples in a 'suspended state of animation.' It almost seems like the apples don't know it is fall and are hanging on to summer, quite literally. Recently picked Macoun do not have that deep purple/red color one would expect by early October according to one grower. Another noted that Gala never developed good flavor this year. Cameo are normally good by Columbus Day, but this year they are green and bland to date. I have noticed that Golden Delicious and Jonagold seem very good this year, so it is not an across-the-board phenomena. Hopefully we will get some cooler weather soon to wrap up the 2007 harvest. Following are some recent apple maturity testing results at the UMass Cold Spring Orchard in Belchertown. Note that I also publish apple maturity testing results on the UMass Fruit Advisor here:

- <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/clements/articles/2007apple/index.html>

J. Clements

date	variety	drop	size (in.)	color (%red)	firmness (lb.)	soluble solids	starch index	taste	disorders	comments
10-Oct	Red Delicious	yes	3.3	99	14.4	13	5	good, for Delicious	none	very loose
08-Oct	Golden Delicious ('Gibson' cv.)	nil	3.1	yellow	13.2	13	7	very good, sweet	some fly speck	
08-Oct	Cameo	nil	3.2	55 (weak)	16.6	12	4	green, a bit bland	color lacking, variable crop load	1/2 rate ReTain (early)
08-Oct	Golden Glory	nil	3.1	yellow	15	14	7	very good, sweet	some fly speck	very nice, smooth skin, Gold. Del. type
08-Oct	Topaz	nil	3.3	90	17.2	14	6	tart, not sweet, rather complex	some end rot; color lacking on some fruit/trees	flat shape; scab-resistant; interesting
05-Oct	Royal Empire	nil	2.7	95	19.5	13	5	good	small, not thinned enough	1/2 rate ReTain (early)
05-Oct	Jonagold ('Morren's Supra')	nil	3.4	65	14	13.5	6.5	very good	some bitter pit, insect injury, RAA	1/2 rate ReTain (early); lacking color on over-cropped trees

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR: New England Vegetable & Fruit Conference slated for December 11,12,13**

The New England Vegetable & Fruit Conference, which is now co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Fruit Growers' Association, is scheduled for December 11,12 and 13, 2007 at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, NH. There will be four tree fruit sessions: Stone Fruit on the afternoon of December 11, and morning and afternoon Apple sessions on December 12. In addition, there will be a special Organic Apple session on the morning of December 11. Please make plans to attend this premier meeting for fruit and vegetable growers in New England. For more information, visit the Conference website:

- [http://www.newenglandvfc.org/about\\_the\\_conference.html](http://www.newenglandvfc.org/about_the_conference.html)

J. Clements

## **2008 Apple Crop Insurance Meetings**

I am in the middle of pulling together a couple 2008 Apple Crop Insurance Meetings tentatively scheduled for November 5 and 6, one to be in western MA, the other to be in central MA. Charles Koines, an independent crop insurance consultant (and formerly with USDA's Risk Management Agency) will give a presentation on the 2008 Apple Crop Insurance Program. I hope to have one or two other speakers on related topics. I know crop insurance is a controversial subject, but recent changes to the apple program make it worth looking at more closely and upgrading your coverage if warranted. If I am not mistaken, crop insurance has become a must-have if you ever expect to collect on any federal disaster payments in the future. (Hopefully we won't have one.) I will be sending out more information in the near future, but I hope you can plan on making it to one of these meetings. Also, I thought you might find the attached article from Win Cowgill of interest -- indeed (relative) disaster does strike from time-to-time.

J. Clements

## **A few orchard 'put-to-bed' chores**

Briefly, here are a few important items to take care of after harvest and before the snow flies:

- All orchards should get a good (flail) mowing to reduce vole habitat and apple scab inoculum.
- An orchard middle/sod spray of 2,4-D (Weedar 64, 1 qt/acre, Unison 2 qt/acre) will eliminate dandelions next year.
- A fall application of herbicide to the tree rows will give a jump start to weed control for next year -- recommended products include Princep, Kerb 50WP, Solicam 80DF, Surflan4S, Devrinol 50DF, or Prowl H2O, all to be mixed with 2,4-D (Weedar 64 or Unison) or Roundup depending on the weeds present (grass, broadleaf, perennial).
- Apples might benefit from a foliar nutrient application *during/after* leaf fall if you can get it done -- the mix includes nitrogen (urea @ 5 lbs/100 gal) and zinc (1 qt zinc chelate). If you are boron-deficient, a spray of solubor (1-2 lbs/100 gal) *before* the leaves drop would help.
- For peach leaf curl, a fall application of fungicide after leaf fall means one less thing to do in the spring -- use copper (see product label for rates) or Bravo Weatherstik 6F (3-4 pt/acre). Note that anecdotal evidences suggest the Bravo Weatherstik *may* increase flower bud hardiness.
- Paint trunks of young apple trees and all stone fruit with white latex paint diluted 50/50 with water to protect against southwest injury.

J. Clements

## **Guest article: Are You Covered if Hail or Disaster Strikes Your Farm?**

Win Cowgill, County Agricultural Agent, Kris Smolenski, Program Assistant in Agriculture, Rutgers Cooperative Extension

**In August, 2007**, a disastrous hail storm hit a two square mile area of Hunterdon County New Jersey. Fruit, vegetable, nursery, flower and field crop growers were severly impacted with crop losses of up to 95% in some cases. We estimate the crop loss to be in the millions of dollars. Many growers had no crop insurance coverage.

We are working on a disaster declaration through the Farm Service Agency and the Governor's office. Of concern to growers is the proposed conditions in the new FARM Bill under consideration by congress. If growers did not have at least the minimum CAT or NAP coverage **they may not eligible** for assistance even if a disaster declaration is declared.

***Do not let four minutes of hail change your life, explore crop insurance this fall and at the bare minimum obtain CAT and or NAP coverage!***

**CAT and NAP** - Catastrophic or CAT crop insurance is the minimum coverage available that is subsidized 100% by the federal government. This plan costs a producer \$100 in administrative fees, per crop per county. Producers are given a maximum guarantee based on their actual production history. Actual production histories are calculated by taking the last four successive years of a grower's records and averaging them together. If no records are available from the farm, the county averages will be utilized. Catastrophic crop insurance is sold by private insurance agencies. For more information or a list of insurance agents, contact Kris Smolenski of the Garden State Crop Insurance Education Initiative at 1-800-308-2449. (In Massachusetts, see: <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/riskmgmt/08ciagentsma.pdf>)

CAT pays 55% of the USDA's established price of the commodity when crop losses exceed 50% of the set guarantee. This means you have to have lost over 50% of your guaranteed yield and will only get paid 55% of the price election. This is a low level of protection against yield loss.

The Farm Service Agency has a similar program to CAT crop insurance. It is called the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program or NAP. To be eligible for NAP, crops must be uninsurable under the CAT policy. Contact a crop insurance agent if you have questions regarding whether a crop is insurable in your county. Like CAT, NAP protects against natural disasters and covers losses greater than 50% of the crop's expected production, based on the approved yield and reported acreage. Also like CAT, NAP only pays 55% of the average market price for the specific commodity established by the FSA state committee. To apply for coverage or for further information regarding NAP, contact your local FSA office.

### ***UMass 'Mass Aggie' Home Garden Series***

You, or some of your customers may be interested in attending one of these upcoming Seminars For more information, go to the Mass Aggie Seminars website: <http://www.massaggieseminars.org/>

### ***Make Your Own Sweet Apple Cider***

**Date:** October 20, 2007

**Location:** UMass Cold Spring Orchard, Belchertown, MA

**Time:** 9:00 AM - Noon

**Instructor:** Dr. Duane Greene, University of Massachusetts

**Tuition = \$60**

*cont. on reverse....*

***Hard Cider from Sweet Apple Cider***

**Date:** October 20, 2007

**Location:** UMass Cold Spring Orchard, Belchertown, MA

**Time:** 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Instructor:** Dr. Duane Greene, University of Massachusetts

**Tuition = \$40**

*Note: this will be the last Healthy Fruit for 2008. We hope you have found it helpful in managing your orchard this year. As always, if you have any suggestions for improving Healthy Fruit please get in touch with us. We look forward to seeing you in 2008.*

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