

Small Fruit Update



Providing Northwest berry growers with the information they need when they need it.

The Small Fruit Update is sent out weekly during the growing season by [Peerbolt Crop Management](#) and is funded entirely by the Northwest berry growers and industry through their commissions and councils.

March 5, 2013

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[Florida expects peak blueberry season despite cold front](#)

(3/5, Fresh Fruit Portal)

[NOAA Graphical weather forecasts for the Northwest](#)

(website) Pretty neat & useful northwest weather interactive forecast map—run your mouse over the weather data table.

[The Weather Cafe](#) by Rufus La Lone [Small Fruit Cold Storage Report](#)

This is where we were last year on March 6, 2012...



Lynden, Washington raspberry field. Photo by Brian Cieslar

We don't have snow in the forecast for this year but there are some possible cold temperature scenarios developing over the next month (see the LaLone Weather Café report above). Stay alert and know your options for minimizing cold damage.

Tom Peerbolt, SFU Editor

Disseminating information for:

Washington

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

Oregon

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

British Columbia

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

National

[North American Blueberry Council](#)

Regional Crop Information

Disease Alert

Mummyberry (blueberries)- In the Willamette Valley we're very close to fields being vulnerable to infections. Be ready with a management program by the time fields at risk reach 'green tip stage'. That's when new infections can begin.

- **So, what is "green tip stage"?** [Click here](#) for a chart from Michigan State of the various stages of blueberry growth development.
- [Mummyberry primer from MSU](#)
- **Some critical points:**
 - The optimum temperature for spore release and infection is 50 to 57°F (10 to 14°C). Figure on when temperatures go over 45F in our area you're into the danger zone.
 - At least 12 hours of wetness is required for infection.

Frost may increase susceptibility of blueberry shoots to infection.

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.

British Columbia, Fraser Valley (Monday, 3/4)

- **Blueberries:** Extreme weather last week was the story in the Fraser Valley. From February 28-March 2 we had rain accumulations in the valley ranging from 1.5 - 5 inches. Abbotsford had about 3.25 inches. Needless to say field work came to a standstill. Relatively cool temps last week kept blues from pushing too much. First leaf buds are starting to swell. We're probably looking at mummyberry sprays to start in 7-10 days depending on weather and plant development. Could start earlier in smaller micro-climate pockets. We got a heavy frost this morning and looks to be cool most early part of the days this week. So we may not get a big push.
- **Raspberries:** Raspberries at bud swell to green tip. Lime sulphur going on this week on good days. Canes look good so far.

Whatcom County, Northern Washington (Monday, 3/4)

- **Blueberries & raspberries:** Bit of blueberry herbicide going on, waiting on lime sulfur on the raspberries till the buds push a bit more. Looks like good bud break all around so far.

Skagit Valley, Northern Washington

Very wet and warm here with temps in the 50's expected Saturday.

- **Blackberries:** (Friday, 3/1) Chesters are pushing buds. Most growers are finishing up tying canes. Some with downey mildew issues last season, so they are removing and burning the prunings.
- **Blueberries:** (Friday, 3/1) Winter moth are evident in Reka and Duke but rain has kept most growers from applying a second round of oil. Delegate, Entrust and Pyganic/Aza-direct combinations are popular along with oils. Growers with heavy grass middles are seeing lots of voles. We've got lots of resident starling flocks as well. Perhaps the down side of a very mild winter. All fingers crossed!
- **Blueberries & raspberries:** (Monday, 3/4) Very good bud break at Mount Vernon, as well. Bluecrop showing some leaves, but Duke just has loose buds. Raspberries coming on, we plan to apply lime sulfur later this week.

Willamette Valley, Oregon and SW Washington

- **Blackberries:** (Monday, 3/4) Not all buds are as far along as the one below but it's definitely time to think about sulfur. Bud break looks good, hoping for no cold weather.



- **Blueberries:** (Friday, 3/1) Most cultivars are still at the bud swell stage although early bloomers like Earlyblue and Patriot as well as some Duke are close to tight cluster. With the nights still going down to around freezing it doesn't look like we'll see a big jump in development anytime soon. Some mummyberry applications will be starting next week.



Bud stage of most cultivars



Furthest developed Duke buds



Pseudomonas in Bluejay

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Late Winter/Early Spring Weather Risks

Pictorial blueberry growth stages with temperature damage thresholds

- [Blueberry growth stages and critical spring temperatures](#) (Michigan State Extension)
- The relevant stages & temperature thresholds from the chart:
 - **Bud Swell:** "Visible swelling of buds; scales separated. Can tolerate 10-15 F (-12 to -9 C)".
 - **Tight cluster:** "Individual flowers distinguishable. Can tolerate 20-23 F (-7 to -5 C)".

Early Spring Weather Management Information

- [Using your sprinkler system to protect blueberries from freezes](#) (Eric Hansen, Michigan State Small Fruit Specialist)
- (All berries) [Frost protection: Tips & Techniques](#) (Kathy Demchek, Penn State)

Food Safety Events

Washington Food Safety Training Offered

by the Washington Blueberry & Red Raspberry commissions

- [Click here](#) for a detailed information sheet.
- Class is free of charge but RSVP is required.
- **Dates & Locations:**
 - **March 19** WSU-IAREC – 24106 N. Bunn Road, Prosser
 - **March 20** WSU-Clark County Extension – 1919 NE 78th St., Vancouver, WA
 - **March 27** WSU-NWREC – 16650 Highway 536, Mt. Vernon
 - **March 28** NW WA Fairgrounds, Rotary Building – 1775 Front Street, Lynden
- Buyers of Washington berries and berry products are increasingly requiring growers be third party certified to meet minimum requirements for food safety.
- The minimum standard for this is GAP (Good Agricultural Practices).
- It is very likely that new federal legislation will require growers to implement these standards soon.
- In order to help you meet these new standards the Washington Blueberry and Red Raspberry commissions will host a series of food safety meetings around the state.
- The training will have capabilities for a Spanish translation for employees and Punjabi at the Lynden location.

Oregon Food Safety Training Offered

by the Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry, Blueberry, Strawberry commissions

- [Click here](#) for the website with registration and detailed information.
- Class is free of charge but RSVP is required.
- **Dates & locations:**
 - **April 4** North Willamette Research Extension Center – 15210 NE Miley Rd., Aurora
 - **April 9** Unger Farm Store – 34880 SW Johnson School Rd, Cornelius
 - **April 18** Woodburn Fertilizer – 868 N Front Street, Woodburn
 - **April 23** Scenic Fruit Co. – 7510 SE Altman Rd., Gresham
 - **May 2** Riverbend Organic Farm – 35711 Helms Dr., Jefferson
 - **May 7** Willamette Valley Fruit Co. – 2994 82nd Ave NE, Salem
 - **May 16** HBF International – 310 NE Kirby St, McMinnville
 - **May 21** Western Star Grange Hall #309 – 30423 Tangent Dr., Albany

FDA Informational Workshops on the Proposed FSMA Rules

The Food Safety Modernization Act will significantly impact growers, packers and processors in the coming years. Members of the food industry have the opportunity to submit comments to FDA on the proposed rules that will be used to regulate the food industry in the coming years. There is a need to be familiar with the proposed rules in order to submit relevant comments to FDA by the May 16, 2013 deadline. A multi-state team involving universities and regulatory agencies in partnership with FDA is offering five opportunities to review the proposed rules. FDA will be presenting information and offering input throughout the workshop.”

- [Click here](#) for the flyer with more details on the meetings.
- Cost is \$20 with a registration cutoff date of 4 days prior to the meeting date.
- **Dates & locations:**
 - **March 14** North Willamette Research Extension Center, Aurora, OR
 - **March 15** Holiday Inn Downtown Yakima, Yakima, WA
 - **April 15** WSU Snohomish County Extension, Everett, WA
 - **April 17** Unitarian Universalist Church, Eugene, OR
 - **April 19** Four Rivers Cultural Center, Ontario, OR

FDA Public Hearing in Portland on Food Safety Modernization Act

- **March 27** — 8:30-5:00, Crown Plaza, Downtown Portland Convention Center. [Click here](#) for details.
- For more information on the FMSA including factsheets [click here](#).

Related articles

- [FDA takes food safety meetings to Chicago and Portland](#) (2/12, The Packer)
- [Stakeholders offer broad range of feedback on FSMA in first public meeting](#) (3/5, Food Safety News)

Pesticide MRL Event

Related article

- [EPA seeks input on pesticide residue limits on or in various commodities](#) (2/27, Federal Register)

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Washington Workshop on Maximum Residue Levels (MRL's)

by the Washington Blueberry commission

- **March 20** —10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Best Western Cotton Tree Convention Center, 2300 Market Street, Mt. Vernon.
- Growers, exporters, handlers and other berry industry personnel are encouraged to attend.

- Please RSVP by March 17th. Contact the Washington Blueberry Commission office: abragg@centurytel.net, 509 266 4300.
- The objectives of the meeting are:
 - Update attendees latest MRL developments.
 - Discuss with the commission on what needs to be done in regards to MRLs and developing export markets.
- Speakers will include Matt Lantz from [Bryant Christie, Inc.](#), Mike Willett from [Northwest Hort Council](#), John Dunley from WilburEllis, [Joe DeFrancesco](#) from OSU, [Lynell Tanigoshi](#) from WSU and Alan Schreiber from the [Washington Blueberry Commission](#).

Pest Management

Usual March Pest Management

In most years activities involving the management of the following pests happens during March. They're associated with the warming temperatures and renewed plant growth.

Insects/Mites

- **[Raspberry Crown Borer](#) caneberries:** If you've had borer problems in the past, March is the time to drench for crown borer management 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 few years emerged adult Clay Colored Weevils have been recovered from SW Washington southern strawberry fields and blueberry fields.
- **[Redberry Mite](#) evergreen blackberries:** Dormant sprays of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur for Blackberry Rust and Redberry Mite are recommended in March.

Diseases

- **[Phytophthora Root Rot](#) raspberries:** 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.
- **[Blackberry Rust \(Phragmidium Rust\)](#) Evergreen blackberries:** Dormant spray of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur for Blackberry Rust and Redberry Mites is recommended in March to prevent later problems.
- **[Cane Blight](#) raspberries:** A good time to spot symptoms of cane blight is as the buds break. Infected canes will show either no bud break 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 once it's present, only prevention. The time to prevent next year's canes from getting infected is to apply an appropriate fungicide immediately after harvest when fresh wounds normally become infected.
- **[Purple Blotch](#) blackberries:** Check for cane lesions that are easy to see as the weather warms but the foliage has not yet emerged. It's a good time to assess disease level.

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Present Ongoing Pest Management Activities

All crops

- Weed management.
- **Scout for and plan for [Voles](#):** Vole activity is apparent in many blueberry, caneberry, and strawberry fields. Management of voles is most effective in the spring before they start multiplying like...voles. Kind of like weeds (& starlings)—get them before their reproduction cycle kicks in! [Click here](#) for some background and biology information on voles (or meadow mice). [Click here](#) for information on how to construct bait stations.

Zinc Phosphide baits cannot be used after budbreak

Blueberries

- **Scout for [Pseudomonas \(Bacterial Blight\)](#)** Water-soaked lesions usually appear in February in some fields that then develop into reddish brown to black cankers.
- **Plan for [Bird](#) issues: **Starling management:**** Right now starlings are beginning to fledge. Population control becomes very difficult later into the season because they multiply rapidly. This is a major pest species — plan your control strategy now.
 - [European starlings and their control](#) (Cornell University)
 - [Starling Population Control Methods](#). (Wild Wing Company)
- **[Winter Moth/ Bruce Span Worm](#) blueberries:** Scouting for winter moth larvae should start as soon as the buds start swelling. We've had reports in problems beginning this last week. More of an ongoing issue in the northern growing regions but also an occasional, locally severe problem in some Oregon and SW Washington fields.
- **[Scale](#) blueberries:** A dormant oil or Esteem (pyriproxyfen) can be used while blueberries are dormant.

Industry News/Resources

Newsletters/ Berry Reports

- [Michigan State Extension Blueberry News](#) (3/5)
- [The Source](#) (3/4) *Market reports from The Produce News*

Magazine compilations

- The Packer's Market scope: [blueberries](#) [blackberries](#) [raspberries](#) [strawberries](#)
Recent stories and fresh market pricing for the various berries from The Packer.
- Growing Produce: [recent berry articles](#)

Berry Research Blogs

- [Strawberries and Caneberries blog](#) by Mark Bolda, UC Davis Berry Extension Agent. **Recent entry: 2/28—Field efficacy of the experimental insecticides sulfoxaflor, tolfenpyrad and flonicamid for lygus bugs in strawberry** *Reports on recent insect and disease research and observations in California.*
- [Team Rubus](#) by Gina Fernandez, North Carolina State Small Fruit Specialist. **Recent entry: 2/25—Are you ready for spring?** *Reports on issues in blackberries and raspberries from the Southeast.*
- [NC Small Fruit and Specialty Crop IPM](#) by Hannah Burrack, NCSU extension entomologist. **Recent entry: 2/21—What insecticides are acceptable where?** *Reports on insect issues in the Southeast.*

Pesticide Issues

- [EPA seeks input on proposed pesticide residue limits in or on various commodities](#) (2/27, Federal Register)
- [Chemical companies win appeal on pesticide lawsuit](#) (2/21, Growing Produce)

Crop Management

- [Gypsum enhances moisture availability and improves yields](#) (2/28, Ag Weekly)

Research/Breeding

- [Ecuador announces thornless blackberry variety](#) (2/27, Fresh Plaza)

Marketing

- [Consumers will pay more for local foods](#) (2/27, Food Navigator)
- [Sunsweet rolls out new dried berry products](#) (2/28, The Packer)

Technology

- [Deere introduces cell phone, tablet mounts for machine cabs](#) (2/28, The Grower)
- [Deere enhances field monitor's capabilities](#) (3/1, The Grower)

Food Safety

- [Pesticide data shows fresh produce safety record](#) (2/28, The Packer)

Labor & Immigration

- [Lawyer says DoL inspecting Columbia Gorge farms](#) (3/1, Capital Press)
- [Labor costs expected to rise 10% in 2013](#) (2/27, The Packer)
- (Florida) [Strawberries left unpicked in labor shortage](#) (2/28, Fresh Plaza)

Farm/Food Politics

- [Agriculture has slipped from D.C.'s radar screen](#) (2/25, Politico)

North America

- [Earlier harvesting opens Southeast blueberry season](#) (3/1, The Packer)
- [Blueberry states plan promotions, marketing programs](#) (3/1, The Packer)
- [Southeast blueberries business updates](#) (3/1, The Packer)
- [Florida strawberry growers most concerned about Mexico](#) (2/25, Growing Produce)
- [Walmart Foundation donates \\$3 million for strawberry sustainability](#) (2/26, Fresh Plaza)

International

- [Top global blueberry industry leaders to meet in Chile](#) (2/21, Fresh Fruit Portal)
- [Uruguay ranks among top blueberry and citrus exporters](#) (3/1, Fresh Fruit Portal)
- Chile: [Natural juice company looks for international niche](#) (2/19, Fresh Fruit Portal)

Event Calendar

For more comprehensive event calendar, [click here](#).

- **March 12 — Oregon Blueberry Commission** ~ Noon (budget preparation) at [Chemeteka Community College](#), Chemeketa Events at Winema, building 48, rooms 202 A and B. For more details call (503) 364-2944 or [email](#) Lisa Ostlund.
- **March 13 — Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission** ~ 10:30 am Langdon Farms Golf Club. [Click here](#) for the agenda. Call 541-758-4043 or [email](#) Phillip Gutt for more information.
- **March 20 — Washington Blueberry Commission: Workshop on Maximum Residue Levels** ~10:00 am to 3:00 pm Location TBA (in the Mt Vernon-Seattle vicinity). *An RSVP is required.* For information, please contact the Washington Blueberry Commission office abragg@centurytel.net, 509 266 4300.
- **April 10 — Washington Red Raspberry Commission** ~ Puyallup, WA. Call 360-354-8767 or [email](#) Henry Bierlink for more information.
- **New Posting: April 22-23 — International Blueberry Organization's 2nd Annual Meeting** ~ Santiago, Chile. [Click here](#) for the website.
- **April 23 — Oregon Blueberry Commission** ~ Noon (budget hearing) at [Chemeteka Community College](#), Chemeketa Events at Winema, building 48, rooms 202 A and B. For more details call (503) 364-2944 or email [Lisa Ostlund](#).
- **June 18-20 — Berry Health Benefits Symposium** ~ Charlotte, North Carolina. [Click here](#) for registration and agenda information.

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Archived Small Fruit Updates

(For older Updates [click here](#).)

[SFU02-19-13](#) [SFU02-05-13](#) [SFU01-23-13](#)

This document is a guide and not intended as a recommendation or endorsement.
Consult with your supplier, field representative, or pest consultant.