



# Healthy Fruit

Volume 13, 2005

Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Fruit Team






Issue 4, April 26, 2005

## Current DD Accumulations

Location	Base 32F	Base 43F	Base 50F
Belchertown, UMass CSO observed (01/01/05 – 04/25/05)	--	244	118
Belchertown, SkyBit E-Weather (01/01/05 – 04/25/05)	--	216	--
Belchertown, UMass CSO observed (04/15/05 – 04/25/05)	225 (11*)	--	--
Belchertown, SkyBit E-Weather (04/15/05 – 04/25/05)	(1*)	--	--

•  $\frac{3}{8}$  mature spores

## Current Bud Stages

Location	McIntosh apple	Honeycrisp apple	Pear	Blazing Star Peach	Chelan sweet cherry
Belchertown UMass CSO (04/25/05)					
	late tight cluster	late tight cluster	green cluster	early bloom	bloom

Current bud stages also available on UMass Fruit Advisor, <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/>

## Upcoming Meetings/Events

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Time	Information
May 10	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting	Pine Hill Orchard, Colrain, MA	5:30 PM	Jon Clements 413-478-7219
May 12	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting	Tougas Family Farm, Northboro, MA	5:30 PM	Jon Clements 413-478-7219

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## **The way I see it**

Last weekend saw 2-3 inches of rain in most of Massachusetts and the first scab infection period of the season. (See graph on last page.) Most got a combination fungicide/oil spray on last week, however, if you did not, or coverage was lacking, you will be back on the tractor this week. More rain is predicted for the upcoming week. Stone fruit (peaches and cherries) are in early bloom, and thankfully, there is no frost in the forecast. Apples will be close to early pink by the end of the week, so, when will bloom be? Let's predict Mothers Day, which is early this year. J. Clements

## **Weather, scab and literary delusions**

“There is a sumptuous variety about the New England weather that compels the stranger's admiration--and regret. ... It gets through more business in spring than in any other season. In the spring I have counted one hundred and thirty-six different kinds of weather inside of four-and-twenty hours.” Mark Twain

Samuel Clemens lived in Hartford, CT for much of his adult life, and understood the weather situation here pretty well. It was a week ago that we were going through burning bans in Massachusetts. As a result of the dry weather, scab inoculum development was a little slower than degree days would predict. But all that has changed.

I feel that in most areas where tree growth had reached tight cluster, there was plenty of mature inoculum. In areas which were still at half inch green, scab inoculum was probably very low at the beginning of the rain over the weekend. There was enough wetting to lead to infection throughout the state.

What if an orchard was at early tight cluster and didn't have scab last year? If there was no fungicide on the trees, what was the risk of scab infection over the weekend? My best guess, and it's only that, is that there was a moderate to low risk. Depending on how concerned a grower is about a moderate risk of a light infection, they may ignore it or apply a sterol inhibitor with a protectant.

The protectant fungicides such as captan, Dithane, and Polyram, work on the surface of leaves. So, as leaves grow, it dilutes the fungicide concentration. If there are heavy rains, such as we had last weekend, then fungicide is washed from the leaves. This early in the season, it is not likely that trees that were protected with these materials lost all protection during the rain. However, if applications were made last Thursday and Friday, more protection will be needed this coming Thursday and Friday, particularly if lower rates were used.

By now, all areas have moved into the middle of scab season. For the next couple of weeks, there will be plenty inoculum, and a conservative approach to scab management should be followed. On the other hand, it may just snow!. D. Cooley

## **Fabraea leaf spot and pear scab**

Fabraea leaf spot on pears has been troublesome the past couple of wet years, even leading to defoliation in severe cases late in the season. You need to have some fungicide protection on pears now to prevent these diseases from getting a foothold. (Similar to apple scab.) EBDC fungicides (except Polyram, which is not labeled for pears) and Sovran or Flint are effective on both diseases. J. Clements

## **Blossom blight of stone fruit a concern**

As mentioned, peaches, plums, and cherries are at or approaching bloom. Blossom blight, caused by the brown rot fungus, is a concern when rain and temperatures in the 60's coincide. One or two (and sometimes three) fungicide sprays during stone fruit bloom are necessary to

keep brown at bay. Best options for control include the SI fungicides Indar, Nova, Orbit, and Elite. A Captan and Topsin-M tank mix (peaches and plums) also works. J. Clements

### Apple pink: good time for pre-bloom nutrient spray

Tight cluster to pink bud stage in apples is a good time to apply a foliar nutrient spray. These pre-bloom nutrient applications can be used to supplement ground fertilizer applications, and will give the trees a ‘boost’ during this critical period of growth and fruit set. A basic pre-bloom foliar tank mix includes:

- Urea (<0.25% biuret ‘feed grade’) @ 3 lbs/100 gal
- Solubor® @ 1 lb/100 gal
- EDTA zinc chelate @ label rates

J. Clements

### Apple scab infection period at UMass Cold Spring Orchard, Belchertown

