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**EXTENSION**

# Healthy Fruit

Volume 14, 2006

Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Fruit Program

## Healthy Fruit, Issue 5, May 2, 2006






<http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/>

### Current DD accumulations

	Base 32F	Base 43F	Base 50F
Belchertown, UMass CSO observed (01/01/06 – 05/01/06)		333	152
Belchertown, UMass CSO SkyBit (01/01/06 – 05/01/06)		317	
Belchertown, UMass CSO observed (04/10/06 [GT] – 05/01/06)	431 [47]*		

\*[47] = % mature apple scab spores

### Current bud stages

Location	McIntosh apple	Honeycrisp apple	Pear	Redhaven peach	Cavalier sweet cherry
Belchertown, UMass CSO (05/01/06)					
	late pink	late pink	90% bloom	bloom	bloom

### Upcoming meetings/events

Date	Meeting/ event	Location	Time	Information
May 9	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting	Apex Orchard Shelburne, MA	5:30 PM	Jon Clements 413-478-7219
May 10	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting	Smolak Farms North Andover, MA	5:30 PM	Jon Clements 413-478-7219
May 11	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting	C.N. Smith Farm, Inc. East Bridgewater, MA	5:30 PM	Jon Clements 413-478-7219

## **All's quiet during bloom? – J. Clements**

All's fairly quiet as we approach apple bloom -- be sure to have bee hives in place as soon as king bloom opens and do not apply any insecticides during bloom (see exception below). Also, see Dan Cooley's fireblight article.

It's a good time for a ground application of fertilizer. Many Massachusetts apple orchards do not need additional ground-applied nitrogen, except for young trees, but potassium is (almost) always necessary. Micro-nutrients are generally applied to the foliage on an as-needed basis determined by leaf analyses. The exception is calcium sprays, which should begin after petal-fall. For more information on fertilization, see F-124 Nutrient Recommendations for Apples:

- <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/factsheets/nutrients.htm>

As opposed to apples, all peaches should be getting some ground nitrogen. Attached is a fact sheet by Win Cowgill on peach fertilization guidelines. If you have any questions, let me know.

- <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/clements/2006peachfert.pdf>

Briefly, growers that have a consistent bloom/post-bloom injury problem with tarnished plant bug or sawfly may want to try an application of Assail insecticide at 2.5 oz/acre. It is actually registered for use during bloom as long as bees are not actively foraging -- i.e., apply during early morning or night/evening. Assail has good activity against both these pests, and may be particularly useful in mixed blocks with different bloom times. Unfortunately, it won't do much for curculio so you will still rely on post-bloom insecticides for this pest.

## **Special guest at May 10 Twilight Meeting**

Attached is the May Fruit Twilight Meetings announcement. Note that on May 10, at Smolak Farms, special guest David Epstein, Boston Channel 5 meteorologist, will be presented with a special award and give a talk on "weather matters for fruit growers." Please join us for this special meeting. Below is a short solicitation from Mo Tougas who organized the event:

Good morning!

Cool morning, not cold enough. Whew!!! I hope everyone had a less cold than predicted morning.

Speaking of cool mornings... We have succeeded in convincing Dave Epstein, weekend weatherman from Channel 5 to speak at the May 10 twilight meeting at Mike Smolak's farm in North Andover. If you'll remember, Dave was the weatherman who was so helpful last October in encouraging viewers to visit apple orchards after all those rainy days. The MFGA board had voted to award Dave the newly created Ron Prokopy Friend Of Massachusetts Fruit Growers Award. We will be presenting Dave with a nice John Deere clock to help him remember us. I plan on also giving him a gift certificate to my farm. If you would like to do the same, bring one along on the tenth, or mail it to be ASAP. (246 Ball St, Northboro, MA 01532) I'm thinking something in the \$20 range would be nice. With that he could pick up a peck of apples. If he gets a good number of them, he might give them to other staff at channel five.....Who would then have something to talk about....You get my gist....

Dave will be speaking at the meeting as well, (that's how you get these guys to your garden club, etc. Along with a few bucks) I've asked him to speak about frost predictions, hail, etc.,

all the things we like to think about. Point is, let's try to have a good turnout to thank him. If he could leave our meeting having met a group of positive, upbeat, successful growers, who have lots to offer his viewers in terms of products and experiences, .....

Goal is to make and maintain a contact like this in the media every year.

Mo

## ***Healthy Fruit Disease Elements***

**It's been a quiet week.** Weather wise, it has been dry this week, and relatively cool, so disease pressure has been relatively low. So, there haven't been any significant new infection periods until today and tomorrow (May 2 – 3). For some spots in the East and South, rain and wetting may have begun yesterday.

During the past week, scab inoculum continued to mature, and will be, or has been, released with the rain. This should be a significant infection period. Without rain in the past week, existing protection going into this infection depends on the timing of the last spray and growth since then. Because growth was slow applications applied since the last wetting should be adequate going into this one.

Peach blossoms have opened in many areas. Where they have, a spray for blossom blight is needed to make sure that the interior of blooms are either protected, or will be treated with a post-infection fungicide.

**New York brown rot fungicide resistance.** You'd think that in a state well-known for taking its time to register pesticides that resistance might be relatively less likely. Maybe it's because Cornell researchers are out looking hard for fungicide resistance, or maybe it's because New York growers are so glad when a fungicide is registered that they don't use any other kind for awhile. Anyway, SCAFFOLDS reports this week (Dave Rosenberger and Wolfram Koeller) that brown rot that is resistant to Indar and Orbit has been found in New York. Since these fungicides are sterol inhibitors, it should come as no big surprise. And as with SI-resistant apple scab, the shift in brown rot has been gradual. That means that failures show up slowly, rather than as a complete collapse of control. Where resistance is developing, the grower will be doing the same sort of spray program that has been done for years, but will see significantly more brown rot on fruit. The solution to this is, obviously, to drop Indar or Orbit and substitute other chemicals in the brown rot program. Last week's *HEALTHY FRUIT* listed brown rot fungicides.

**Bloomin' fire blight!** Pears are already well into bloom in most of southern New England, and apples will soon follow. Over the next week, as most apple trees come into full bloom will be the first significant risk period for fire blight. That is, because trees are in bloom they are more susceptible to fire blight. However, tree growth stage isn't all that matters. The fire blight bacteria have to be present in large enough numbers to cause a problem. That just isn't the way it is this year.

The relatively cool temperatures to this point have kept fire blight risk at bloom low, except in those blocks that have carry-over inoculum from last season. Jon Clements ran both the Maryblyt and the Cougar Blight predictions of fire blight risk through the weekend. Both show

very low risk of infections. The build-up of fire blight bacteria, according to MaryBlyt, doesn't reach levels that warrant application of streptomycin. Similarly, Cougar Blight shows a very low risk of infection in all blocks except where fire blight was present last year. In those blocks, risk is low over the present wetting period, and drops to very low as the weather dries

While these are Cold Spring Orchard data, they should be similar for southern New England in general. Growers should also take into account the value of what they have, and it's susceptibility to the disease. So, a Honeycrisp block where there was some blight last season might be worth a strep spray this year. But that's the only that's the only sort of block where streptomycin would be worthwhile, and even there it's a very conservative approach.

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