



Healthy Fruit

Volume 13, 2005

Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Fruit Team

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Upcoming Fruit Meetings/Events

| Date | Meeting/Event | Location | Time | Information |
|----------------------|---|--|------|----------------------------|
| December 13-15, 2005 | New England Vegetable and Fruit Conference* | Center of New Hampshire Radisson Hotel, Manchester, NH | -- | Duane Greene, 413-545-5219 |

* See page 2 for more information on the Conference

Apple maturity report

Here are the results (Page 4) from recent apple maturity testing of mid-fall apples.

Many Massachusetts orchards should be winding up harvest on McIntosh destined for CA storage this week. Starch indexes are already 5-6 this week in Belchertown. Once McIntosh reaches a solid 6 it should generally be put in short-term storage or sold immediately. Drop has been minimal in ReTain treated blocks despite above-average temperatures. Color could still be better, however, it has continued to improve.

Harvest of Honeycrisp should be complete by now except at higher elevations. Later harvested Honeycrisp have a higher risk of developing soft scald and off-flavor.

Cortland – particularly Redcort strain – are starting to be picked and will continue to be harvested over the next week. The starch-iodine test does not work particularly well on Cortland. Watch for oblique-banded leaf roller injury in Cortland as they are particularly attractive to this up-and-coming pest.

Macoun and Empire are still a week away at minimum. Empire harvest could start next week, but it looks like Macoun won't develop good varietal flavor until the first week in October. Taste is the best indicator of harvest timing for Macoun.

Jonagold – particularly red coloring strains like Morren's Supra and Rubinstar – could be picked before this weekend if starch-index readings are in the 5-6 range. Morren's Supra in Belchertown are very nice right now.

Looking at last year's ripening, we are still a little behind 'average' I would say. Continue to monitor fruit as a change to cool weather will hasten maturity. Apple maturity test results will continue to be posted on the UMass Fruit Advisor as they become available:

- <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/clements/articles/2005harvest/2005harvest.html>

New England Vegetable and FRUIT Conference

The New England Vegetable & Berry Conference and the New England Fruit Meeting have officially merged into the **New England Vegetable and FRUIT Conference**, which will be held every two years. The conference will be held this December 13, 14, 15 at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, NH and will include 24 educational sessions over 3 days, covering major vegetable, berry and tree fruit crops as well as various special topics. A Farmer-to-Farmer meeting after each morning and afternoon session will bring speakers and farmers together for informal, in-depth discussion on certain issues.

This conference is put together with close collaboration between growers and Extension from across the region. The steering committee gathers the best speakers from within our region and across the country to let you know about the latest innovations and advances in the fruit and vegetable industry.

Twenty-five educational sessions over three days will mix the best theory and practice regarding major fruit, berry and vegetable crops. Virtually every session – from “Strawberry I” on Tuesday morning to “Sweet Corn School” on Thursday afternoon will include the perspective of both farmers and Extension staff and researchers.

A “Farmer-to-Farmer” session will be held after each morning and afternoon session to allow speakers and farmers the opportunity for informal, in-depth discussion of the issues they find to be most critical.

There is also an extensive **Trade Show** with over 100 exhibitors. We hope that you will enjoy your time here, and meet with fellow growers, advisors, researchers, and industry representatives. We want you to leave with new ideas and new information that will have a positive impact on your farm.

The event is sponsored by the New England Vegetable & Berry Growers Association and the Massachusetts Fruit Growers’ Association in conjunction with the Universities of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont and Maine, as well Cornell University and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station – in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The 3-day educational program offers 4 concurrent sessions each morning and afternoon. On Tuesday, December 13 the sessions are on strawberries, tomatoes, bio-rational and biological pest control, potatoes, leafy greens, root crops, and tree fruit. On Wednesday, December 14 sessions are on tree fruit, pumpkins, blueberries, soil health, greenhouse tomatoes, and organic. The sessions on Thursday, December 15 are on viticulture, sweet corn, cucurbits, brambles, winter growing, sweet corn, peppers and eggplant, and cut flowers.

The Annual Banquet of the New England Vegetable and Berry Growers Association will be held during the conference, on Wednesday evening. The speaker will be Roger Swain from ‘People, Places, and Plants’. Roger also hosted ‘Victory Garden’ for many years.

The pre-registration fee to attend any part or all of the conference or trade show is \$50 for the first member of a farm business and \$25 for each additional member (family or employee) when pre-registered with first member. The pre-registration fee for students (high school or college) is \$20 each when pre-registered by the instructor. There is an additional fee of \$10/\$5 for 1st/2nd person for late registration or walk-ins. Pre-registration must be received by November 30, 2005.

Additional information on the New England Vegetable and Berry Conference and the New England Fruit Meeting, including downloadable registration material, may be found at <http://www.newenglandvfc.org/>.

Two educational programs of interest

Fall Flower Grower Program

Wednesday, October 5, 2005

Pioneer Gardens, Inc, Deerfield, MA

9:00 AM - 3:45 PM

Sponsored by: University of Massachusetts and Massachusetts Flower Growers Association

Growers of greenhouse crops are invited to attend the Fall Flower Grower's Program at Pioneer Gardens Inc. Deerfield, MA. The program will include a tour of Pioneer Gardens, full-day educational program and catered lunch. The morning session will focus on energy conservation and alternative fuel for greenhouse production. The afternoon session will include marketing, customer service and displaying for retail sales. There will also be a session on worker protection standards and what to expect from an inspector's visit. Pioneer Gardens is a wholesale herbaceous perennial plant producer with forty acres of field grown perennials and 72,000 sq.ft. of greenhouse perennial plug production, that produces more than 300 varieties of plants. For more information contact: Tina Smith, 413-545-5306 tsmith@umext.umass.edu, or Paul Lopes, 508-295-2212 ext. 24 lopes@umext.umass.edu.

[Registration and Details](#)

http://www.umass.edu/umext/floriculture/upcoming_events_archive/05_fall_mtg.htm

Greenhouse Tomato Conference

Thursday, November 10, 2005

9:00 AM – 4: 30 PM

Tolland County Agricultural Center, 24 Hyde Ave (Route 30), Vernon CT

Sponsored by: University of Connecticut , University of Massachusetts , Northeast SARE

Come hear Vern Grubinger, from University of Vermont speak on **Organic Greenhouse Production**, Cathy Thomas from PA Department of Agriculture speak on **Biocontrol of Insect Pests**, John Bartok from University of Connecticut speak on **Selecting the Best Structures, Environmental Controls and Energy Conservation Measures**, Richard McAvoy from University of Connecticut speak on **Managing Light, Temperatures and Nutrients for Maximum Yields**, Rob Wick from University of Massachusetts speak on **Greenhouse Tomato Diseases and their Management**. *Three contact hours toward pesticide recertification have been approved for this conference.* Learn more about the new technique of grafting to increase yields and tips on marketing greenhouse tomatoes from a grower panel.

For more information contact: Tina Smith, 413-545-5306 tsmith@umext.umass.edu, or Paul Lopes, 508-295-2212 ext. 24 lopes@umext.umass.edu.

[Registration and Details](#)

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Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) crop insurance update

“Can I get coverage for crops that are not insurable in Massachusetts? Right now in MA we have the following tree fruit crop insurance programs: apples, and peaches (Worcester County only). What if I grow pears, cherries, or other fruit in MA?”

This is a very good question. The Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) program was created for you. Peaches (all counties except Worcester), cherries, pears, and many small fruits and vegetables are crops that are currently uninsurable in Massachusetts. This is where the AGR program fits best. As a diversified farming operation, whether wholesale or retail, you have risks that are unavoidable. Weather, production, quality and market fluctuation, these risks can impact your business by decreasing your gross revenue. I want to add another important risk management product that you should be looking at if you are growing uninsurable crops. That is the NAP program (Non-insurable Crop Disaster Assistance Program), this product is purchased through the Farm Service Agency and the cost is \$100 per crop, per county. Contact your Farm Service Agency for further details. This program goes hand-in-hand with the Adjusted Gross Revenue Program.

AGR Update: The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation Board met a few weeks ago and one of the topics was the Adjusted Gross Revenue program. The Board is looking at making changes to this program to enhance its features, stay tuned! –*Jeremy Forrett, Crop Growers Insurances Service*

Apple maturity report (cont.)

Results of apple maturity testing, 20-Sept, UMass Cold Spring Orchard, Belchertown, MA

| Date | Location | Cultivar | Drop | Size (in.) | Color (% red) | Firmness (lbs.) | Soluble Solids | Starch Index* | Taste | Comments |
|------|-------------|-------------------------|------|------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------|--|
| 9/20 | Belchertown | Redmax McIntosh | Some | 3.0 | 90 | 14.8 | 13 | 5 | Good | Last pick this week; more drop than would like |
| 9/20 | Belchertown | Royal Empire | Nil | 3.0 | 95 | 18.1 | 13 | 3 | Tart | Pick next week |
| 9/20 | Belchertown | Redcort Cortland | Nil | 3.3 | 90 | 15.9 | 13 | 2 | OK | Being picked this week |
| 9/20 | Belchertown | Macoun | Nil | 3.1 | 45 weak | 16.1 | 12.5 | 2 | Very tart | 30% with moldy core; no pick before next week at very earliest |
| 9/20 | Belchertown | Morren's Supra Jonagold | Nil | 3.3 | 75 | 17.1 | 16 | 5 | Good | Pick end of week; premium fruit |

* using the Cornell 'generic' starch-iodine index chart

Note: this is the last Healthy Fruit for 2005. Hopefully you have found the information in Healthy Fruit useful in producing a successful crop in 2005. As always, your comments and suggestions for improvement are welcome.

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