



Healthy Fruit, Vol. 31, No. 16, September 12, 2023

Prepared by the University of Massachusetts Amherst Fruit Team

Jon Clements, Editor

Upcoming meetings

Apple maturity reports, via Zoom, Tuesday's at noon through October 10 <https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/95275281199>
Meeting ID: 952 7528 1199

2023 Farm Disasters: Free Dinner, Info, and Farmer Discussion Wednesday, September 13, 4:00 – Sundown, Plainville Farm, 135 Mt. Warner Road, Hadley, MA 01035 <https://www.buylocalfood.org/event/2023-farm-disasters-info-and-farmer-discussion/>

The way I see it

Jon Clements

Based on the results of my apple maturity testing, Macs, Gala, and Honeycrisp should be targeted for harvest this week. The weather has not been good for red color development, but that will change pretty quickly over the upcoming weekend. Looks to be windy Thursday and Saturday, I expect to see McIntosh drop accelerate as the heat has advanced maturity (but not necessarily color). Cortland may be economically ripe but you ought to wait a week to harvest. Sooty blotch and flyspeck is prevalent on low spray apples, and with this weather a final fungicide application to later picked apples is warranted. That is about all I have, I am sure everyone is busy with harvest so keep going...

Natural Disaster Recovery (NDR)

Matthew Bley (mbley@umass.edu)

A 'Frequently Asked Questions' will come out shortly as they compile all questions submitted. These are just brief notes from the webinar for accessibility purposes. Please go over the [RFR](#) and [webinar](#) recording.

Program Background and Goals

- The NDR program is intended to help farmers recover from three natural disasters in 2023: the February 3-5 sub-zero cold which wiped out stone fruit crops; the May 17-18 freeze which mostly affected pome fruit (apples and pears), blueberries, and grapes; the July 9-16 rainfall and flooding
- 20 million dollars have been appropriated, but 15 million dollars has been secured and made available to MDAR so far
- These are non-competitive funds, all who apply and are eligible will receive funds subject to availability
- The deadline for completed applications is **Sep 29, 2023** at 4:00pm, late applications will not be accepted

Eligible applicants must be

- Commercial or non-profit farming operation selling products to wholesale or direct to consumers
- Non-profits or other operations that have multiple growers on the same parcel must submit a single application with the collective information

- Farm must have been established prior to 2023
- Farm must have suffered at least 15% acreage of crop loss
 - 15% loss of total planted acreage, not some specific crops
 - No minimum acreage to qualify, only minimum % loss

Application process

- Applications must be done online at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/natural-disaster-recovery-ndr-program-for-agriculture>
- If you need help please reach out to other local resources as MDAR cannot assist on your application
- A rough aerial photo or a map with indicators of the location of loss
- Lease agreements just need to be a form displaying who has the legal right to grow on this property (i.e. A tenancy agreement, land lease, etc.)
- Applicant may need to include a narrative report if additional justification is needed for the 'Estimated Revenue Lost' column of the provided budget report

Definitions:

- MDAR will be compiling all applicant prices to establish an average market price for each crop
 - If your prices skew far above or below be prepared to explain the difference
 - If an application is incomplete, the average market price will be used
- Total acreage is considered the planted acreage
 - This does not include any of your land that is designated for processing, infrastructure, etc. (nor land left fallow, it must be producing)

Payments:

- Payments will be made via ACH (direct deposit), after all applications are reviewed
- Payments will be determined based upon the collective amount of all request in relation to available funding
 - If the sum of losses exceeds available funding, the payments to eligible applicants will be reduced on a pro rata basis; meaning that all payments will be equally reduced
- Estimated award date is November 2023 with payments fulfilled by June 2024, subject to change

Please reach out with any comments, questions, or concerns. If you would like to read the questions and answers from the webinar, please reach out to me.

Ed. note, this just in...

Davidson, Rebecca (AGR) rebecca.davidson@mass.gov via umass.edu
2:49 PM (55 minutes ago)
to Rebecca, Winton, Laura

Good afternoon:

Thank you for registering to attend the Natural Disaster Recovery Program Webinar that was held on September 8th, 2023.

If you missed the webinar, or would like to re-watch it, you can find the [link here](#).

You can find the webinar slides [here](#), and the questions and answers document can be found [here](#).

For more information on the Natural Disaster Recovery Program, and to apply, [please visit our webpage](#).

Kind regards,

Rebecca

Rebecca Davidson (she, her, hers)

Director, Food and Climate Equity

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Horticulture (apple maturity report)

Jon Clements

All observations from UMass Orchard, Belchertown, MA unless otherwise noted. Target maturity numbers: red color, >50%; firmness, >14 lbs.; soluble solids, >12; DA, 0.60 to 0.40 for Honeycrisp, 0.65 for Gala, 1.00 for Golden Delicious, 1.15 to 1.00 for Red Delicious (higher DA = more "green"); starch index, 4-6

2023 Date	Variety	Drop	Diameter (inches)	Color (% red)	Firmness (lbs.)	Brix	Starch Index	DA Meter	Comments	Picture
9/11	Rubymac McIntosh	nil	3.2	99	13.5	12.4	4.5	NA	Seem loose, pick ASAP	
9/11	Rogers Red McIntosh	some	3.1	60	14	10.7	5-6	NA	Seem loose, pick ASAP	
9/11	Honeycrisp	few	3.3	65	14	13	6-7	0.62	Pick ASAP on color	
9/11	Buckeye Gala	none	3.0	90	14	11.1	3.5-6+	0.26	Pick ASAP	
9/11	Redcort Cortland	none	3.4	65 dull	13.7	11.1	2	NA	Need another week	

9/11	Morning Mist Fuji	none	3.1	50	14.5	13.9	4-5	1.01	Getting there...	
9/12	Blondee	none	2.8	NA	16	13	4.5-6	0.17	Harvest ASAP	
9/12	Crimson Crisp	none	2.9	70	20	12.5	4-5-6	0.79	Next week	

Useful links

UMass Fruit Advisor: <http://umassfruit.com>

Network for Environment and Weather Applications (NEWA): <http://newa.cornell.edu>

Follow me on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/jmcextman>) and Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/jmcextman>)

[The Jentsch Lab](#) (Peter Jentsch, Poma Tech)

[Acimovic Lab](#) (Srdjan Acimovic at Virginia Tech)

[Tree Fruit Horticulture Updates](#) (Sherif Sherif at Virginia Tech)

[CCE ENYCHP Tree Fruit Blog](#)

The next Healthy Fruit (apple maturity report) will be published on or about August September 26, 2023. In the meantime, feel free to contact any of the UMass Fruit Team if you have any fruit-related production questions.

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