



UMassAmherst Outreach UMass Extension

Healthy Fruit

Volume 15, 2007

Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Fruit Program






Healthy Fruit, Issue 5, May 1, 2007

http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/healthy_fruit/

Current DD accumulations

Location	Base 43F	Base 50F
Belchertown, UMass CSO observed (01/01/07 – 04/30/07)	300	154
Belchertown, UMass CSO SkyBit (01/01/07 – 04/30/07)	209	NA

Current bud stages

Location	McIntosh apple	Honeycrisp apple	Bartlett Pear	Redhaven peach	Cavalier sweet cherry
Belchertown, UMass CSO (04/30/07)					
	tight-cluster	early tight cluster	green cluster	pink	bud burst

More bud stages at: <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/clements/2007budstages/043007/043007.html>

Upcoming meetings/events

Date	Meeting/event	Location	Time	Information
May 15	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting	UMass Cold Spring Orchard , 391 Sabin St., Belchertown MA	5:30 PM	Jon Clements 413-478-7219
May 16	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting*	Brookdale Fruit Farm , 36 Broad St., Hollis, NH	5:15 PM	George Hamilton 603-641-6060
May 17	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting*	TBA , somewhere in Rhode Island	5:30 PM	Jon Clements 413-478-7219

Pesticide re-certification credits offered at each Fruit Team Twilight meeting. Please be on time to receive credit

* In cooperation with New Hampshire Fruit Growers' Assoc. and UNH Cooperative Extension

** In cooperation with Rhode Island Fruit Growers' Assoc.

The way I see it

Things are moving along and many growers will have peach bloom this week. I expect the first apple bloom sometime early-middle of next week based on the weather forecast. Speaking of which, after a period of wetting tonight and early tomorrow (heaviest in southern New England) the forecast is fair, dry, and seasonable with a warm-up by late weekend. No frost is predicted, although the air will be chilly, and I expect some light scattered frost later in the week in normally colder pockets.

Clearly there was an apple scab infection period late last week and most growers were covered up. But that protection is probably gone now. If there is a scab infection period coming up tonight-tomorrow, you should probably have some protectant fungicide on. It is a bit of a conundrum, however, as I don't see wetting in the forecast after that for another week. We are entering a phase of accelerated spore maturity and rapid leaf/green tissue expansion, so the danger of being unprotected and having a scab infection period tomorrow is not to be taken lightly. That being said, should you be uncomfortable about being adequately protected during this next wetting event, applying a fungicide with some kick-back after the wetting may be wise. The post-infection fungicides Scala or Vanguard would be good choices then.

Also, open peach blossoms are highly susceptible to brown rot/blossom blight infection. Any open bloom should have fungicide -- Bravo, Captan, Indar, Orbit, Elite, etc. -- protection with any wetting event. Treating for brown rot during bloom will help reduce problems later when fruit is ripening.

As far as insects go, it is still fairly quiet. Oil applications should be wrapping up as we are at tight cluster, with a maximum concentration of 1% at this time. If tarnished plant bug (TPB) is an issue, a pink spray when temperatures are in the 70's is the best control option. Pyrethroids are best on TPB but hard on beneficial insects. Peter Jentsch of Cornell's Hudson Valley Lab has posted a new video on insect control at pink:

<http://hudsonvf.cce.cornell.edu/galleryphotos/video/Pre-bloom.TPB,RAA,MPB.mov>

J. Clements.

2007 New England Tree Fruit Pest Management Guide (almost) available

We expect to have the print copy of the 2007 New England Tree Fruit Pest Management Guide in our hands in the next week or so. In the meantime, we are taking pre-orders for the printed Guide (hereafter known as NETFPMG or the Guide) and offering access right now to an on-line version. You can pre-order (and pre-pay) the NETFPMG and have access to the on-line version here:

<http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/2007netfpmg.html>

<http://fruit.umext.umass.edu/netfpmg/>

The price is \$35 (payable by credit card) and includes both the printed version (mailed to you as soon as it is available, hopefully very soon) and access to the on-line version. Note that the NETFPMG now includes stone fruit as well as apples. Despite it's lateness, we hope you will purchase and find it useful for the remainder of the growing season. J. Clements

Pruning peaches

Boom is a good time to prune peaches. For one thing, you know how many flowers you have for sure, and for another, pruning cuts heal rapidly at this time, helping to prevent canker infection. One caveat is that peach pruning should be done during a period of dry weather, at least three of four days, to give the cuts a chance to heal before wet weather could spread infection.

Some peach pruning points to keep in mind include:

- Tree shape and height is ultimately determined by the system -- be it open-center, central-leader,

or perpendicular-V. But some principles, including growing new wood and letting the light in are universal.

- Open-center trees should be maintained at a height of no more than 8 feet by pruning to outward-growing lateral branches. Perpendicular-V trees should be allowed to reach an optimum height by respecting apical dominance. Central leader peaches should be pruned similar to central leader apples using the principle of diameter-based pruning.
- Tree ‘openness’ should be maintained using thinning cuts of larger, older, lateral branches and laterals. Particular attention should be made to making sure light is evenly distributed in the tree canopy and reaches all portions of the fruiting area. Prune to desirable wood that is oriented outward and is evenly spaced.
- Attention should be placed on thinning out weak one- and two- year old wood in favor of pencil-size one year-old shoots that will produce the best peaches. Removing/renewal of older branches and laterals -- sometimes using stubbing cuts -- is the best way to rejuvenate the trees and produce the best new wood. Keeping light in the tree canopy is also critical to produce these quality fruit ‘hangers.’
- Although time consuming now, it will save much hand thinning time later -- assuming a good bloom, thin small laterals out with hand pruners to leave only the best hangers. You can almost prune to leave just enough lateral, fruiting wood to support the desired crop load, say about 300 peaches on mature, open-center trees.
- Finally, all dead and diseased wood must be removed -- it is just a source of canker/disease infection.

Steve Hoying of Cornell’s Hudson Valley Lab has written more details on peach pruning in this week’s Scaffolds Fruit Journal:

<http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/ent/scaffolds/2007/070430.html>

J. Clements



Un-thinned peach shoots (l.) vs. thinned peach shoots (r.). Note the pencil-diameter (app.) one-year old fruiting shoots

UMass Amherst is an affirmative action, equal-opportunity institution. UMass Amherst Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status.

This information is for educational purposes only. References to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by UMass Extension or bias against those not mentioned.