

# Small Fruit Update



February 28, 2006

[Event Calendar](#)   [Small Fruit Cold Storage Reports](#)   [Weather Forecast](#) by Rufus La Lone

There won't be an Update next week. Anna and I will be finishing up some beach research in Hawaii.

**Freeze damage assessments:** This information is preliminary and speculative. Caneberry bud damage is assessed by cutting open buds and looking for blackened meristem tissue. Secondary bud break in caneberries can compensate for loss of the primary buds. It's too early to assess actual cane damage. Blueberry bud damage can be more difficult to assess. Cold damage not readily apparent can show up as blossoms open and fruit sets.

**Whatcom County raspberries:** Some black buds in the raspberries but more in blueberries. The Willamette variety took it a little tougher than the Meekers it seems.

**Skagit County raspberries:** Generally look OK. Meeker and Cowichan seem fine, but varieties with early-emerging laterals may have problems. Some moderate damage in Willamette, and some fairly heavy damage in Chemainus.

**Willamette Valley raspberries:** As usual they were a week or so ahead of the northern Washington raspberries but temperatures got at least as low if not lower than further north. Some blackened meristem tissue in most of the fields that had early emerging laterals. Young fields hit the hardest. Chemainus and Chilliwack also hit harder since they were the furthest out.

**Willamette Valley blackberries:** An early assessment shows that, on average, around 20% of the buds in Marions look damaged but this is very dependant on where you look, low spots and weaker fields worse, healthy fields and higher spots better. Secondary buds can potentially compensate for lost buds however, this only holds if there is no cane damage. Also finding some bud damage in other early blackberries like Obsidian. Boysens seem to have faired better, maybe because they are a little behind. Kotata, Triple Crown, and Chester look OK. Fields tied up on the wires just before the cold, where the worse damage is most likely.

**Whatcom County blueberries:** Blues are all across the board. A quick assessment of worst to best: Blue Jay, Blue Crop, Jersey, Reka, Berkley, 1613a, Dukes. Damage is very inconsistent and time consuming to assess.

**Skagit County blueberries:** Blueberries at the Mt Vernon WSU station show some damage in early-flowering varieties. Early estimated loss at 10% Duke blooms and 15-20% Bluejay blooms. Bluecrop looks fine. It was not quite as cold on some nearby farms, and their blueberries seem undamaged.

**Willamette Valley blueberries:** Some areas down to 14° F in the Willamette Valley. Finding damage to blueberries, especially near the terminals that were showing blossom buds. Old woody/twiggly tissue of Brigitta hit hard. Berkley hit hard. Too early to have good estimates but 10-15% or more possible.

**Correction:** We messed up last week's link to **temperatures in Whatcom County** for the period Feb 14 – 21 from Craig MacConnell, Whatcom County's Extension agent. Here it is again... [Click here](#) for a PDF file showing air temperatures in Lynden & Nooksack Ag Weather Net Stations.

## State/National Issues Update:

**1) March 15 Deadline for New, Streamlined USDA Whole Farm Insurance Program:** The Adjusted Gross Revenue Lite plan can provide berry growers with protection against low returns due to unavoidable natural disasters and market fluctuations. [Click here](#) for a PDF information sheet or call [Jo Lynne Seuffer](#) at 509-353-2147

**2) President's Proposed Budget Cuts Small Fruit Research Funding:** [Click here](#) for information from **Dr. Bob Martin**, acting research leader of the Northwest Center for Small Fruits Research, on how this proposed budget would effect our industry.

**3) [The National Council of Agricultural Employers](#)** and the [Agriculture Coalition for Immigration Reform](#) are working hard to advocate for agricultural interests in the critical bills now before Congress addressing immigration and labor issues. [Click here](#) for more information on how you can help them (in five minutes or less..)

## Chemical Control Update:

**1) Caneberry Insecticide: Guthion**, our traditional treatment option for borer control, can still be used this spring but all sales and distribution will cease as of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006 and use will be allowed only until September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

**2) Caneberry Insecticide:** In response to the loss of Guthion, [Capture](#) (bifenthrin) has been granted a supplemental label for use as a drench for borer control. However, the 0.1 active ingredient pre-harvest limit for

bifenthrin is still in effect; meaning that you could use it as a drench or as a pre-harvest insect contaminant clean up spray but not for both in the same season.

**3) Strawberry Herbicide: Spartan** (Sulfentrazone): The Section 18 Emergency use label for the use of Spartan for weed control expires today (February 28<sup>th</sup>).

#### Disease Update:

**1) Disease Alert: Mummyberry Blueberries.** Many blueberries are at green bud stage or beyond. So far I haven't found any sprouting mummies however, growers who have experienced mummyberry problems in the past need to stay on top of control measures at this critical stage of disease development. [Click here](#) for scouting and control details as well as photos. The Section 18 Emergency exemption labels for **Indar** (Febuconazole) use in Washington and Oregon have been applied for in both Oregon and Washington but have not yet been granted.

**2) Disease Alert: Bacterial Blight** (*Pseudomonas syringae*): **Blueberries.** With additional tissue damage caused by the cold weather, it is more important than most years to get on copper applications at this time to help prevent infections.

#### Ongoing Disease Information

**1) Purple Blotch: Blackberries.** Lime Sulfur is usually applied in the spring although spores released from the floricanes won't infect the new primocanes until temperatures get into the 60's (16-18 C). The idea is to protect the new primocanes from infection. Any signs of floricanes infection took place last year and can't be remedied at this time.

**2) Phragmidium Rust: Evergreen Blackberries** - Apply Lime Sulfur at the highest rate allowed. Good coverage is essential. Check to see how well it's penetrating the 'rope' of canes tied along the wire where a lot of rust spores are hiding out. Also, remove as much of the old fruiting canes as possible to get rid of overwintering inoculum.

**3) Phytophthora Root Rot:** Raspberries - March is the time to use a fungicide drench for Phytophthora root rot control in raspberries. **Ridomil Gold** is pretty volatile and needs to be watered in well for effectiveness. It should be applied just before or during rain.

**Vertebrate Pest Update: Caneberries and Blueberries - [Voles](#)**

#### Insect Update:

##### Ongoing Insect Information

**1) Redberry mites: Blackberries** -If you have had Redberry mite problems start your prevention program with an application of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur shortly after budbreak.

**2) Scale: Blueberries** - A dormant oil or **Esteem** (pyriproxyfen) can be used.

**3) Winter Moth Blueberries**

**4) Raspberry Crown Borer** and/or **Strawberry Crown Moth caneberries:** Most effectively treated with an insecticide drench in early March. Be sure it gets well rained in. The major problem is getting the chemical to get down far enough. Guthion can still be used this year but we also have a new supplemental label for **Capture** (bifenthrin).

#### Cropwork:

**All Crops:** 1) Can still apply lime/dolomite to raise soil pH. 2) Weed control.

**All Caneberries:** 1) Put out [mouse/vole](#) bait as needed before budbreak. 2) Apply lime sulfur for disease control. 3) Scout for bud damage/feeding & determine cause. 4) Can apply Ridomil for root rot control in March. 5) Can apply insecticide drench for borer control.

**Blackberries:** 1) Use caution in mechanical detritus removal. If buds have broken, damage can result. 2) (in particular Evergreens) Apply lime sulfur for treatment of both rust and [Redberry mite](#) at budbreak.

**Blueberries:** 1) Put out [mouse/vole](#) bait as needed before budbreak. 2) Can apply Copper or Bordeaux mix for Bacterial Blight. 3) Dormant oil or Esteem can be applied for scale and winter moth egg control. 4) Scout for bud damage & determine cause. 5) Scout for mummyberries & control as needed.

**Strawberries:** As plants start growing, check weak areas for root weevil larvae, strawberry crown borers or root disease problems.

**Some Upcoming Meetings** (For a more complete schedule go to the [Event Calendar](#))

[Click Here](#). For **Oregon and Washington Tilth's Calendar of Sustainable Ag** events in the Northwest for 2006.

**February 28, March 1-2 —Export Seminar & Consultations** ~ Seattle, WA. Seminar focuses on branding and federal assistance programs; personal consultations available. [Click here](#) (PDF file) for details and registration form.

**March 3-4 —US Highbush Blueberry Council Spring Meeting** ~ Crowne Plaza Seattle, 1113 6th Ave., Seattle, Washington. (206) 464-1980. For the online registration, [click here](#) --- (user name: meeting; password: meetingnabc1)

**March 14 —WSU Extension Workshop for Berry Growers and Washington Red Raspberry Commission meeting~** Vancouver, WA campus of WSU. For Workshop information, call Dr. Lynell Tanigoshi at 306-576-6030 x 12 [Click here for the agenda](#). The **WRRC** meeting will follow the Vancouver workshop at 3 pm in the same location. On the agenda is a discussion about the selection of a contractor for developing a **marketing strategy** designed to increase consumption of raspberries.