

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.

April 1, 2015

Week 14

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Welcome to our historically early spring. All kinds of things are happening...sooner than normal...

- Blueberry bloom is moving rapidly along. In the Willamette Valley we've hit 10% Duke bloom earlier than I can remember.
- Some cold damage is now being reported both in blackberries in Oregon and in raspberries in Whatcom County and B.C. The amount of damage is still being evaluated.
- Shock virus symptoms are becoming very obvious in southern blueberries.
- With a mild, wet weather forecast, fungal diseases of all kinds will be favored. Stay on top of fungicide applications especially for Mummyberry in blues and botrytis in all the berry crops.
- OSU entomologist Amy Dreves reports the first evidence of SWD larvae recovery in the fruit of the ornamental, Sarcococca (Sweet Box) in Corvallis. Could be a very high pressure SWD year.
- With the scouts and the monitoring traps now in place—our first SWD catches for 2015 will be coming in soon.
- Hope the bees have some good pollination windows over the next couple of weeks. At least here in the Willamette Valley, we got a lot of blueberry bloom open.
- And...be prepared for frost protection. It could really be important this month.

**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](#)

Tom Peerbolt, SFU Editor

Processed Raspberry Industry Survey

The National Processed Raspberry Council (NPRC) is conducting an online survey about growing raspberries for processing. The purpose of this survey is to gather opinions from growers regarding the NPRC and its programs. This confidential online survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete. If you grow raspberries for processing, please take this survey and share your thoughts with the NPRC.

Click here to take survey: www.RaspberrySurvey.com

Regional reports

Tuesday, 3/31 PM: Quick update. Fraser valley had heavy hail storms all morning. Yet to confirm how blueberry flowers held up

British Columbia, Fraser Valley (Tuesday, 3/31)

- **Blueberries:** We've moved some bees into a few fields the last few days with more likely by the weekend. Bloom on Dukes has been slow to come but a day or two of warm conditions will cause considerable flowering on this and Bluecrop. When things open up it could happen very quickly. Northland and Reka well into bloom. I've even seen open flowers on Elliot. This is a weird spring. Fertilizing is under way and incredibly there is still a little pruning going on. I'm a bit anxious about the weather for early April as it appears that a lot of pollination may have to occur in the first half. So warm days without rain are necessary. This is not what the forecasts appear to be promising. Looks unsettled.

Raspberries: Meeker raspberries are really slow moving at the moment. However, the warm weekend did make a difference. Seeing more winter damage in this variety than I had at first believed was there. It appears that some issues with dormancy were at play to cause this. Chemainus, Rudi and Saanich are ok. Clay coloured weevils are now up in the canes feeding on buds and leaves, so look for controls to be applied now.

British Columbia, Fraser Valley (Sunday, 3/28)

- **Blueberries:** Rain combined with incredibly warm temperatures, 22C (72F) in the Fraser Valley on March 26, is pushing vegetative growth like crazy. Blueberry blooms just sadly hanging there in the rains. Had a big storm Friday to Saturday night with strong winds and heavy rains, which makes field work near impossible and the blooms took a bit of a beating with a few fallen off. If we get two days of solid sunshine sometime soon we could have a lot of flowers pop open quickly. Duke and Reka for sure, with other varieties not too far behind. The bumble bees are actively searching out the few open blooms. Protection of the flowers needs to be strongly considered as they are now wet for long time periods.
- **Strawberries:** Strawberries now pushing trusses out.
- **Haskap:** Early [Haskap](#) have set fruit, 4 weeks to first ripe fruit, three weeks earlier than last year thus far.
- **Caneberries:** Huge growth on raspberries and blackberries now, primocane growth also.

British Columbia, Fraser Valley

- **Blueberries:** (Tuesday, 3/31) Things are progressing with the warm weather. There is a lot of variability in the same varieties from area to area and even between fields within 2 km of each other. Reka beginning bloom (5-10%) and Duke just starting to see a handful of open flowers per plant. Bluecrop and Elliot are a bit behind but not as much as I would expect them to be.
Growers applying pre-emergent herbicides and hopefully they waited until after the high amounts of rainfall we have had recently. Hoping for the weather to change so fungicides can be applied. Many fields



saturated and need at least a day or 2 of dry weather to drain off so growers can get out there without making a pile more work to clean things up after.

Expect some berry busy bee keepers over the next week as if we get some heat and dry, things will jump. Hoping flowering isn't too condensed and growers have a high number of hives per acre because of projected weather and possibly short pollination window. Hail expected today (Tuesday) but hoping they are wrong as this could cause huge amounts of damage at this point. Growers organizing fertilizer programs but nothing really being applied yet in blueberries. Some fertilizer going on in raspberries with a bigger push expected in the next week. It certainly is an interesting year...

Northern Washington, Whatcom County (Monday, 3/30)

- **Raspberries & blueberries:** There's tremendous advancement over weekend with all crops. The raspberries are pushing hard. In the blues, the bees aren't flying with this rainy, windy weather. Lower day temperatures, but warm nights will keep things moving.

Northern Washington (Tuesday, 3/30) *From WSU Small Fruit horticulturist, Lisa Wasco DeVetter:*

- **Blueberries:** We have 'Duke' and others in bloom within the Mount Vernon/Burlington and Lynden areas, with other earlier varieties not far behind. Bloom has also started in eastern Washington. While the flowers are blooming, the honeybees are still being moved into fields in the western part of the state and I've seen some fields still without their honeybees. Thus, depressed yield due to insufficient and poor pollination is a concern, particularly for areas where bloom is more advanced and honeybees are still largely absent. The cooler and damp weather anticipated for the week ahead will likely further reduce honeybee activity.
- **Raspberries:** Raspberries have grown quite a bit this past week. Growers are fertilizing and report substantial cold damage in certain pockets around the Lynden area.

Northern Washington, Skagit County (Tuesday, 3/31)

- **Blueberries:** Blueberry bloom has been advancing very rapidly with warm soil and air temps. Early blooming varieties like Reka are ready for bees (photo above). Now is a good time to make sure dandelions and other bee-attractive weeds are well managed so they do not distract the bees from the blueberry blossoms. It looks like wet, cool weather for the rest of this week; not ideal weather for honeybee pollination. Now that there are open blooms, it's an important time to keep good coverage on for both mummyberry and Botrytis.

Western Oregon, Willamette Valley

- **Blueberries:** (Monday, 3/20) Blueberry bloom is emerging very quickly in the Willamette Valley. We've got petal fall in some Patriot and Legacy fields. Looks like the pollination window could be, as well as early, fairly short. Not prime. So...could definitely see some poor pollination effects. Could see Dukes in early June... I know—this is a lot of speculation. But this isn't slowing down much and each week we get into it the less likely that it will. Be prepared I guess is the motto to use.
- **Blackberries:** (Tuesday, 3/31) There is cold damage in the Marions, showing more every warm day we have. The prevailing theory is that it came from the cold we had in November when the plants were coming off a warm October and were not fully dormant. Although there is no consistent pattern it seems to be worse in the fields where the water was running later keeping them actively growing longer. Also, the usual older weaker fields. Both EY and AY are affected. It is too early to predict the overall significance but yields will be reduced. There also appears to be some damage in the Black Diamonds, minor at this point. At first I suspected herbicide drift but it is in every field I have seen, deformed leaves and buds opening with no flower development. It will take a little more warm weather to sort it all out but something to keep an eye on. Herbicides and lime sulfur going on, fertilizer mostly done. We are still at least two weeks ahead, probably more like three.



AY Marionberries, 3/30/15 Photo by Bill Dinger

- **Strawberries:** (Sunday, 3/29) Some strawberry June bearers will get to 10% bloom this coming week. Figuring 7 weeks to the ripe fruit, that'd put first ripe fruit in Mid May. Definitely on the early side.



Week 13-- North Willamette Valley Strawberries-- Most advanced buds
 Left-1st year Hood; Middle-2nd year Albion; Right-2nd year Albion-cold damage

Northwest Berry Nutrient Management Guides

- [Nutrient management in blueberries](#) (OSU)
- [Nutrient management in caneberries](#) (OSU)
- [B.C. interactive berry management guides](#)
- [June bearing strawberries fertilizer guide](#) (OSU)
- [Growing day-neutral strawberries in Western Washington](#) (WSU)

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.*

Disease Alerts

Blueberries: Mummyberry We have open Mummyberry apothecia 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.

Pest Management

- [Slugs remain a mystery, experts say](#) (3/26, Capital Press)

Blueberry Bud Development Comparison for the Western Willamette Valley

Protocols for these photos: 1) Each Friday I take 5-7 cuttings from the same fields in the NW Willamette Valley. 2) Later in the day I look over the cuttings to and choose what seems the most 'representative' (not the most advanced or the least advanced). I'm aiming for the development stage that best represents the fruit that would be the first harvested.

This year continues to be well ahead in development over the last two years.

Northwestern Willamette Valley

Top – 3/27/15 Middle – 3/21/14 Bottom – 3/22/13

Patriot

Bluejay

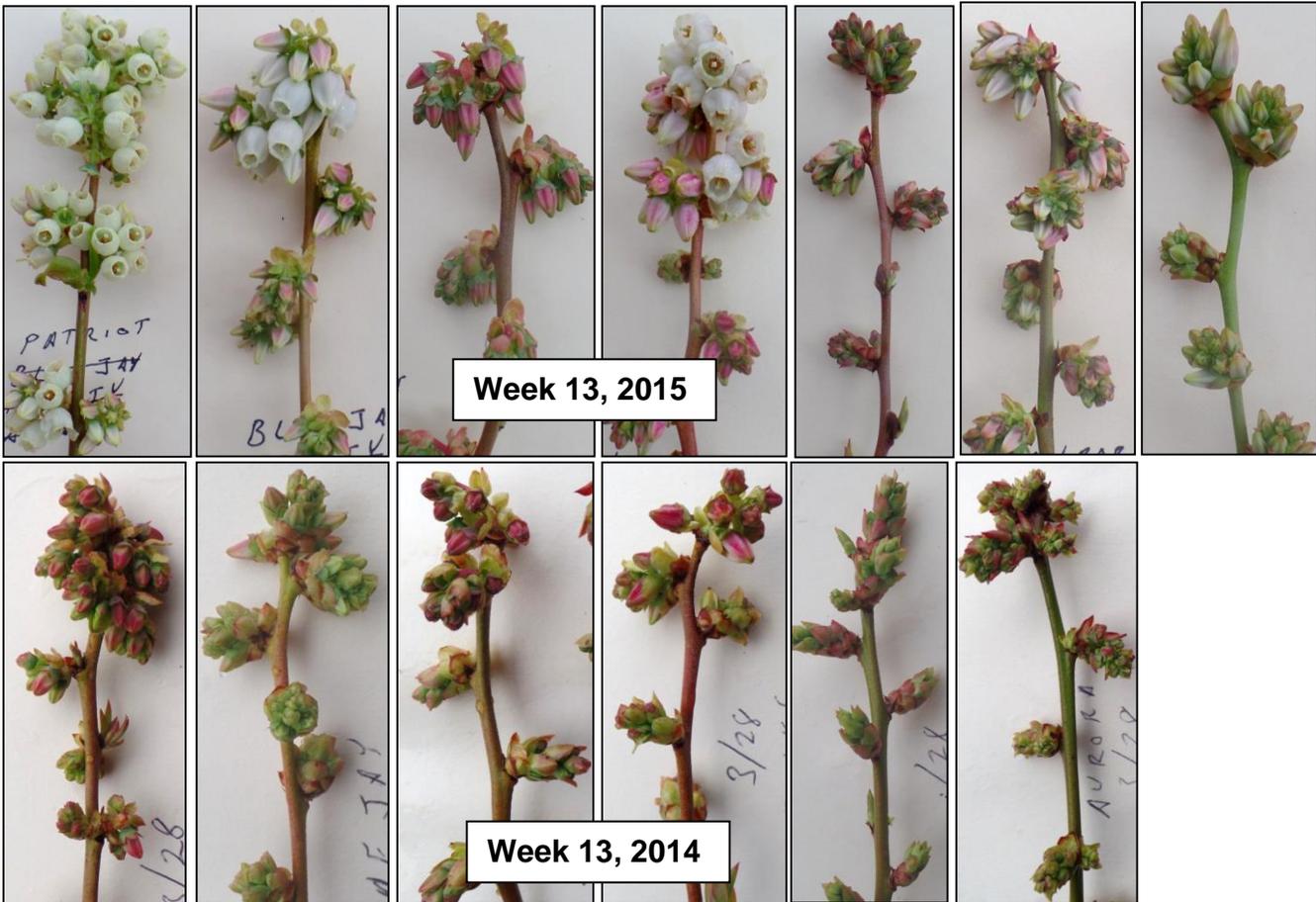
Draper

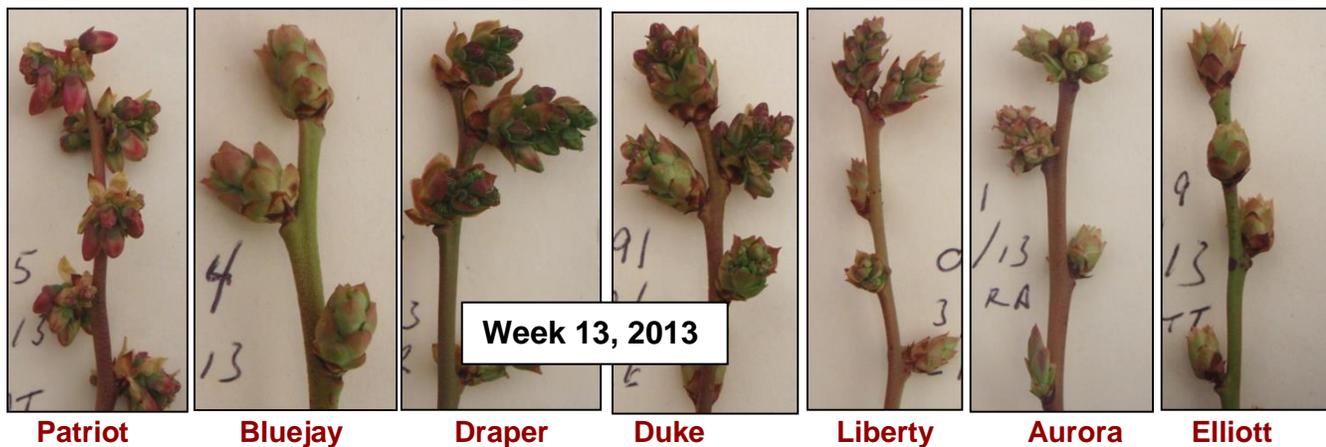
Duke

Liberty

Aurora

Elliott





Classifieds -- Job offers

If you have job openings or services that we might be able to help get the word out on, let me know (tom@peerbolt.com). This is free.

- **Briggs Nursery, Elma, WA is looking for a Container nursery grower.** [Go here](#) for more details and/or contact Janet @ jnelson@briggsnursery.com or 360-482-6190 ext. 106, for a detailed job description.
- **Monte Creek Ranch Winery** in Kamloops, B.C. is looking for 2 Vineyard Foremen. [Go here](#) for more details.

Industry news/resources

Commission News

- [Oregon Raspberry and Blackberry Commission News](#) (3/30)

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](#) (3/30) Produce marketing news from Pro*Act.

Magazine/website compilations

- **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 (3/23): A little biography about your author** 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.

Research/Plant Breeding

- Strawberries: [Disease resistance high on UC Davis breeder's list](#) (3/24, The Packer)

Labor

- [Group targets Washington grower, Driscoll's over labor dispute](#) (3/31, The Packer)
- Washington: [State health agency rewriting farmworker housing standards](#) (3/27, Capital Press)
- California: [Bill touts farmworkers' rights in light of Gerawan dispute](#) (3/24, Capital Press)
- [Where America's undocumented immigrants work](#) (3/27, The Washington Post)

The West

- California: [Warm, dry weather pushes strawberry season](#) (3/27, Capital Press)

North America

- [Florida blueberries begin light, Georgia to start later volume](#) (3/31 The Packer)

International

- [What you missed at Global Berry Congress 2015](#) (3/25, Eurofruit)
- [Retail berry revenue in U.S. bigger than bananas or apples](#) (3/25, Fresh Plaza)

Chile

- [Chile important player for US blueberry imports](#) (3/30, Fresh Plaza)
- [Chilean blueberry export volumes up +20%](#) (3/27, Fresh Plaza)

Mexico

- [Baja strike stalls strawberry production](#) (3/26, The Packer)

Europe

- [UK raspberries 2 weeks early on the shelves](#) (3/27, Fresh Plaza)

Crop work/pest management activities

Week 14

All crops

- Vole management.
- Weed management.
- Fertilizer program.
- Can put out monitoring traps for Spotted Wing Drosophila.

Blueberries

- **Treat for [Mummyberry](#) as needed.** (See Alert at top of newsletter) *You can scout for sprouting mummyberries on the ground but they can be very difficult to find. Base treatment decisions on plant stage, environmental conditions and the past mummyberry history of the field and surrounding fields.*
- **Scout for [Pseudomonas \(Bacterial Blight\)](#)** Water-soaked lesions in some fields that then develop into reddish brown to black cankers or dead buds.
 - [Click here](#) for a PCM Research Update on bacterial blight first posted on 1/3/13.
- Scout for [leafroller larvae feeding](#).
- Scout for [Shock virus](#) symptoms in southern area fields.
- Plan for pre-bloom aphid control where scorch virus transmission is an issue.
- Make preparations for bringing in bees around 10% bloom.
- **[Winter Moth/ Bruce Span Worm](#) blueberries:** *Scouting for winter moth larvae should start as soon as the buds start swelling. 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.

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.

Raspberries

- Burn back primocanes as needed.
- (northern areas) Scout for [Clay Colored Weevil](#) feeding and treat as needed.
- Scout for mites.
- Can still apply Ridomil for [Phytophthora root rot](#) management.
- Can still drench for [crown borer](#) management.

Strawberries

- Can apply phosphite material.
- (Southern strawberries) Can scout for [Strawberry Crown Moth](#) larvae.
- Watch for weak growing areas and check rots for [weevil larvae](#), [root rot](#) and/or cold damage.



Patriot Blueberries into petal fall, Friday, 3/27/15
Willamette Valley, OR *Photo by Tom Peerbolt*

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

- **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 25th 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
- **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 — 5th 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.

Archived Small Fruit Updates

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

[13-SFU03-24-15](#)
[12-SFU03-17-15](#)
[11-SFU03-10-15](#)