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Facts for Fancy Fruit 2002-12
 September 4, 2002

Crop Conditions: Grapes are being harvested and quality has been excellent overall. Yields are down in some vineyards due to the May frosts. Fall bearing brambles are still producing well. Apple harvest is well underway, although in many places it's not a happy situation. Cool conditions during the flowering period meant that for most of the time the flowers were open, the bees weren't flying. Many orchards have light crops and one long-time grower said it's the worst apple crop he's seen in 30 years. Many growers also had to cope with frosts during bloom, further reducing fruit set and also marking fruit that did set. Some growers are seeing premature fruit drop likely caused by poor seed set in those fruit.

More Plum Pox in Pennsylvania: As a result of surveys of commercial orchards carried out by USDA and State inspectors, PPV has been confirmed at an orchard outside of the current quarantine areas for the first time this year. The detection was made at an orchard in Monaghan Township, York County. PPV was identified by scientists at the State laboratory in Harrisburg, PA, and confirmed by Scientists at the PPQ-Center for Plant Health Science and Technology in Beltsville, MD. In addition to requiring the removal of the orchard, the project staff will also be requiring the removal of all host material within 500 meters. This will result in the removal of a total of 50 acres of orchard. The State and USDA will be revising the current quarantine areas to include an area that includes the new find. (Hirst)

No Plum Pox in Indiana: We have completed a second year of sampling for plum pox in Indiana peach orchards. Over the last 2 years, we have collected just over 2000 samples and all have tested negative. No more sampling is planned. Let's

hope the virus can be contained in Pennsylvania and Ontario. (Hirst)

New Apple Varieties: As some of you saw during the Hort. Society summer tour at Purdue, we are testing a range of new apple cultivars to see how they perform under Indiana conditions. This is our first year of seeing fruit from these trees. Last week I sampled fruit from Zestar from MN and Silken from BC. My first impressions are that Zestar looks promising, although it shows some unevenness in shape and russeting. These could be problems associated with light crops from young trees. I wasn't too excited about Silken. Although it is quite attractive (very light cream color) it's flavor was pretty bland. Please bear in mind these are just initial impressions from young trees and that we need to evaluate these varieties over a number of years to have a more accurate handle on their performance here. Thanks to contributors to the **Return Bloom Fund** who helped pay for the establishment and management of this planting. (Hirst)

Pinpoint Scab: Wet weather during the apple harvest period can lead to the development of pinpoint scab and other fruit infecting diseases, such as sooty blotch and fly speck. Pinpoint scab can infect fruit up to and during the harvest period if wet weather persists at this time, however, the symptoms of pinpoint scab may not show up until the fruit have been stored for several months. Late season apple scab can also build up on leaves after harvest, resulting in large quantities of primary scab spores the following season, even though a good spray program was followed early this year. Help prevent such problems by maintaining scab fungicides in late cover sprays; also do not stop cover sprays too early. Check the label for days-to-harvest restrictions before making the final application. (Pecknold)

Collar Rot: Late summer is a good time to inspect trees for above-ground symptoms of collar rot. Look for weak trees with premature leaf reddening (especially on goldens); sparse, yellow foliage; and many small, highly colored fruit. Keep in mind that such symptoms are general stress symptoms that may be caused by a number of factors, such as wet feet, mouse injury, trunk decay, root rot, etc. However, trees that show the above-described symptoms *AND ALSO* have a canker at or just below ground level are likely infected with collar rot. If collar rot is suspected we advise the use of Ridomil Gold EC in the fall after harvest. Apply Ridomil as soon as possible after harvest so it will be in place before the fall rainy periods begin and possible new infections occur. Also be sure to concentrate your Ridomil treatment on surrounding healthy appearing trees, not just trees already showing symptoms of collar rot. Ridomil is best used to prevent collar rot, not cure it.

The soil-borne fungus, *Phytophthora*, which causes collar rot, can be even more of a problem on stone fruits, such as cherry and peach. Don't forget to check out your stone fruits for symptoms of collar rot as described above. (Pecknold)

Asian Lady Beetle Survey: The Multi-colored Asian Lady Beetle (MALB) has been a serious problem over the past two years in grapes. The insects are not directly attacking the fruit, but they tend to cling to the harvested clusters and when the fruit is processed into juice, they impart a definite off-flavor and aroma to the resulting wine. We have

organized a multi-state coalition to monitor the problem this year but as luck would have it, the MALBs have not cooperated. Apparently their population is way down this year, perhaps due to reduced populations of soybean aphids. We're really not sure what happened, but we're not complaining either. However, we would like to hear from any fruit grower that sees a significant build up of this insect in their plantings. It's doubtful that they have ceased to be a problem altogether. If you have any questions or want to report sightings of this pest, please contact Bruce Bordelon or Rick Foster. Our contact information is at the end of this newsletter. And "thanks" in advance for your help.

Fall Small Fruit Care:

Grapes-

Grapes should be encouraged to harden off for winter by avoiding nitrogen fertilizers and supplemental watering at this time. Apply non-nitrogen fertilizers and lime as needed based on soil and tissue test results. It is especially important to maintain healthy leaves through fall to promote proper hardening. Downy and powdery mildews often build to epidemic levels on susceptible cultivars in fall. Both can cause defoliation and reduced winter hardiness so it's important to maintain protection against these diseases throughout the fall until leaves drop naturally.

Blueberries-

Blueberry plants should be encouraged to harden off for the winter. However, growers should continue to irrigate if dry weather persists. Fruit buds are developing now for next year's crop so it is important to avoid water stress on the plants during this time. Apply non-nitrogen fertilizers and materials for soil pH adjustment based on foliar analysis and soil tests. Apply these before fall rains begin and also before adding any supplemental mulch to the plants.

Strawberries-

Flower bud initiation occurs during late summer and fall, so maintaining good plant health into the fall is important for high yield potential next year. The recent dry weather (in some parts of the state) can significantly reduce fruitfulness next year. Irrigate to provide at least 1 inch of water per week through October. We mentioned the importance of an application of nitrogen

fertilizer in the last issue of this newsletter. If it hasn't been done yet, it's not too late. If tissue analysis shows deficiencies in magnesium or boron, early fall is a good time for foliar applications of Epsom salts (15 lb./100 gal./acre) for magnesium and Solubor (3 lb./100 gal./acre) for boron. Phytotoxicity can be a problem with these materials so read the labels. In addition to fertility, controlling leaf diseases improves the ability of the plant to carry on photosynthesis and store starch in the crowns. Check fields for infestations of leafhopper or aphids. Generally, plants can take a fair amount of feeding by these insects, but heavy infestations can be a problem.

Brambles-

Encourage hardening off of canes in summer bearing varieties of brambles by avoiding nitrogen fertilizers and supplemental watering at this time. Spent floricanes can be removed now, or later in the winter or early spring. Fall bearing raspberries can still benefit from irrigation in dry weather to help maintain fruit size. Apply non-nitrogen fertilizers and lime as needed based on soil and tissue test results. If Phytophthora root rot has been identified in a field, treat the affected area with Ridomil Gold EC or Alliette in September or early October. This timing is important to get the material in place in the root zone before the onset of cool wet weather in the fall. (Bordelon)

US Apple Association Appoints New President:

The US Apple Association (a Washington-based lobby group for the apple industry) has selected Nancy Foster as their new president and CEO. Foster comes to the apple industry association after seven years as vice president of legislative affairs with CropLife America, formerly the American Crop Protection Association. Foster has served as the vice president of legislative affairs for CropLife America since 1995. She replaces Kraig Naasz, who departed USApple at the end of May to become president of The Fertilizer Institute. (from <http://www.fruitgowersnews.com>)

Indiana Horticultural Congress: Planning is currently underway for next year's Hort Congress which will be held January 27-29, 2003 at the Adams Mark Hotel in Indianapolis. We met this past week and started developing the program. We have some exciting topics and believe this will be one of the best conferences yet. Support from the

Indiana Commissioner of Agriculture's specialty crop block grant program will allow us to bring in more speakers this year. We would like to have your input. If you have a burning issue you would like us to address, or a speaker you would like us to consider, please let us know soon. Remember, the congress is for the participants, not the organizers, so let us know what you want.

Upcoming Meetings:

Sept. 27-28 Indiana Nut Growers Association
American Persimmon Conference.
Terre Haute, IN Contact Jerry
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