



Issue 3, April 7, 2004

Current DD Accumulations

Location	Base 43F	Base 50F
Belchertown, UMass CSO observed (01/01/04 – 04/05/04)	100	38

Current Bud Stages

Location	McIntosh apple	Honeycrisp apple	Pear	Redhaven peach	Cavalier sweet cherry
Belchertown UMass CSO (04/05/04)					
	silver-tip +	dormant	dormant	dormant +	dormant +

Current bud stages also available on UMass Fruit Advisor, <http://www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/>

Upcoming Meetings/Events

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Time	Information
April 13	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting	Bashista Orchards * 159 East St. Southampton, MA	5:30 PM	Jon Clements 413-478-7219
April 14	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting	Kimball Fruit Farm 184 Hollis St. Pepperell, MA	5:30 PM	Jon Clements 413-478-7219
April 15	Fruit Team Twilight Meeting	Jaswell's Farms 50 Swan Rd. Smithfield, RI	5:30 PM	Heather Faubert 401-874-2750
April 21- 22	Spring Grape Grower Workshop	Various locations, Southeast New England		Sonia Schloemann 413-478-7219

* Co-sponsored by Massachusetts Association of Roadside Stand. MARS members welcome.

UMass Amherst is an affirmative action, equal-opportunity institution. UMass Amherst Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status.

This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by UMass Amherst Extension or bias against those not mentioned.

The way I see it...

Unseasonably cool weather has halted bud development. This is good, as it has bought time for last-minute pruning, orchard clean-up, and equipment maintenance in preparation for that first spray of the season. Warmer weather is sure to follow so be prepared. You should be thinking a copper (or other fungicide) green-tip spray for apples, and a fungicide (copper, etc.) spray on peaches before bud swell for leaf curl. Keep in mind it's in your best interest to plan on an early, rigorous scab control program in 2004. To borrow from the latest Scaffolds Fruit Journal (Vol. 13, No. 3, April 5, 2004), Cornell pathologist Bill Turechek says "my recommendation is that growers start their spray program at green tip this year. The degree of apple scab area-wide last year (and the year before) was very high so I believe that there are plenty of mature ascospores waiting in the litter to infect the first bit of green tissue they 'see.' Growers using oil early will want to rely on mancozeb as their first spray. Growers not using oil may also choose captan." I'd follow his advice. J. Clements

Got deer? Mice, rabbits, birds, etc.?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services program is available to assist tree fruit growers with wildlife damage management throughout Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Wildlife Services may provide assistance with obtaining permits and the development of a management plan specific to most fruit growers' needs. For more information, please contact Don Wilda at 413-253-2403, or email at Donald.J.Wilda@aphis.usda.gov.

Time for notching is here!

Notching is one of the few reliable means of enhancing branch development in apples. Young trees particularly can benefit from notching as a way to encourage new branches in specific parts of the tree. The process is simply to make a cut through the bark into the wood, perpendicular to the stem, and just above a bud that you wish to produce a shoot. The cut can be made with a hacksaw blade and should be about 1/2" long. The best timing is between 4 and 2 weeks before bloom, but is still somewhat effective at bloom. Two-year-old wood is ideal for notching, but it can work on older wood as well. Results are nearly as good on one-year-old wood, but chances of breakage in the notching process increase dramatically. Choose the largest buds, since they will result in the longest shoots. Overall, you should expect in excess of 70% of these notch buds to produce useable shoots. W. Autio and D. Greene



Gypsum survey – apple grower feedback needed

No Work! Free Gypsum! Bitter Pit and senescent breakdown result from calcium deficiency in apple. Gypsum, applied as a soil amendment can improve soil structure, and data from the UMass Cold Spring Orchard in Belchertown show that soil applied gypsum can increase calcium uptake in apple fruit and reduce bitter pit development in stored Cortland fruit. If there is interest, I, Sarah Weis, postharvest physiologist at UMass, would like to set up a few demonstration sites at commercial orchards to show effects of gypsum in a variety of soils and on other cultivars, such as Honeycrisp, which also tend to be calcium deficient. A brief survey is included on a postcard accompanying paper versions of Healthy Fruit, and here is a link to an electronic survey: <http://www.massfruitgrowers.org/survey/gypsumsurvey.html>

Your assistance and interest is appreciated.