





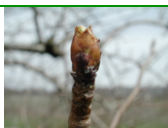


Issue 5, April 20, 2004

Current DD Accumulations

Location	Base 32F	Base 43F	Base 50F
Belchertown, UMass CSO observed (01/01/04 – 04/19/04)	--	222	111
Belchertown, SkyBit E-Weather (01/01/04 – 04/19/04)	--	137	--
Belchertown, UMass CSO observed (04/15/04 – 04/19/04)	107 (3*)	--	--
Belchertown, SkyBit E-Weather (04/15/04 – 04/19/04)	-- (0*)	--	--

* % mature scab spores

Current Bud Stages

Location	McIntosh apple	Honeycrisp apple	Pear	Redhaven peach	Cavalier sweet cherry
Belchertown UMass CSO (04/19/04)					
	half-inch green	green-tip ++	swollen bud+	swollen bud++ (dead flower buds)	swollen bud

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

Upcoming Meetings/Events

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Time	Information
April 21- 22	Spring Grape Grower Workshop	Various locations, Southeast New England		Sonia Schloemann 413-478-7219
May 11	Fruit Twilight Meeting	UMass Cold Spring Orchard, Belchertown	5:30 P.M.	Jon Clements 413-478-7219
May 12	Fruit Twilight Meeting	Highland Farm, Holliston	5:30 P.M.	Jon Clements 413-478-7219

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Pruning winter bud-damaged peaches

By now, winter-damaged peach flower buds are not swelling and will rub off easily. Flower bud damage is likely to be variable by site and variety. The question is how to prune peaches with damage and a very light crop? The first instinct is to prune lightly, trying to preserve some of the crop. But this is wrong – peaches should still be pruned aggressively to promote good light penetration and renewal shoot growth. In fact, peaches with a light or non-existent crop should be pruned hard to bring the fruiting canopy back down and in. (You know how I feel about peach ‘creep up and out.’) You’d be amazed how new shoot growth will sprout from wood that appears barren when pruned hard. That being said, I would cut back on total nitrogen fertilization by 1/2. J. Clements

Oil – to concentrate or not to concentrate?

Last week at a Twilight Meeting, the question arose about concentrating oil – should you, or shouldn’t you? There is some confusion, however, the best recommendation I can give is to NOT concentrate (either water or oil) when applying oil. Oil should be applied at dilute tree row volume, i.e. 1X, for best efficacy. That being said, at tight-cluster (now) oil should be applied to apples at 2% v/v (2 gallons oil per in 100 gallons water) to thoroughly wet the trees. Now, off-the-record, if you choose to concentrate spray, say 2X or 3X (definitely no more), you should still only add 2 gallons of oil per 100 gallons water in the tank (2% v/v) to avoid phytotoxicity. And do not spray oil when the temperature has dropped/will drop to 35 F. or lower within 48 hours of application.

With that behind us, it is the ideal time to apply superior oil for control of mites and/or San Jose scale. At half-inch green use 2% v/v, but moving to tight-cluster drop the rate to 1 to 1.5% v/v. Apply at least 100 gallons water per acre even on very small trees. If San Jose scale is an issue, the addition of Esteem or Assail to 1% oil at the tight-cluster stage is very effective. J. Clements and R. Prokopy

Tarnished plant bug – they’re out there

Ron Prokopy reports a “large” migration of tarnished plant bugs into orchards over the weekend. He uses 2 ft. by 2 ft. plexiglass panels on the perimeter of orchards to monitor the influx – they catch about 15 times the number of plant bugs as the traditional white attractant traps. The time for control is not until the pink bud stage, however, they bear watching. J. Clements and R. Prokopy

Massachusetts Fruit Growers’ Association (MFGA) Weather Network

The MFGA Weather Network is up and running again for 2004. At seven sites – Belchertown, Bolton, Deerfield, Northboro, Peabody, Pittsfield, and Sterling – weather data and apple scab models are being posted to the MFGA Weather Network website, <http://www.massfruitgrowers.org/weather/readme.html>. Keep in mind the information is specific to the site, however, you can use it to get an idea what’s happening in your area. J. Clements
