

# 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 24, 2015

Week 13

## Table of Contents

[Disease Alerts](#)

[Blueberry Bud Development](#)

[Events and Meetings](#)

[Pest Management](#)

[Industry News](#)

## ***The U.S. berry season starts on a weather roller coaster:***

- California: [Strawberry season starts early](#) (3/20, Merced Sun-Star)
- California: ['Highly unusual' weather to accelerate summer crop season](#) (3/18, Fresh Fruit Portal)
- Washington: [Warm, weird weather puts state's crops ahead of schedule](#) (3/3, WSU News)
- Georgia: [Deep Freezes Impact Blueberry Crop](#) (3/19, Thomasville Times-Enterprise)
- Florida: [Blueberry Farmers Expect Long Harvest](#) (3/22, Tampa Bay Times)

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

## Regional reports

### **British Columbia, Fraser Valley** (Monday, 3/23)

- **Blueberries:** The weather's turning a bit wet and cooler and may slow things a bit. But I think we're in pretty deep right now to be held up too much. Some Reka in early bloom on Sumas Prairie near Abbotsford and Duke with a few flowers popping but not the real deal yet. It's amazing how strongly Bluecrop is advancing. In some areas it appears to be neck to neck with Duke. Nobody appears to be placing bees yet but some warm weather this week could force that hand by next weekend in the early areas. Blues look good with no perceptible damage yet. But still highly variable in development through the area.
- **Raspberries:** I've seen some raspberry cane damage (dead loops and lower cane bud death) that appears to be linked to last fall. I don't believe it can be winter injury as we've not had any winter. So far it is localized to a few farms that are close to each other and doesn't appear to be a general condition.

### **British Columbia, Fraser Valley** (Monday, 3/23)

*Have heard that SWD numbers are very high for this time of year thanks to our not really having a winter. The lack of snowpack--we are 30% of normal--is becoming a more common topic.*

### **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**

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

### **National**

[North American Blueberry Council](#)

**Week 13--British Columbia  
From Left: Duke, Reka, Bluecrop**

*Photos by Jason Smith*



- **Blueberries:** Things are continuing to move along with warm temperatures. Reka 100% pink tip in Abbotsford area and beginning to flower at Northwest end of the valley. Also Duke beginning to flower there and have seen the odd one mid-Valley (Abbotsford area). It seems to be very variable depending where you are as Duke in my area that's 10 km away is about a week behind. A bit of pink bud on Bluecrop and Elliot a bit behind. Northland and Bluejays at 10-20% bloom on west end of the valley (Delta). No damage evident from earlier cold temperatures so at this point. I'm thinking we made it through. Pre-emerge herbicides and some mummyberry products still going on.
- **Raspberries:** Some growers beginning to put fertilizer on raspberries. They don't seem to be as far ahead as the blueberries are and neither do the strawberries.

**British Columbia, Fraser Valley** (Friday, 3/20)

- **Blueberries/raspberries/strawberries/Haskap:** Blooms are now showing up open in various varieties, but still very spotty. Not bee time yet but its closing in... I have (don't laugh) the '[Pink Lemonade](#)' blueberry cultivar in full bloom here. Our weather has been a bit on the wet side, but it is just not getting cold anymore. Therefore plants are pushing ahead big time for blueberries and even more so for raspberries, where the largest increase in shoot length has been noticed last week. Strawberries are still somewhat behind, as they are on the ground which is still somewhat cooler. The rains will wash in the residual herbicides nicely, so are welcome. Lots of activity in the fields whenever it is not raining. We are still about 14 days ahead of normal in the Eastern Fraser Valley. It does at this time appear that the frosts of two weeks ago have caused no damage yet. We are still prone to get more cold and lots more rain, so we are far from being out of the woods. Haskap have set fruit and developing fast and furious, I predict an end of May first fruit. Even grapes are now pushing buds out and the first green has appeared. Cranberries are now vulnerable and are showing signs of breaking bud. Never mind the weeds, they are prolific and covering every brown patch of soil with green. Snapweed is seeding already. Horsetail is "seeding" and growing furiously in wet, compacted soils. It is now easy for the weeds to get out of hand.

**Northern Washington, Whatcom County** (Monday, 3/23)

- **Raspberries & blueberries:** Like BC, things have slowed here, but not very much. Too early for bees, but it won't be long. Some cane damage in raspberries showing here as well. Again, probably from last fall's cold snap.

**Western Oregon, Willamette Valley** (Friday, 3/20)

*Not seeing any signs of plant development slowdown with night temps now rising things are actually accelerating.*

- **All crops:** Fertilizer and herbicides also being applied to all crops. New plantings of strawberries and caneberries are going in. We're also just getting the first seasonal scout going today and will get the first SWD traps out next week. That should be interesting...
- **Blueberries:** Bees are in a lot of blueberry fields at this point. Dukes, Berkeley, Reka, Bluegold, Patriots, Bluejay and, of course, Legacy are all showing open bloom. Along with some guys trying to finish up pruning in blues. Fungicide applications going on for both mummyberry and first bloom in blues which is good with more moisture coming this week.
- **Blackberries:** (Monday, 3/20) Caneberries are also looking very green with primocane emergence moving fast. If we can make it through without a late cold event, the crop potential looks great.
- **Strawberries:** (Sunday, 3/20) Flower trusses are now emerging in June bearers. Some of the day neutrals are making a good attempt at first fruit formation. We'll see how that works out for them. No winter damage. Fields are looking good. New fields are being planted.



## Disease Alerts

**Blueberries:** [Mummyberry](#) We have open Mummyberry apothecia (see photo's above) and fields being vulnerable to infections throughout the region. With prolonged periods of leaf/tissue wetness and temperatures in the 50's we'll be seeing infections. Get a management program in place in fields at risk ASAP. Green tip stage is the plant development stage when they can be infected—we're well past that.

- **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.
  - **12 hours of leaf/tissue wetness is required for infection.**

**Raspberries & blackberries:** [Raspberry Crown Borer](#) We've seen an upswing in reports of crown borer damage the last couple of years. If you've had issues or it's been a few years since you've treated, now is the time to consider getting an insecticide crown drench on.

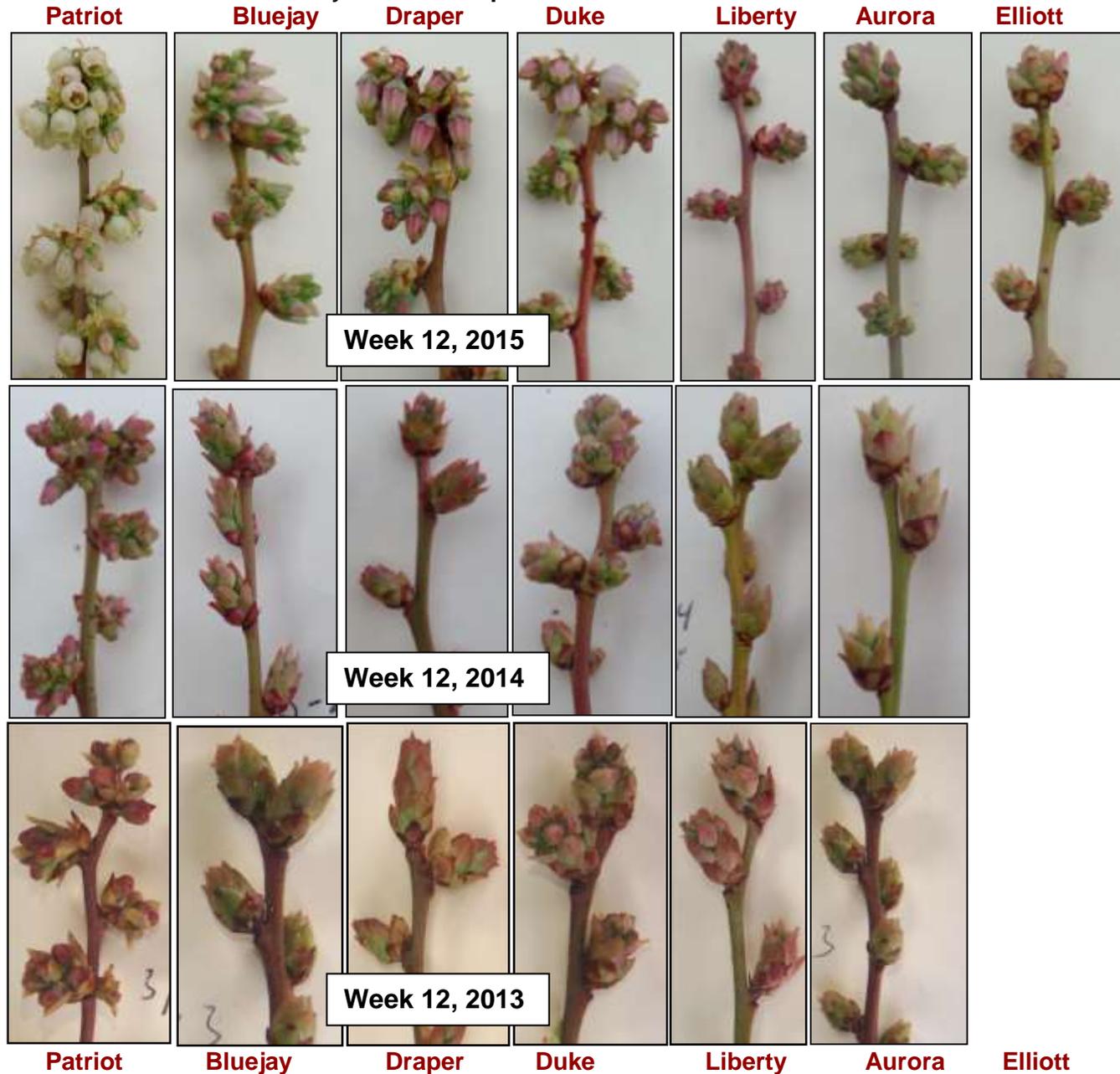
**Raspberries & Blueberries:** [Phytophthora Root Rot](#) As soils warm and saturate, conditions are ideal for the spores of Phytophthora to spread from plant to plant. All precautions should be taken to inhibit the disease in fields at risk with soil drenches of Ridomil and doing whatever you can to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

## Blueberry Bud Development Comparison for the Western Willamette Valley

I've switched up the comparisons now that I've got 3 years of photos. I've eliminated the last week photos in the center row to make room for comparisons of the same week for the last three years. Same fields.

Northwestern Willamette Valley

Top – 3/20/15 Middle – 3/21/14 Bottom – 3/22/13



## Degree Day Updates

- [WSU Extension—Whatcom County](#)
- [Regional sites—Updated by Len Coop, OSU-IPPC](#) click on the link, go to right hand column & click on the Degree day icon.

## Classified (second week)

Liquidation Sale—Berry Processing Equipment available for a start up processor or small grower:

Mike and Jean Youngquist (Mike and Jean's Berry Farm/Skagit Growers, Inc.) are liquidating. [Go here](#) for the flyer describing what they have available. Contact Mike for further information ([email](#) or call: 360 424-7220/cell: 360 770-4670).

## WA Berry Grower Workshops on Food Safety & Labor Regulations

Sponsored by the Washington Blueberry & Raspberry Commissions

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All Sites: 9 - 5, RSVP Required, [Go here](#) for the agenda and to register.

### Purpose:

- What do growers need to know about Food Safety to protect themselves and their customers?
- What do growers need to know about Labor regulations to protect themselves and their workers?

### Dates & Locations

- **March 25 — Mt. Vernon** ~ WSU-NWREC, 16650 Highway 536.
- **March 26 — Lynden** ~ NW Washington Fair- Rotary Building, 1775 Front Street.

## Upcoming Regional Events & Commission Meetings

[Go here for Full Event Calendar](#)

- **April 8 — Washington Red Raspberry Commission meeting.** In Puyallup, WA. Contact Henry Bierlink for more information by [email](#) or phone 360-354-8767
- **New Posting: April 16 — Washington Blueberry Commission meeting.** In Lynden, WA. 10:30 at the Steakhouse 9 Restaurant at the Homestead, 115 East Homestead Blvd. For more information, contact Alan Schreiber by [email](#) or phone 509 266-4305

## Oregon State Open House Events

Details to be announced. At the North Willamette Research and Extension Center, Aurora, OR. Contact Bernadine Strik with questions, [Bernadine.strik@oregonstate.edu](mailto:Bernadine.strik@oregonstate.edu)

- **June 10 — OSU Strawberry Open House.** 1-4:30
- **July 1 — OSU Caneberry Open House** 1-5:00
- **July 8 — OSU Blueberry Open House.** 1-5:00

## Upcoming National & International Berry Events

- **April 9 — British Columbia Blueberry Council 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** ~ The Royal King Palace, Surrey, BC. 5:30. Call the Council's office at 604-864-2117 for tickets. [Go here](#) for information. [Go hear](#) for more details from Modern Agriculture magazine.
- **May 18-19 — National Processed Raspberry Council** ~ Semiahmoo Resort in Blaine, WA. [Go here](#) to make hotel reservations or call phone 360-318-2000. Be sure to identify yourself as part of the National Processed Raspberry Council. For more information, please contact Tom Krugman, 360-354-0948, [TKrugman@redrazz.org](mailto:TKrugman@redrazz.org)
- **June 18-24 — Eleventh International Rubus and Ribes Symposium** ~ Charlotte & Asheville, North Carolina. [Go here](#) for their website with all the details.
- **September 7-9 — 5<sup>th</sup> Annual International Blueberry Organization Summit**~ Coffs Harbor, Australia. [Go here](#) for meeting information.
- **September 13-16 — International Symposium on Mechanical Harvesting & Handling of Fruits and Nuts** ~ Richland, Washington. [Go here](#) for meeting information.

## Pest Management

### Brown Marmorated Stink Bug

- [USDA uses man's best friend to track stink bug](#) (3/23, Growing Produce)
- [Stink Bug predator found in U.S.](#) (3/18, Growing Produce)

### Blueberry Diseases

- [Green Fruit Drop in 'Draper': A Quick Fix?](#) (March issue, Whatcom Ag Monthly)

### Red Raspberry Weed Management

- [Herbicide Trial Results](#) (March issue, Whatcom Ag Monthly)

## Usual March Pest Management

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In most years activities involving the management of the following pests happen 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.

## 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.*
- [The Source](#) (3/23) *Produce marketing news from Pro\*Act.*
- [Fresh News](#) (3/23) *Produce news from the San Francisco Produce Market*

### Magazine/website compilations

- **The Packer**: [blueberries](#), [blackberries](#), [raspberries](#), [strawberries](#).
- **Growing Produce**: [recent berry articles](#).
- **Fruitnet-Eurofruit**: [recent berry articles](#).
- **Fresh Fruit Portal**: [blueberries](#), [blackberries](#), [raspberries](#), [strawberries](#).

### Berry research blogs

- [Strawberries and Caneberries](#) by Mark Bolda, UC Davis Berry Extension Agent. **Recent entry (3/18)**: **Importance of scouting for Light Brown Apple Moth** *Reports on recent insect and disease research and observations in California.*
- [Team Rubus](#) by Gina Fernandez, North Carolina State Small Fruit Specialist. **Recent entry (3/9)**: **Monitoring flower to fruit development of blackberries** *Reports on issues in blackberries and raspberries from the Southeast.*

### Climate/Water

- Oregon: [Snowstorm expected in Oregon Cascades](#) (3/23, Capital Press)
- Oregon: [Bad water situation in Eastern Oregon getting worse](#) (3/18, Capital Press)

- California: [Governor proposes \\$1 billion in drought spending](#) (3/20, Capital Press)
- Washington: [Warm, weird weather puts Washington crops ahead of schedule](#) (3/10, Farmer-Stockman)

#### **Technology**

- [Sprayer drone suited to awkward terrain](#) (3/23, Capital Press)

#### **Labor**

- [Washington Supreme Court hears case for farmers' rights](#) (3/17, KIMATV.com)

#### **The West**

- British Columbia: [Raspberry redactions leave sour taste](#) (3/10, The Record)

#### **North America**

- Georgia: [Blueberry growers suffer chill damage](#) (3/23, Growing Produce)
- Georgia: [Deep freezes impact blueberry crop](#) (3/18, Thomasville Times-Enterprise)
- Florida: [Blueberry growers 'pleased' with fruit set](#) (3/18, Fresh Fruit Portal)
- Ontario: [Berry growers eye marketing board](#) (3/20, Better Farming)

#### **International**

##### **Chile**

- [Chilean Blueberry Committee Crop & Exports Report for Week 12](#) (3/16-3/22)

##### **Mexico**

- [Mexican berries out to conquer China](#) (3/16, Fresh Plaza)

##### **Europe**

- [Mediocre demand for raspberries and blueberries](#) (3/19, Fresh Plaza)

## **Archived Small Fruit Updates**

*(For older Updates [go here.](#))*

[12-SFU03-17-15](#)

[11-SFU03-10-15](#)

[10-SFU03-03-15](#)