UMASS EXTENSION

Healthy Fruit

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Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Fruit Team

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Summer Meeting – July 24

REMINDER: The Annual Summer Meeting of the Massachusetts Fruit Growers' Association will be held on July 24 at Apex Orchards in Shelburne, Mass in cooperation with New England Fruit Consultant's Research & Demonstration Field Day. (see http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/ for more details). If you wish to partake of the barbeque lunch (provided free of charge), please contact New England Fruit Consultants at 413-367-9578 (voice), 413-367-0313 (fax), or nefcon@aol.com (email) by Thursday (July 17).

Apple Maggot Fly

So far, AMF captures remain quite low in all monitored blocks. Continue to check traps and withhold sprays until first female flies are captured.

Mites

Some evidence of rust mite (Aculus schlectendali) feeding has been noted in one monitored block. The injury manifests as a slight discoloration of the leaves. If you think red mites are small and hard to see, then rust mites are going to be a real issue for those of us who are "visually challenged". A hand lens is critical to see the rust mites which are tiny, and shaped like a comma. Generally rust mite damage does not get to the point that requires treatment, and it is even considered "good" in that rust mite feeding pre-conditions leaves to be less suitable for red mite feeding later.

Leafminers

No sites visited so far this week have leafminers populations requiring treatment for this first summer generation, and most mines are still in the treatable, sap-feeding stages. Continue to monitor leaf undersides for signs of mines.

Some orchards are seeing damage from a different leafminer (Lyonetia speculella) that causes brown trails, often on succulent watersprouts. The pupal stage can be recognized by the silken "hammocks" that the larvae spin on leaf undersides. We have rarely seen Lyonetia leafminers reach levels that would indicate a treatment is needed.

Japanese Beetles

Are showing up on time in quantity. Excessive feeding can reduce leaf area and reduce growth in young trees. Don't let them get out of hand – Guthion, Imidan, and Sevin are good control options, however, Asana and Danitol give excellent control. Beware some pesticides (Sevin, Asana) may be detrimental to mite predators, so weigh that in your decision to control and choice of spray chemical.

'Farmers Code of Good Practice'

While visiting orchards in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley last week during the IDFTA Summer Tour, I came across this sign attached to a grower's equipment shed. I thought it was a useful reminder on the 'good practices' we should all be following, and therefore repeat it here. (My comments in parentheses. JC)

Farmers Code of Good Practice for Pesticide Users in Agriculture

- Identify the pest, understand the stages in its life cycle, and determine if its numbers will cause economic damage. (i.e, good IPM)
- Consult the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries crop production guides and determine the appropriate pesticide, application rate, and pre-harvest interval. (Do you have your copy of the 2003-2004 New England Apple Pest Management Guide?)
- Use pesticides sparingly along with other methods of pest control. (Ditto IPM.)
- Read and follow all label directions and precautions. (State and federal law here.)
- Use only pesticides with a Pest Control Products Act Registration number on the label. (EPA Reg. #, again the law.)
- Transport pesticides safely according to Canadian and B.C. laws. (Regulated by state and federal government here.)
- Store pesticides in good containers with proper labels. The storage area must be locked, vented, and have a warning sign on the entrance. (If you don't have a good pesticide storage and mixing area, there is technical and financial help available from NRCS – contact your local USDA Service Center for details.)
- Use personal protective gear suited to the type of pesticide. (Dictated by the Worker Protection Standard, WPS.)
- Keep application equipment in good repair.
- Calibrate application equipment at least once a year.
- Notify neighbors of all pesticide application plans. (At least communicate with them annually.)
- Use pesticides carefully: by measuring accurately, by avoiding spills and splashes, and by reducing drift.
- Shower, clean application equipment and clean protective gear after use.
- Dispose of excess pesticides and pesticide containers safely according to accepted practices and B.C. (and U.S. and Massachusetts) laws.
- Keep people and livestock out of treated area for the recommended period of re-entry. (Again, dictated here by the label and WPS.)
- Keep accurate records off pesticide use. (Look into TracApple, a computerized pesticide record-keeping application, http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/trac/trac_apple.html)

Crop Insurance: Did You Know?

Crop insurance policy plans developed by the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) are sold and administered through private insurance companies. There are four types of crop insurance policies available in Massachusetts:

1. Actual Production History (APH)
2. Crop Revenue Coverage (CRC)
3. Dollar Plan
4. Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) Pilot Program

All these plans offer protection against unavoidable perils such as adverse weather, insects, and disease. Most plans allow the insured to tailor the amount and type of insurance to fit their specific needs. Many plans offer options for producers who raise specific crops where quality is critical. *The USDA subsidizes premiums for all crops.* Crop insurance is part of an integrated risk management program that incorporates a combination of risk management tools and concepts. For more information, contact your local crop insurance agent, or visit the USDA RMA web site, http://www.rma.usda.gov.