

Small Fruit Update



News and opinions from [Peerbolt Crop Management](#) and [berriesNW](#) sent out weekly during the growing season, and sporadically when we have something to share in the off season.

March 5, 2010

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[Video link of the week](#): This video supported by Farm Credit Canada demonstrates the benefits of precision agriculture use by Canadian farmers.

[The Weather Cafe](#) by Rufus La Lone

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Regional Reports

These reports are from individuals within the region and are their particular observations. They are included to give an impression of the present 'state of the industry' and regional activities.

Whatcom County, Northern Washington

Blueberries:

- (3/1/10) Mummyberries are in full bloom and releasing spores. Indar fungicide will be going on this week. Also finishing up herbicide application. We're sprucing up kestrel boxes.
- (3/2/10) Early dukes are going to be in bloom in about a week for the earliest fields that I watch.

Raspberries:

- (3/1/10) We're finishing up pruning at last and applying lime sulfur.
- (3/2/10) Chemainus and Saanich are leafing out to the point that some fields will have the canes covered by the end of the week. 47 degrees for most of the night, things are not really slowing down even with lots of rain.

Strawberries: (3/1/10) Still dormant!-Yahoo!

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Meetings

New Webinar: March 9—Webinar on the Organic Blueberry Production trial, 11am (lasts about 45 minutes and is free), Bernadine Strik, Dave Bryla, and Handell Larco. [Click here](#) for access information

Disseminating information for:

Washington

[Washington Red Raspberry Commission](#)
[Washington Blueberry Commission](#)
[Washington Strawberry Commission](#)

Oregon

[Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission](#)
[Oregon Blueberry Commission](#)
[Oregon Strawberry Commission](#)

British Columbia

[Fraser Valley Strawberry Growers Association](#)
[Raspberry Industry Development Council](#)
[B.C. Blueberry Council](#)

and/or join the webinar live. Growers can learn about how the results of an organic blueberry production systems research study have provided insight on best planting methods, fertilization, irrigation, weed management, and economic considerations. (It's free).

March 16—Oregon Blackberry and Raspberry Commission meeting~ 12pm. Langdon Farms Golf Course Aurora, OR. Contact [Philip Gütt](#) for more information or call 541-758-4043.

March 19—Oregon Blueberry Commission meeting~ 12pm. Doaks Ferry Room, West Salem Roths IGA, OR. Call 503 364-2944 for more information. *Originally scheduled for March 16.*

New Meeting: March 30—OSU is hosting a meeting to provide the latest information available on the Spotted Wing Drosophila, 1-5pm, Sheraton Hotel at the Portland Airport. Open to all stakeholders. The session will include updates on research, trapping and monitoring, occurrence and available control measures from the perspectives of OR, WA, and CA universities, Oregon Department of Agriculture, USDA-ARS Horticultural Crops Research Lab, and other scientists. A detailed agenda will be available by March 20th; information on this pest can be found at <http://swd.hort.oregonstate.edu/> where there are links to related websites. There will be no registration fee for this meeting.

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Pest Alerts

- **[Mummyberry](#) blueberries**
 - Many fields are already at or very close to green tip stage (vegetative buds are close to showing the first green color) when infections can take place.
 - If the field or adjacent fields have a history of Mummyberry infections, preventative applications should begin at green tip stage and continue through the end of bloom.
 - **So, what is "green tip stage"?** [Click here](#) for a pictorial guide put together by Michigan State University of the various stages of blueberry growth development.
- **[Winter Moth/ Bruce Span Worm](#) blueberries:** Span worm larvae feeding on blueberry buds in Northern Washington and British Columbia are being reported. Northern planting areas have traditionally had much larger populations, but outbreaks have also caused major economic damage in the southern areas.
- **[Pseudomonas \(Bacterial Blight\)](#) blueberries:** There are reports of new, damaging lesions showing up in some southern fields. Cankers may extend from a fraction of an inch to the entire length of 1-year-old wood. Buds in cankers die. If girdled, the cane portion above the canker dies. **Recommended management:** The lesions now being seen are the effects of past infections. To prevent future lesions from forming, copper sprays are recommended starting when the temperatures get warmer, usually around mid-February in the Willamette Valley and SW Washington. Good coverage is essential with copper. Serenade has also shown efficacy in some research trials.
- **[Voles](#) all berries:** Vole activity and damage is at very high levels in many berry fields. Management of voles is most effective now in the spring before they start multiplying. [Click here](#) for some background and biology information on voles (or meadow mice). [Click here](#) for information on how to construct bait stations.

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Industry news/resources

Market Newsletter: *The Source* for 3-03-10 [Click here](#) (from Produce News).

Northwest

- **Blueberry Canada Campaign for a National Fruit:** [Click here](#). This site is dedicated to making the blueberry a national fruit.
- **Sensors, software send Ag alerts to farmer phones:** [Click here](#) (3/4, Capital Press).

National

- **Stricter regulations likely for wood pallets:** [Click here](#) (2/25, The Packer) USDA aims to halt the spread of pests, primarily the emerald ash borer and the Asian long-horned beetle, that hide in wood packaging shipped from state to state.
- (FL): **Glut of supersweet strawberries may follow shortage:** [Click here](#) (2/25, Fresh Plaza) Florida could have such a sudden oversupply of berries that farmers say they might have to leave them to rot in the fields.

- (FL): **US: Blueberries become multimillion industry in Hernando County:** [Click here](#) (3/1, Fresh Plaza) Blueberries are no longer just a niche crop in Hernando.
- **Produce-related illnesses account for \$39 billion in annual costs, says report:** [Click here](#) (3/3 The Produce News).
- **Blanching benefits antioxidants in processed berries:** [Click here](#) (3/2, Food Navigator).
- (FL) **Strawberry prices skyrocket, up to \$6 per pound:** [Click here](#) (3/4, FreshPlaza).

International

- **Chilean earthquake stories:**
 - **Update on Chile earthquake impact on fruit supplies:** [Click here](#) (3/4, FreshPlaza).
 - **Chileans predict quick rebound from earthquake:** [Click here](#) (3/3, The Packer).
 - **Chile already emerging from earthquake: groups may petition USDA:** [Click here](#) (3/2, Produce News).
 - **Monster earthquake disrupts Chilean fruit business:** [Click here](#) (3/2, Produce News).
- (China) **The First Int'l Blueberry Festival in China:** [Click here](#) (2/17, About Harvest) China has been raising wild blueberries in northeast region of the country for the last 6 or 7 years, and this was their official opening.
- (Chile) **Chilean wild blackberry harvest looks terrible:** [Click here](#) (2/24, Agra-Net.com) There are now fears that this year could well see one of the worst ever record wild blackberry crops in Chile, as yields are projected to be low.

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New Pest Management & IPM Information

Insects/Mites

- **Spotted Wing Drosophila all berries:** The Oregon legislature included \$225,000 in the recently passed budget to fund immediate emergency measures to respond to this pest. \$75,000 was designated for three categories: synthesizing & disseminating information, pest control and pest monitoring. Oregon State, the USDA, and Peerbolt Crop Management will be cooperating with the Oregon Department of Agriculture in developing and implementing a relevant action plan. For more information of this insect, [Click here](#) to go to the OSU SWD information website.
- **Redberry Mite evergreen blackberries:** Dormant sprays of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur for Blackberry Rust and Redberry Mite are recommended in March.

Diseases

- **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 budbreak 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.

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Ongoing Pest Management Information

[Birds](#), blueberries.

Insects

- **Alert: Winter Moth/ Bruce Span Worm blueberries:** See alert section above.
- **Whatcom Extension looking for some help:** Colleen Burrows, Whatcom County IPM Coordinator, has some new(er) lures for Raspberry Crown Borer that she'd like to try on a few farms. She's looking for farms in Whatcom or Skagit Counties that might have RCB and would be willing to have a trap or two on their farm. Whatcom Extension will check the traps and take care of them. Contact Colleen at cburrows@wsu.edu, Washington State University, Whatcom County Extension (360) 676-6736.
- **Raspberry Crown Borer caneberries:** If you've had borer problems in the past, March is the time to drench for crown borer control in caneberries.
- **Strawberry Crown Moth southern caneberries:** In Oregon and Southwest Washington, this borer looks to do as much, if not more, damage in caneberries as the Raspberry Crown Borer. The treatment is the same as for RCB- a spring (or fall) insecticide drench.

- **Clay Colored Weevils southern strawberries:** This early emerging species is usually just considered a pest of raspberries in northern growing areas where it feeds on newly emerging shoots and buds. But in the last couple of years emerged adult Clay Colored Weevils have been recovered from SW Washington southern strawberry fields and blueberry fields. These have been isolated cases with only a couple of fields so far identified.
- **Leafroller larvae blueberries.**
- **Scale blueberries:** A dormant oil or [Esteem](#) (Pyriproxyfen) can be used while blueberries are dormant.

Diseases

- **Alert: Pseudomonas (Bacterial Blight) blueberries:** See alert section above.
- **Alert: Mummyberry: blueberries:** See alert section above.
- **Phytophthora Root Rot raspberries:** (*Early reminder*) March is the time to use a fungicide drench in raspberries. Warm, saturated soils are the conditions that favor this organism allowing it to spread quickly.
- **Purple Blotch blackberries:** Check for cane lesions that are easy to see now. Good time to assess disease level.
- **Blackberry Rust (Phragmidium Rust) Evergreen blackberries:** (*Early reminder*) Dormant spray of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur for Blackberry Rust and Redberry Mites is recommended in March to prevent later problems.

Other Pest Species

- **Alert: Voles:** See alert section above.

Crop work

All crops—

- Scout for voles and treat as needed.
- Weed management.
- Plan fertilizer program.

Blueberries—

- Scout for Winter Moth/Span Worm and treat as needed.
- Can apply Bacterial Blight (Pseudomonas) management materials.
- Scout for sprouting Mummyberries and treat as needed.
- Scout for leafroller larvae feeding.
- Make preparations for bringing in bees around 10% bloom.

Blackberries—

- Scout for Purple Blotch lesions in Marion berries to assess field disease levels for later treatments.
- Can apply lime sulfur for Redberry Mites and/or disease management.
- Can drench for crown borer management.

Evergreen Blackberries—

- Can apply a dormant spray of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur in mid-February for Redberry mites and Blackberry Rust.

Raspberries—

- Can apply lime sulfur for Redberry Mites and/or disease management.
- Can apply Ridomil for Phytophthora root rot management.
- Can drench for crown borer management.
- Scout for Cane Blight symptoms as buds break.

Strawberries—

- As plants start to grow, watch for weak growing areas and check rots for weevil larvae, root rot and/or cold damage.

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