

# 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 18, 2014

Week 12

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### [The National Processed Raspberry Council](#)

This newly formed U.S. marketing council is now up and running! Click on the link above to go to their website.

- **Next Meeting:** May 29, SeaTac Marriott, Seattle
- **For information:** Tom Krugman, 360-354-0948

### International Blueberry Organization Conference report:

- [“There’s a lot of room for growth in blueberries,” says USHBC](#)  
(3/18, Fresh Fruit Portal)

Chile: [Raspberry prices expected to fall in 2014](#) (3/14, Fresh Plaza)

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

*I guess this is what we call ‘seasonal’ weather. Warm, cool, wet, dry, damp, cloudy. Everything except ‘extremes’—no deluges, droughts, wind storms, arctic events, volcano eruptions.*

*Actually seems decent for plant growth right now in the fields and they’re able to drain reasonably well. Field access/activities sure got a break this last week with some consecutive dry days.*

*A lot of logistics and planning are also going on in our office right now, too. With the seasonal field scouts lined up and ready for work, we’ll be getting the weekly field checks and insect monitoring traps going out in the next couple of weeks.*

*Here’s hoping for a low pressure SWD year!*

*Tom Peerbolt, SFU editor.*

**Note:** We changed the way we send out this newsletter last week to the much more user friendly, MailChimp system. If you’re having any difficulties with opening and using the SFU please let us know ASAP.

### 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](#)

## Blueberry Disease Alert

**Mummyberry (blueberries)**- Time to be in prevention mode! In fields with a history of mummyberry and at green tip stage, now's the time to be implementing your management program and keep it going as consistently as possible all the way through the end of bloom.

- **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](#)



*Mummyberry Apothecia are now present and releasing infective spores in many regional blueberry fields. (Photos by C. Teasdale)*

## Raspberry Disease Alert

**Northern areas: [Phytophthora Root Rot](#) raspberries & blueberries:** As soils warm and soil are saturated conditions are ideal for the spores of *Phytophthora* to spread from plant to plant. All precautions should be taken to inhibit the disease in fields at risk with soil drenches of Ridomil and doing whatever you can to keep roots out of the saturated soil zone.

### Regional reports

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*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

- **Blueberries** (Friday, 3/14):
  - **Duke** buds starting to open. Not quite at the "kings crown" stage but with expected nice weather coming by the end of next week we may be looking at mummyberry sprays. Some damage to buds on tips of laterals, 5% or less at this point (see picture below).



- **Reka** on higher peat soils about 50% at kings crown stage. Reka on sandy soils have about 75% at this stage. Time for sprays.
  - **Bluecrop** swollen and buds slightly cracked open. At least a week for mummyberry sprays.
  - **No span worm** spotted at this point.
  - **Areas west of Abbotsford** (Pitt Meadows) have made **first mummyberry application** on earlier varieties (Duke, Reka).
- **Blueberries** (Sunday, 3/16): Quite a diversity as to development stage out there in the blues. Mummyberry sprays will go on this week in a number of areas and varieties. Growers really have to look at their own fields closely and look at leaf bud growth as it's hard to generalize about varietal and regional advancement. Pre-emerge weed control underway. But it is wet in a lot of fields and this weekend deluge is not going to make early week field work easy.
  - **Raspberries** (Sunday, 3/16): In the raspberries, lime sulphur going on. Meekers still not opening up too much but Chemainus and Rudi buds are open and extending. Canes look good and I'm optimistic about lack of winter impact. If the weather backs off, we've got some new plantings to get in.

### Northern Washington, Whatcom County

- **Blueberries:** (Friday, 3/14) This week, sunshine, dry ground and no wind!! A rare combination for Whatcom in March. Finished Mummy cover spray at oh dark thirty Wednesday night. Buds on plants pushing very hard now. I was going to turn around and put Lime-sulfur cover on, but now concerned the window may have closed. Anybody have experience with late applications on blueberries?? I have seen applications in Raspberry and Blackberry, **very** late (floral buds out) and it was still OK.
- **Raspberries:** (Friday, 3/14) We got in a few things this week with the break in the weather. Ground is being worked and new raspberries are going in. A little late for our liking but with this weather what can you do. Lime sulfur is going on raspberries as well as some early herbicides to try to clean up fields that have had consistent weed issues in the past. Seeing quite a bit of winter damage in the raspberries. Some secondary and tertiary bids will push through making up a little of the difference.
- **Blueberries:** (Friday, 3/14) Spring herbicides going on in blues. In response to the question above, I think it's a little late for lime/oil in blues. Things have progressed pretty quickly. I've seen them get pretty toasty at this time. Some have started early mummy berry sprays and the majority will go on next week. Either way crops are looking good so far.
- **Strawberries:** (Friday, 3/14) Strawberries are just starting to push and some pre emerge still being put on. Weather started to turn sour again for the weekend so hopefully we can get a full week in sometime soon.

### Western Oregon, Willamette Valley

- **Blackberries** (Tuesday, 3/18): Most of the sulfur is on the blacks. Some herbicides going on and fertilizer is starting to be applied. Nice weather for all activities. Some of the weaker Marion fields are starting to show signs of cold damage.

**Regional Reports continued on next page**

**Black Diamond bud development. Top -- 3/14/14. Bottom -- 3/15/13.**  
**Again, same field, different location** (Photos by Bill Dinger)



- **Blueberries** (Friday, 3/14): Dukes are at tight cluster stage in most fields. Temperatures are remaining relatively cool. We're running a little behind last year in degree days. There's a chance that we suffered some cold damage but nothing I've seen yet. Right now most fields look very good.

**Blueberry bud development—Western Willamette Valley 3-14-14**



Blue Jay

Draper

Duke

Liberty

Patriot

## Meet Dr. Lisa Wasko Devetter, our new WSU Berry Crop Specialist

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Our new Washington State University (WSU) berry crop specialist, Lisa Wasko DeVetter has arrived! Lisa is originally from Iowa, where she earned her BS and MS in horticulture, soil science, and biology at Iowa State University. She recently completed her PhD at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and studied yield components, bud development, and return bloom in cranberry.

- **New Posting: March 21 — WSU Skagit Berry Breakfast and Workshop** ~ 8:30-10:30, WSU NWREC, 16650 S.R. 536, Mount Vernon. [Click here](#) for directions. [Click here](#) for the agenda. Meet the newest WSU NWREC Faculty member Lisa Wasko DeVetter.
- **Monday, March 31 — Open House, Meet & Greet for Lisa Wasko DeVetter** ~ 10 AM to 1 PM, Washington Red Raspberry Commission office, 1796 Front Street, Lynden.
- **Contact information: Lisa Wasko DeVetter**, Assistant Professor, Berry Crops, WSU Mount Vernon NWREC, Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
**E-mail:** [lisa.devetter@wsu.edu](mailto:lisa.devetter@wsu.edu), **Office:** 360-848-6124, **Cell:** 515-480-0383

## Late winter/early spring weather risks

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### 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)
- [Frost & freeze protection: Blueberries](#) ([www.eXtension.org](http://www.eXtension.org))

[Click here](#) to go back to the top of this newsletter.



## Grower Resources

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### From Maria Jeffries at the BC Ministry of Ag's Plant Health Lab

*“As the new season is about to begin, we were wondering if you could include the following links in the Small Fruit Update for our growers.” Maria*

- [How to Submit Plant Samples for Diagnosis](#)
- [How to Submit Blueberry Plants for Diagnosis](#)
- **Contact Information:**  
**Maria Jeffries**, British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Plant and Animal Health Branch, Plant Health Coordinator  
1767 Angus Campbell Road, Abbotsford BC V3G 2M3  
Phone: 604-556-3127 Fax: 604-556-3154 Toll Free: 1-888-221-7141 Email: [Maria.Jeffries@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Maria.Jeffries@gov.bc.ca)

## Industry news/resources

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### Newsletters/ Berry reports

- [Whatcom Ag Monthly](#) Produced by WSU Whatcom County Extension. Includes excellent berry crop information.
- [National Berry Report](#) Daily fresh market berry reports. Hosted by the California Strawberry Commission, this report is generated from data from the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service and is updated daily.
- [General Produce Company's Weekly Market Report](#) (3/17)

### Magazine/website compilations

- **The Packer:** [blueberries](#), [blackberries](#), [raspberries](#), [strawberries](#).  
Recent stories and fresh market pricing for the various berries from *The Packer*.
- **Growing Produce:** [recent berry articles](#).
- **Fresh Fruit Portal:** [blueberries](#), [blackberries](#), [raspberries](#), [strawberries](#).  
Recent stories for the various berries from *Fresh Fruit Portal*.

### Berry research blogs

- [Strawberries and Caneberries](#) by Mark Bolda, UC Davis Berry Extension Agent. **Recent entry: 3/11—LBAM** (*Light Brown Apple Moth*) **flight ticking up—time for berry growers to be alert** Reports on recent insect and disease research and observations in California.
- [Team Rubus](#) by Gina Fernandez, North Carolina State Small Fruit Specialist. Reports on issues in blackberries and raspberries from the Southeast.

### Technology/equipment

- [pH testing: There's an app for that now](#) (3/12, Precision Ag)

### Immigration/ Ag Labor

- [Immigration study to be released at DC event](#) (3/17, The Packer)

### West

- [California strawberry season off to fast start](#) (3/14, The Packer)

### North America

- Eastern Canada, wild blueberries: [Blueberry plant gets \\$6 million investment from Ottawa](#) (3/14, Fresh Plaza)

### International

(FFP=*Fresh Fruit Portal*)

- Mexico: [World blueberry industry leaders discuss production](#) (3/14, The Packer)
- Mexico: [Mexico presents serious blueberry potential](#) (3/14, Fresh Plaza)
- E.U.: [Tariff on dried blueberries from U.S. suspended](#) (3/13, NABC)
- Chile: [Blueberry demand strong as Chile winds down](#) (3/12, The Packer)

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## Blueberry Nutrient Management

We're getting into a traditional time for applying fertilizer. Many growers still apply the first blueberry application just before the buds break. Research has shown that 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.

- [Click here](#) For OSU's "Nutrient Management in Blueberries" (16 page pdf).

## Crop Work/Pest Management Activities

## Week 12

### All crops

- **Weed management.**
- **Scout for and plan for Voles:** **Baits cannot be used after bud break.** 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 ( and 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.

### Blueberries

- **Alert:** [Mummyberry](#) (blueberries) Treat for mummyberry as needed.

- Scout for bud damage & determine cause.
- Dormant oil can be applied for scale and winter moth egg control before bud break.
- Can apply Bacterial Blight (*Pseudomonas*) management materials.
- **Scout for [Pseudomonas \(Bacterial Blight\)](#)** Water-soaked lesions usually appear in February in some fields that then develop into reddish brown to black cankers.
  - [Click here](#) for a PCM Research Update on bacterial blight first posted on 1/3/13.
- **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 previous years of problems beginning this early but it's usually in a couple of weeks. 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](#):** A dormant oil or Esteem (pyriproxyfen) can be used while blueberries are dormant.

### Blackberries

- Scout for [purple blotch](#) lesions in Marion berries to assess field disease levels for later treatments.
- Can apply lime sulfur for [redberry mite](#) and/or disease management.

### Raspberries

- Can apply lime sulfur for disease 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.

## 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.

## Food Safety Meetings

### OR Blueberry, Strawberry, and Raspberry & Blackberry Commissions

**Free Food Safety "Train the Trainers" Workshops—3 hour program**

[Click here](#) for all the information and to sign up

- **March 19** — HBF International, McMinnville
- **March 21** — FOOD for Lane County, Eugene
- **March 27** — Columbia Gorge CC, The Dalles
- **March 28** — Pine Grove Grange, Hood River
- **April 3** — Fairview Grange, Tillamook
- **April 4** — Lincoln City Cultural Center, Lincoln City
- **April 16** — OSU Seafood Research & Education Center in Astoria
- **April 23** — Unger Farm Store, Cornelius
- **April 25** — Santo Community Center, Medford

## Event Calendar

- **March 19 — Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission meeting** ~ Committee meetings start at 9 am. Regular meeting at 12. [Click here](#) for the agenda. At Langdon Farms Golf Club. Call 541-758-4043 or [email Phillip Gutt](#) for more information.
- **New Posting: March 21 — WSU Skagit Berry Breakfast and Workshop** ~ 8:30-10:30, WSU NWREC, 16650 S.R. 536, Mount Vernon. [Click here](#) for directions. [Click here](#) for the agenda. *Meet the newest WSU NWREC Faculty member Lisa Wasko DeVetter.*
- **Monday, March 31 — Open House, Meet & Greet for Lisa Wasko DeVetter** ~ 10 AM to 1 PM, Washington Red Raspberry Commission office, 1796 Front Street, Lynden.
- **April 2-3 — Oregon Precision Farming Expo** ~ Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum, McMinnville, OR. [Click here](#) for information and tickets. *Unmanned systems, robotics, ag drones, data systems, automation, remote sensing, oh boy!*
- **April 3 — Oregon Strawberry Commission meeting.** Committee meetings start at 4:30. Regular meeting at 6. At Langdon Farms Golf Club. Call 541-758-4043 or [email Phillip Gutt](#) for more information.
- **April 7- 9 — Global Berry Congress** ~ in Amsterdam. [Click here](#) for the conference's information page and registration.
- **April 9 — Washington Red Raspberry Commission** ~ Board meeting in Puyallup. [Contact Henry Bierlink](#) for more information.
- **April 29 — Oregon Blueberry Commission** ~ 12 pm (Budget Hearing), at Chemeketa Events at Winema, Building 48, Room 210. Contact Bryan Ostlund for more information at 503-364-2944 or [bryan@ostlund.com](mailto:bryan@ostlund.com).
- **May 11-13 — International Raspberry Organization** ~ Chuzhou, China. [Contact Henry Bierlink](#) for more information.
- **May 29 — National Processed Raspberry Council**, SeaTac Marriott, Seattle, WA. For more information, call Tom Krugman at 360-354-0948. [Click here](#) for the Council's website.
- **June 11 — OSU Strawberry Open House** ~ 1:00-4:30pm North [Willamette Research and Extension Center](#) (NWREC) *A focus on the breeding program & research for commercial growers. Details TBA.*
- **July 9 — OSU Caneberry Field Day** ~ 1:00-5:00pm [North Willamette Research and Extension Center](#) (NWREC) *A focus on the breeding program & research on conventional and organic production systems for commercial growers. Details TBA.*
- **July 16 — OSU Blueberry Field Day** ~ 1:00 – 5:00pm [North Willamette Research and Extension Center](#) (NWREC) *A focus on the breeding program & research on conventional and organic production systems for commercial growers. Details TBA.*

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## Archived Small Fruit Updates

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

[11-SFU03-11-14](#)   [10-SFU03-04-14](#)   [09-SFU02-25-14](#)

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