



## INDEX

Help May Be On The Way  
 China Appeals Anti-Dumping Decision  
 Cultivated Blueberry Producers and  
 Importers Approve National Promotion  
 Program  
 Disease Management  
 Black Rot and White Rot  
 Nectria Twig Blight  
 Raspberry Anthracnose  
 Grape Harvest Parameters  
 New Zealand Tour  
 An Apple A Day . . .

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**Crop Conditions:** Many fruit crops are continuing to develop 1-2 weeks ahead of normal, but it makes you wonder if we know what normal is anymore. Apart from a few late peaches in northern areas, peach season is over. Many growers around the state had excellent peach crops, and the marketing conditions were also very good. Summer apples are being harvested in central to southern parts of the state. Blueberry harvest is winding down and fall raspberry harvest is getting started. Grape harvest has started in the southern part of the state.

**Help May Be On the Way:** The U.S. Senate on July 20 approved legislation to provide the nation's apple growers with \$160 million in economic assistance. Specifically, the Senate agriculture spending bill for fiscal 2001 allocates \$100 million in market loss assistance and \$60 million in crop loss assistance to apple growers.

"Now that both the House and Senate have signaled their support, apple growers and their families are virtually assured of receiving this much-needed assistance," said U.S. Apple Association (USApple) President Kraig R. Naasz, whose group spearheaded efforts to secure apple assistance. "We are grateful that Congress acted on our pleas to address the devastating losses suffered by apple growers."

The House and Senate now must reconcile the differences between their versions of the agriculture spending bill -including the \$45 million discrepancy in apple assistance -before sending it to President Clinton to sign. The House- and Senate-

approved \$75 billion agriculture spending bills provide \$100 million for direct payments to apple growers on the first 1.6 million pounds of their past production, and an additional \$15 million for losses caused by natural disaster to their 1999 crop. The Senate version provides an additional \$45 million in assistance for losses caused by natural disaster to the 2000 apple crop.

Growers suffered severe economic losses of \$760 million over the past three years according to U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics, due to unfairly-priced imports of apple juice concentrate from China, lost sales to several key export markets and weather-related crop disasters. (from: The Fruit Growers News online, <http://www.fruitgrowersnews.com>)

**China Appeals Anti-Dumping Decision:** Chinese concentrate producers filed an appeal of that decision with the U.S. Court of International Trade on July 5. "We will vigorously

defend our industry's hard fought trade victory over cheap Chinese concentrate," said USApple President Kraig Naasz. "We have the facts and the law on our industry's side." The Commerce Department ruled April 7 that Chinese concentrate was being sold in the United States at prices substantially below production costs. The U.S. International Trade Commission unanimously ruled May 22 that these "dumped" imports were causing economic injury to U.S. concentrate producers. As a result, the Customs Service levied antidumping duties of up to 51.74% on Chinese concentrate imports entering the U.S. since Nov. 23, 1999.

The industry's case dramatically reduced imports of unfairly priced concentrate imports from China, and significantly improved the price for both domestic concentrate and juice apples. Imports of Chinese concentrate declined by 76% between June 1999 - when the industry filed its antidumping complaint - and December 1999, as compared to the same period in 1998, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

More recently, the value of Chinese concentrate imports since January is up 54% compared to the same period in 1999, reflecting the duties' upward impact on price. Meanwhile, the average price growers received for juice apples increased 70% from \$58 per ton for 1998 crop juice apples to \$98 per ton for the 1999 crop - according to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) statistics.

As a result, apple growers received \$49 million more for the 1999 juice apple crop than the 1998 juice apple crop of similar size. Chinese concentrate imports increased by more than 1,200% between 1995 and 1998, while the average price of Chinese concentrate declined by 53% from \$7.65 per gallon in 1995 to \$3.57 per gallon in 1998. As a result, U.S. concentrate producers were forced to slash their prices and to drastically reduce the price they paid for U.S. juice apples.

The Commerce Department, represented by the U.S. Department of Justice, will

defend its dumping decision before the New York-based U.S. Court of International Trade. USApple's legal team, led by Thomas Graham of King & Spalding, will work alongside Justice Department lawyers as "defendant-interveners" in defending the case. The Chinese producers are appealing the Commerce Department's use of India as a surrogate country, among other factors, to determine the cost of concentrate production in China. (from: The Fruit Growers News online, <http://www.fruitgrowersnews.com>)



***Cultivated Blueberry Producers and Importers Approve National Promotion Program:***

AMS Release No. 182-00 WASHINGTON, July 13, 2000—Producers and importers of cultivated blueberries have voted to approve a national promotion program. The vote was taken in a referendum conducted by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service from March 13 through April 14.

"The cultivated blueberry industry has recognized that a mandatory national promotion program is a valuable marketing tool," said Kathleen L. Merrigan, AMS administrator. "Industry members will fund their self-help program to increase market efficiency, develop new markets and marketing strategies, and enhance the image of cultivated blueberries in the United States and abroad. We will work with them to help them meet their goals," Merrigan said.

In the referendum, 67.8 percent of those who voted favored implementation of the order. Those who voted in favor represented 73.2 percent of the volume of cultivated blueberries represented in the referendum. Any current producer or importer of 2,000 pounds or more of cultivated blueberries during the 1999 calendar year was eligible to

vote. The program will become effective 30 days after final publication in the Federal Register.

The promotion program will be administered by a council of 13 members under USDA supervision. Council members will be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture from nominees submitted by the industry. USDA will begin the nomination process soon after the Blueberry Promotion, Research, and Information Order becomes effective. For further information, contact Oliver L. Flake at (888) 720-9917 (toll free) or e-mail [oliver.flake@usda.gov](mailto:oliver.flake@usda.gov).

The program will be funded by an assessment of \$12 per ton of domestic cultivated blueberries and \$12 per ton of fresh and processed imported cultivated blueberries starting in 2001. The program is the second to be implemented under the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act of 1996. A program for peanut producers was implemented in July 1999.

Since the referendum was announced earlier this year, the Secretary of Agriculture has received information that the official title of the new program for cultivated blueberries may cause confusion in parts of the blueberry industry since native blueberries are not covered by the program. Therefore, soon after the new program becomes effective, the Secretary will issue a proposed rule to seek comments on changing the title of the program to clarify that the program covers only cultivated blueberries and cultivated blueberry producers and importers.

**Disease Management:** Wet conditions result in high disease pressure from apple scab, sooty blotch, summer rots, flyspeck, brown rot of peach, plum and cherry, strawberry leafspot, grape black rot and the list goes on. Under such conditions sprays need to be applied on a tight schedule as long as wet weather prevails. However, as we move into drier summer months the disease pressure lessens and protectant sprays do not need to be applied on

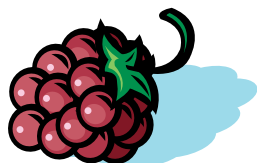
such a tight schedule. BUT, this does NOT mean you can stop applying fungicides altogether OR stretch the interval between sprays to 4 or more weeks. Remember that most fungicides are protectant, not curative, and need to be in place before infection occurs, not after. This means applying fungicides before it rains, not after. By all means, if dry conditions persist in your area, use the longest interval between sprays as recommended on the label, but for dependable disease control, maintain a regular fungicide spray program up to the preharvest restriction date. -Pecknold

**Black Rot and White Rot:** Branches which show bright yellow leaves that eventually turn brown and die are likely candidates for having black rot or white rot cankers. All such yellow “flags” should be pruned out completely several inches below any signs of obvious cankering or discolored wood as soon as they appear. Removing dead wood, mummies and cankers from the trees is critical in the management of these diseases. Current-season prunings should be removed from the orchard or chopped with a flail mower. Prunings piled on the orchard perimeter (let alone within the orchard!!) can serve as important disease sources...both this year and next! Act now to get rid of such sources. -Pecknold

**Nectria Twig Blight:** Speaking of canker diseases... I often mistake Nectria twig blight on ‘Rome Beauty’ for fire blight; don’t laugh, it’s easy to do. Both diseases show a shepherd’s crook at the terminal end along with browning and wilting of leaves. A primary difference between the two, in the early stages of disease development, is that outer and inner bark discoloration is most evident at the base of the twig if Nectria is the problem, while with fire blight, the discoloration is most evident at the terminal twig end. Also, with Nectria there is no bacterial ooze, instead, bright pinkish-orange spore producing structures will form within the cankered areas at the base of the stem. Nectria is a “stress patho-

gen” that should not be of major concern; it has been reported to occur where trees are too vigorous in fall and fail to harden adequately before winter. While Romes are where you most often find Nectria canker, it has also been reported on Fuji and Granny Smith.

- Pecknold



**Raspberry Anthracnose:** During this time of year the plant disease clinic often receives raspberry samples with severe anthracnose infection. The most disturbing overall symptom is the failure of fruit to ripen; fruit remain small, hard and discolored due to the extensive girdling of canes and pedicels. The fungus overwinters on both living and dead plant tissues; therefore, old fruiting canes and infected primocanes should be removed from plantings after harvest and destroyed. This greatly reduces the amount of disease that survives within the planting. ALSO, if anthracnose is severe, do not forget the liquid lime sulfur application next spring. See ID-169, “2000 Indiana Commercial Small Fruit & Grape Spray Guide “, for further information.

- Pecknold



**Grape Harvest Parameters:** Grape harvest is a few days ahead of normal this season due to the early start this spring. Some early varieties were harvested in southern locations last week. Growers should be sampling their vineyards and analyzing fruit composition (sugar, acidity, and pH) to determine the appropriate harvest date. As harvest nears, sampling should be

done at least twice weekly to track the progress of fruit ripening. Samples should be representative of the entire vineyard so avoid end plants and other atypical plants when sampling. As fruit ripen, sugar concentration increases, titratable acidity decreases, and pH increases. Flavor and color also develop as the ripening process occurs. It is important to pick grapes at their peak ripeness level because grapes do not continue to ripen after they are harvested.

The level of ripeness desired at harvest depends on the variety and style of wine to be made. For light, fruity style wines, grapes are usually harvested before they are fully ripe. This is especially true with strong flavored American varieties, such as Concord and Niagara, and some French-American hybrids such as Cayuga White. When grapes are harvested before full ripeness sugar may have to be added to the must before fermentation, but the results are a lighter, fruitier wine without the overpowering ‘foxy’ flavor. For heavier, full-bodied wines, fruit is usually allowed to fully ripen before harvest to develop full flavor, color, and tannins. If you will be selling to a winery, keep them updated on fruit composition and let them help make harvest decisions based on their needs.

Sugar (soluble solids) is the easiest parameter to measure, but is not the best indicator of optimum fruit ripeness for winegrapes. Instead, a balance of soluble solids, titratable acidity, and juice pH should be considered. Of the three parameters, juice pH is perhaps the most important. High juice pH can be a problem with certain varieties especially in warm growing seasons, and causes many problems for the winemaker. Several wine quality attributes are adversely affected by high pH including color, protein and tartrate stability, oxidative rate, metal complexing, ability to clarify, biological stability, and sensory attributes. Since pH cannot be adjusted in the winery as easily as titratable acidity or sugar content, it is best to harvest fruit within the desired pH range. Most winemakers prefer white winegrapes with a

juice pH of about 3.1-3.2 with a maximum of 3.4, and red winegrapes with a pH of 3.3-3.4 with a maximum of 3.5.

During harvest, protect fruit quality by picking early in the day while the fruit is cool, handling the fruit carefully to avoid cracked berries, juice leakage, and potential spoilage, and keeping the fruit cool by moving containers out of the vineyard quickly and placing them in shade or cold storage. Minimize the time between harvest and crush as much as possible. -*Bordelon*



**NZ Tour:** I am happy to report that a number of people have already registered for the fruit tour of New Zealand from Feb 19-Mar 4 2001. We currently have about half the slots filled and I have issued an invitation to folks from other states to join us. If you want to join us on this tour but haven't sent in your registration yet, I urge you to do this quickly as space is limited to the first 30 who register. The itinerary is now slightly changed from that in the brochure – we will no longer be stopping in Fiji on the way home due to changes in airline flight schedules and political unrest in Fiji. If you would like a brochure and registration form, please call Penny at the horticulture department at Purdue (765-494-1301). -*Hirst*



**An apple a day...** In a recent issue of the highly respected journal *Nature*, the health benefits of eating fresh apples was again demonstrated. The study “Anti-oxidant activity of fresh apples” showed that most of the health promoting anti-oxidant activity of apples was in the skin, although the flesh was also a source of these compounds. In their tests, the authors found that apple skin extracts slowed the rate of tumor cell proliferation to almost half that without the skin extracts. It wasn't one particular compound found in the apples which was responsible, but the combination of flavonoids and polyphenols that led to the cancer inhibiting activity. If you would like a copy of the journal paper for your own reference or to display in your market, please call Penny White at 765-494-1301 or email Penny at [white@hort.purdue.edu](mailto:white@hort.purdue.edu) -*Hirst*

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**Coming Meetings:**

**August 17** – Fruit Field Day and Equipment Show. Cornell University and New York State Agricultural Experiment Station. Geneva, NY. Contact: Linda McCandless, [llm3@cornell.edu](mailto:llm3@cornell.edu), 315-787-2417.

**August 31** - SEPAC Field Day. Contact Don Biehle, 812-458-6977, [djbiehle@seidata.com](mailto:djbiehle@seidata.com).

Department of Horticulture &  
Landscape Architecture  
Purdue University  
1165 Horticulture Bldg.  
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1165

Bruce Bordelon  
1165 Dept. of Horticulture &  
Landscape Architecture  
Purdue University  
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1165  
765/494-1301  
e-mail: bordelon@hort.purdue.edu

Peter Hirst  
1165 Dept. of Horticulture &  
Landscape Architecture  
Purdue University  
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1165  
765/494-1323  
e-mail: hirst@hort.purdue.edu

Paul Pecknold  
1155 Dept. of Botany & Plant Path.  
Purdue University  
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1155  
765/494-4628  
e-mail: Pecknold@btpny.purdue.edu

Rick Foster  
1158 Dept. of Entomology  
Purdue University  
West Lafayette, IN 47907-1158  
765/494-9572  
e-mail: Rick\_Foster@entm.purdue.edu

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