

Small Fruit Update



March 14, 2006

[Event Calendar](#) [Small Fruit Cold Storage Reports](#) [Weather Forecast](#) by Rufus La Lone

Continuing below normal air and soil temperatures have held back crop, insect and disease development.

[Click here](#) for photos illustrating freeze damage in Marionberry buds.

Crop Updates:

Whatcom County raspberries: Freeze damage seems minimal. Just some of the weaker cane tips showing die back.

Skagit County raspberries: Most raspberries are not showing signs of freeze damage, but it's probably too early to tell. Meeker and Cowichan canes brought into the greenhouse before and after the freeze show no difference.

Willamette Valley raspberries: Older fields look to be all right. Baby fields and varieties with early bud break sustained damage to buds that had broken. Too early to assess secondary bud compensation or cane damage.

Willamette Valley blackberries: The potential Marionberry crop could be down by 10-20% due to freeze damage. Obsidian was also affected. These are still very preliminary, speculative estimates based on primary bud damage. It will take some warm weather to get a better idea of secondary bud and cane conditions. Nothing is moving much right now.

Whatcom County blueberries: Some damage is evident but too soon to quantify. Bluejay, Reka, Duke, and Bluecrop are showing some flower bud dieback symptoms.

Skagit County blueberries: Things have been cool and wet, so not much movement in the last week or so. Eight-inch deep soil temperature remains under 40 degrees. Duke plants at the WSU Mt. Vernon Station show some clear damage to earliest blooms, but Bluecrop, Bluejay, Hardiblack and Elliott seem fine.

British Columbia blueberries: Still dealing with snow and wind this last week but no more extreme temperatures. Some central Fraser Valley fields showed just minor evidence of damage, although the western portions of the Fraser Valley could have more. Consistently, Duke, Reka and Hardiblack (1613A) have been found with damaged flower buds and some blackened laterals. Bluecrop, Elliott and other later varieties did not show evidence of significant damage.

Willamette Valley blueberries: Overall, it doesn't look to be a problem in the northern Willamette Valley. Berkeley seems to show a little terminal bud damage. Duke, Bluecrop, and Elliott look just fine. The southern Valley is seeing some symptoms in rabbiteye varieties as well as Brigitta and Berkeley. Some twig blackening that could be from the freeze and/or Pseudomonas infection. Duke and Elliotts look OK.

SW Washington/Oregon Strawberries: Some freeze damage symptoms in Totems. Apparent cell damage in exposed crowns—a darkening within the 'stalks' when cut open. Reports are variable depending on the geographic location and age of the field. There's a potential impact on overall yields but it's not possible to assess with any accuracy at this stage. Other varieties look to be fine.

Plastic recycling efforts starting in Whatcom County: Growers can contact Agri-Plas, Martin Jongsma at 541-221-2724 or local hauler Evert Velthuizen at 360-815-4467. They will take buckets, pails, jugs, drip tape, barrel liners, fumigation ground cover etc. So far, they only charge for fumigation plastic due to attached dirt. Check with them about degree of cleanliness required.

New ORBC Promotion Grants Program: In an effort to encourage new sales and innovations by Oregon berry processors, the **Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission** is starting a **First Purchaser Matching Grant Program**. The minimum grant amount to be awarded will be \$5,000 and the maximum will be \$25,000. Deadline for proposals: Noon, Friday, April 14, 2006. [Click here](#) for a Word document containing details and an application.

Irrigation Systems Evaluation Short Course Scholarships: The three Washington small fruit commissions are joining together with Dr. Tom Walters (WSU) and Dr. Dave Bryla (USDA) in an effort to improve industry knowledge and expertise of proper irrigation usage. The commissions will be offering **six sponsorships (up to \$1500each) for industry personnel to attend a three-day course** (June 12-14) at Cal State San Luis Obispo. [Click here](#) for a course description. More details will follow. If you or someone in your organization is interested, contact [Henry Bierlink](#) (360-354-8767) at the Raspberry Commission or [Tom Peerbolt](#) (503-289-7287).

Blueberry Fertilizer timing: We're getting close to the traditional time for applying fertilizer. Many recommendations still call for blueberries to receive their first application just before the buds break. Recent research shows the plant takes up very little nitrogen before late April. Recommended timing for split applications in the Willamette Valley is 1/3 in late April 1/3 in mid-May and 1/3 in mid-June.

Chemical Control Update:

- 1) **Fungicide, Blueberries: Indar** for Mummyberry control. Status of Oregon's Section 18 emergency label request; **EPA says: "it is close"**. We will keep you posted and put out a notice as soon as we receive word. Washington's was submitted at the same time as Oregon's and our assumption is they should both come at the same time...
- 2) **Fungicide, Blueberries:** Alternative treatments for mummyberry control: **Pristine** is more effective in controlling the later secondary stage of mummy berry infection than the primary stage. So folks may want to use it for a later timing and use other materials like Bravo or Captevate during this imminent primary infection stage.
- 3) **Fungicide, Blueberries: Funginex** no longer has a label or a tolerance on blueberries in the U.S. and cannot be used for mummyberry control. It is still labeled for use in Canada.
- 4) **Fungicide, Oregon Evergreen Blackberries:** A SLN (Special Local Needs) label is being pursued for the use of **Rally** at a higher than presently allowed rate for the treatment of Phragmidium rust in Oregon's blackberries.
- 5) **Herbicide, Strawberries:** Both Washington and Oregon have received approval of a Section 18 label for **Spartan** for the 2006-2007 season. Use is allowed during three distinct use periods: prior to planting, after renovation, and during dormancy. These labels begin March 15, 2006 and expire February 28, 2007. Click for labels – [WA label](#) – [OR label](#).

New pest Information

Insects/Mites:

Winter Moth Blueberries: Larvae have been recovered from blueberries in Skagit county. These guys feed on the emerging buds and can cause significant damage before you even know they're out there. They're very small right now. [Click here](#) for pictures, scouting and control information

Diseases:

- 1) **Disease Alert: Mummyberry Blueberries.** The cool weather has slowed down both plant and disease development but many blueberries are at green bud stage or beyond. Still haven't found or heard of any sprouting mummies however, growers who have experienced mummyberry problems in the past need to stay on top of control measures at this very critical stage of disease development. [Click here](#) for scouting and control details as well as photos.
- 2) **Cane Blight: Raspberries.** A good time to spot symptoms of cane blight is as the buds break. Infected canes will show either no budbreak if the cane has been girdled or one sided bud break if the infection is on one side. Scrape canes to look for rust colored streaks usually coming up from machine harvester scars. There is no treatment for cane blight, only prevention. The time to protect next year's canes from infection is immediately after harvest when fresh wounds become infected.
- 3) **Purple Blotch: Blackberries.** Lesions are easy to see right now with no new foliage in the way. Lime Sulfur is usually applied in the spring although spores released from the floricanes won't infect the new primocanes until temperatures get into the 60's (16-18 C). The idea is to protect the new primocanes from infection. Any signs of floricane infection took place last year and can't be remedied at this time.

Ongoing Seasonal Pest Information

Vertebrates: Caneberries and Blueberries - Voles

Insects/Mites

- 1) **Redberry mites: Blackberries** -If you have had Redberry mite problems start your prevention program with an application of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur shortly after budbreak.
- 2) **Scale: Blueberries** - A dormant oil or **Esteem** (pyriproxyfen) can be used.
- 3) **Raspberry Crown Borer** and /or **Strawberry Crown Moth Caneberries:** Most effectively treated with an insecticide drench in early March. Be sure it gets well rained in. Guthion can still be used this year but we also have a new supplemental label for **Capture** (bifenthrin).

Diseases

- 1) **Phragmidium Rust: Evergreen Blackberries** - Apply Lime Sulfur at the highest rate allowed.
- 2) **Phytophthora Root Rot:** Raspberries - March is the time to use a fungicide drench for Phytophthora root rot control in raspberries. **Ridomil Gold** is pretty volatile and needs to be watered in well for effectiveness. It should be applied just before or during rain.
- 3) **Bacterial Blight** (Pseudomonas syringae): **Blueberries.** With additional tissue damage caused by the cold weather, it is more important than most years to get on copper applications at this time to help prevent infections.

Cropwork:

All Crops: 1) Can still apply lime/dolomite to raise soil pH. 2) Weed control.

All Caneberries: 1) Put out [mouse/vole](#) bait as needed before budbreak. 2) Apply lime sulfur for disease control. 3) Scout for bud damage/feeding & determine cause. 4) Can apply Ridomil for root rot control in March. 5) Can apply insecticide drench for borer control.

Blackberries: 1) (in particular Evergreens) Apply lime sulfur for treatment of both rust and [Redberry mite](#).

Blueberries: 1) Scout for Winter Moth feeding. 2) Put out [mouse/vole](#) bait as needed before budbreak. 3) Can apply Copper or Bordeaux mix for Bacterial Blight. 4) Dormant oil or Esteem can be applied for scale and winter moth egg control. 5) Scout for mummyberries & control as needed. 6) Make preparations to bring in bees around 10% bloom.

Strawberries: As plants start growing, check weak areas for root weevil larvae, strawberry crown borers or root disease problems.