

# Small Fruit Update



**Providing Northwest berry growers with the information they need when they need it.**

The Small Fruit Update is sent out weekly during the growing season by [Peerbolt Crop Management](#) and is funded entirely by the Northwest berry growers & industry through their commissions & councils.

April 6, 2011

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## Featured links:

- **Video:** [British Columbia Blueberries](#)
- **Website:** [The Oregon Berry Festival](#): July 22-23 in Portland. This could be the start of an exciting annual event. There's venter sign up info on the site also.
- [The Weather Cafe](#) by Rufus La Lone
- [Small Fruit Cold Storage Report](#)

## Disease Alert:

### Blueberries- [Mummyberry](#)

From now through the end of bloom, blueberries are susceptible to mummyberry infections. This early period is critical to managing the disease when the vegetative buds are at/beyond green tip stage, there's long periods of wetness, the temperatures are getting into the 50-57°F / 10-14°C range...and it's difficult to get into the fields to treat.

[Click here](#) for a Mummyberry fact sheet from MSU.

## Control Material Alert:

### U.S. Strawberries-Herbicides

Spartan (sulfentrazone) labeling developments:

- For the last several years Spartan has been available through yearly renewals of Section 18 emergency labels.
- A legal tolerance level has now been established for sulfentrazone; so, a Section 18 could not be applied for again.
- The company (FMC) is expected to issue a full, federal Section 3 label but has not yet done so.
- Until this Section 3 label is issued, the herbicide has no legal label and cannot be used even if you've got stocks that were legally purchased under the old Section 18 label.
- **Do not use Spartan** in strawberries until the new label is available.

## New meeting Information:

**April 21 — SWD Research Update & Season Warm Up Workshop** ~ OSU, WSU, USDA-ARS—1:00-4:00pm, At the North Willamette Research & Extension Center, Aurora, OR. [Click here](#) for the agenda and registration information.

## Disseminating information for:

### Washington

[Washington Red Raspberry Commission](#)  
[Washington Blueberry Commission](#)  
[Washington Strawberry Commission](#)

### Oregon

[Oregon Raspberry and Blackberry Commission](#)  
[Oregon Blueberry Commission](#)  
[Oregon Strawberry Commission](#)

### British Columbia

[Fraser Valley Strawberry Growers Association](#)  
[Raspberry Industry Development Council](#)  
[B.C. Blueberry Council](#)

## Regional Reports

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*These reports are from individuals within the region and are their particular observations. They are included to give an impression of the present 'state of the industry' and regional activities.*

### British Columbia, Fraser Valley

- **Blueberries:** (Monday, 4/4) It's really hard getting anything done right now. Very wet field conditions hampering just about all activities. Stipes (*the stem-like structures*) started to sprout from exposed mummies at the end of last week in some blueberry fields in Abbotsford that I use as marker fields. We should be getting second mummyberry sprays on this week, but that will be a challenge until late this week.
- **Raspberries:** (Monday, 4/4) Raspberries continue to push, but Meekers are still a bit slow. Even new primocanes are slow to emerge. Saanich and Chemainus are pushing a lot of new growth and shoots. Shoot burning should be just around the corner in the next 7-10 days.

### Northern Washington, Whatcom County

- **Raspberries:** (Thursday, 3/31) 3+ inches of rain over the last two days kind of halted the meager attempts at farming. When/if it dries out, we'll likely get into berry fertilizing in earnest. Lime sulfur applications are all but over. We've been trying to plant the last few new fields. It's pretty green out there- looks like we dodged the frozen bullet this time.
- **Blueberries:** (Thursday, 3/31) The first Indar applications for mummyberry control should be on. We've got frost protection ready to go just in case. There's lots of mice activity evident.
- **Strawberries:** (Thursday, 3/31) They're trying to grow. Watching for cutworms, and checking for mice tunneling under the old leaves/stems/runners.

### Northern Washington, Skagit County

- **Blueberries:** (Friday, 4/1) Too wet to do much in the field--some weed spraying. Mummyberry apothecia are rearing their ugly heads in organic blues. Conditions are ideal for them to thrive, while it's difficult to get on with a lime sulfur application to burn them off. Our organic Reka are looking better than expected. We have organic and conventional Reka blocks side-by-side and the conventional have much more severe winter damage, not sure why. Perhaps the black weed mat under the organic block made a soil temperature difference. Bluejay are still in best shape over all.
- **Raspberries:** (Friday, 4/1) Cane burning in the raspberries has not started yet.
- **Strawberries:** (Friday, 4/1) There's standing water in strawberry fields this afternoon.

### Willamette Valley, Oregon and SW Washington

- **Blueberries:** (Friday, 4/1) At Salem, we are finally finishing up our herbicide applications. The bees will be arriving soon, but there's only a small amount of open blossom in Duke, Bluecrop and Legacy. The young Bluegold field is taking another beating from shock virus with symptoms on breaking buds progressing swiftly.

### Update on Cold Damage Assessment from Northern Washington The following information is from [Dr. Tom Walters](#), WSU Small Fruit Horticulturist

- **Raspberries:** Our Meeker flowering bud emergence at the research center remains painfully slow, but primocanes are coming out fine. Most of the other varieties are coming out all right.
- **Blueberries:** Some of the freeze damage in our blueberry trial is looking more obvious now that you can see individual flower buds coming out. On this basis, I am seeing (in really round numbers):  
*Note: These are just based on observing buds on the plant-this doesn't include damage to the vascular system, which will be significant for Reka and probably for some of the other varieties.*  
**Bluecrop**-about 30% flower loss; **Duke**-similar to Bluecrop; **Liberty**-somewhat more flower loss, perhaps 50%; **Elliot**-OK; **Aurora**-OK; **1613A (Hardiblu)**-OK; **Powderblue**-100% loss; **Tifblue**-100% loss; **Olympia**-OK; **Bluejay**-20% loss; **Toro**-OK; **Nui**-60% loss; **Reka**-60%

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## Equipment Options

Since choice of equipment and knowledge of equipment options have a large impact on the viability of Northwest Small Fruit growers, I'm including direct links to these equipment manufacturers. This information should not be construed as an endorsement, but disseminating equipment option information in the best interests of the growers. If there are particular tools/machinery that you've found useful and are willing to share that information, please pass it along to me at [pcm@peerbolt.com](mailto:pcm@peerbolt.com)—Tom Peerbolt, SFU editor)

- **Yanmar tractors with treads:** [Click here](#) for manufacturer's information. These tractors are used by many Northwest berry growers to be able to work in wet fields as well as limit soil compaction.
- **Matracks 88 Series Trail-R- Mate tracks:** [Click here](#) for manufacturer's information. These are track sets for converting regular sprayers, mulch spreaders, and other equipment to tracks and can be used behind Yanmar crawler units.

## Control Material Information

- [Spring herbicide choice for blueberries](#) (3/30, MSU)

## Food Safety Resources

- [Using Chlorine as a packing and washwater sanitizer](#) (4/1, MSU)

## Industry News/Resources

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### **Newsletters/Blogs**

- ['The Source'](#) (4/4) Market updates from *The Produce News*.
- [Oregon Blueberry Commission Newsletter](#) (Spring, 2011) *The premier issue!*
- [Michigan State News for Agriculture](#) (4/5)
- [Southern Region Small Fruits Newsletter](#) for April, 2011 (27 page pdf file)  
*Some of the contents: Georgia enterprise budgets for Highbush & Rabbiteye blueberries; a lot of fresh market strawberry information; growing blackberries in tunnels.*
- [New Jersey Blueberry Bulletin](#) (3/28)  
*Good article on blueberry fertilization. A quote from Gary Pavlis, New Jersey blueberry extension agent: "Fertilizer recommendations which are based on soil analysis are nearly worthless."*
- [New Jersey Blueberry Bulletin](#) (4/4)

### **West**

- [Harry and David files for bankruptcy](#) (3/30, GrowingProduce)
- [California's drought is officially over](#) (3/31, GrowingProduce)
- [Washington state organic agriculture sector sees declines in 2010](#) (3/23, WSU Marketing news)  
*Blueberries are an exception to the trend: "Organic blueberry production increased to 900 acres with another 230 acres in transition, likely making Washington the nation's top producer."*

### **National**

- [The next farm bill: Not just the same old song and dance](#) (4/5, GrowingProduce)
- [Groups protest spending cuts](#) (to agricultural research) (4/5, The Packer)
- North Carolina: [Cape Fear strawberry growers expect a strong season](#) (4/4, FayObserver.com)

### **International**

- [Global Berry Congress](#) (April 6-8 in Monterey, Cal.)
- [Domestic market share growing for Chilean fruit exports](#) (4/5, The Produce News)
- Spain: [New strawberry \(San Andreas\) produces fruit for seven months](#) (4/6, FreshPlaza)
- U.K.: ['White strawberry' that tastes like pineapple to go on sale](#) (4/6, The Telegraph)
- Taiwan: [Samples of agricultural products safe from radiation](#) (4/6, FreshPlaza)
- Argentina: [Tax Burden has cornered the blueberry sector](#) (3/30, FreshPlaza)

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## Pest Alerts

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### Diseases

- **Risk is High:** [Pseudomonas \(Bacterial Blight\)](#) blueberries- **Recommended management:** To prevent future lesions from forming, copper sprays are recommended. Once night temperatures are consistently above the mid thirties (F), the risk of new damage is minimal.
- **Risk is High:** [Mummyberry](#) blueberries See [alert](#) at the top of the newsletter.
- **Risk higher than normal:** [Phytophthora Root Rot](#) raspberries: *Warming, saturated soils favor Phytophthora spread & infections* March is the time to use a fungicide drench in raspberries. Warm, saturated soils are the conditions that favor this organism, allowing it to spread quickly.
- **Risk higher than normal:** [Blackberry Rust \(Phragmidium Rust\)](#) Evergreen blackberries: *Warming temperatures & long periods of leaf wetness favor Phragmidium rust infections.* **From the [OSU Plant Disease Manual online](#):** “Wet conditions (> 6 hours of leaf wetness) with mean daily temperatures between 49° and 64°F favor disease development. Spores are easily spread by the wind; young leaves at 3/4 expansion are most susceptible to infection.” Dormant spray of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur for Blackberry Rust and Redberry Mites is recommended in March to prevent later problems.

### Viruses

- **Start scouting for:** [Shock virus](#), southern blueberries. Symptoms are just becoming visible in many fields.

### Insects/Mites

- **Prime Time to Scout for:** [Winter Moth/Bruce Span Worm](#) blueberries: Scouting for Winter Moth larvae should start as soon as the buds start swelling. This is more of an ongoing issue in the northern growing regions, but it's also an occasional, locally severe problem in some Oregon and SW Washington fields.
- **Prime Time to Scout for:** [Clay Colored Weevils](#) northern raspberries: This early emerging species is considered a pest of raspberries in northern growing areas where it feeds on newly emerging shoots and buds.

### Vertebrates

- **Voles, all berries:** ***Zinc Phosphide baits can only be used up to budbreak.***
  - [Click here](#) for some background and biology information on voles (or meadow mice).
  - [Click here](#) for information on how to construct bait stations.
  - [Click here](#) for a video of Vole Traps and Trapping Techniques- might be a bit labor intensive for some, but looks good for organic management.

## Additional, Ongoing Pest Management & IPM Information

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### Diseases

- [Purple Blotch](#) blackberries: Check for cane lesions that are easy to see as the weather warms but the foliage has not yet emerged. It's a good time to assess disease level.

### Insects/Mites

- [Strawberry Crown Moth](#), southern strawberries: It's now possible to find the larvae in the crowns of strawberry plants in some SW Washington fields.
- **Root Weevils, southern strawberries:** Larvae of [Black Vine](#), [Rough Strawberry](#), [Strawberry Root Weevils](#) are now being recovered from some strawberry fields.
- [Aphids/Scorch virus](#), northern blueberries: Pre bloom aphid control is strongly recommended in blueberry fields infected with or in close proximity to fields infected with [Scorch virus](#). **This disease is most prevalent in B.C.**
- [Blueberry Gall Midge](#), southern blueberries: The first Gall Midge feeding symptoms are usually found around this time in southern blueberry fields as the first generation of adults emerges from the soil. They could be delayed a week or two given this year's slow start.

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## Meeting Information

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For more comprehensive meeting schedule, [click here](#).

- **April 12 — Washington Blueberry Commission meeting** ~ Regular commission meeting to be held in Eastern WA. Location TBA. Contact [Alan Schreiber](#) 509-266-4300 for more information.
- **April 13 — Washington Red Raspberry Commission meeting** ~ Puyallup, WA. Contact [Henry Bierlink](#) or call 360-354-8767 for more information.
- **April 19-20 — Soil & Water Conservation Society “Protecting Natural Resources with Conservation Buffers” Workshop** ~ Portland, OR. [Click here](#) for details. Portland, OR. Someone from EPA will be giving the keynote address. This conference will address many of the issues that are at the center of ongoing legal efforts to limit the use of many pesticides.
- **April 21 — SWD Research Update & Season Warm Up Workshop** ~ OSU, WSU, USDA-ARS—1:00-4:00, At the North Willamette Research & Extension Center, Aurora, OR. [Click here](#) for the agenda and registration information
- **April 26 — Oregon Blueberry Commission meeting** ~ Noon. Santiam Room, West Salem Roth's IGA in Salem. Call (503) 364-2944 for more information.

## Crop work

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### All crops

- Scout for voles and treat as needed.
- Weed management.
- Plan fertilizer program.
- Can put out monitoring traps for Spotted Wing Drosophila.

### Blueberries

- Weed management note: [Callisto \(mesotrione\)](#) can only be used before bloom.
  - [Click here](#) for information from OSU on the new herbicide options in blueberries.
- Scout for Winter Moth/Spanworm and treat as needed.
- Can apply Bacterial Blight (*Pseudomonas*) management materials.
- Scout for sprouting Mummyberries and treat as needed.
- Scout for leafroller larvae feeding.
- Plan for pre-bloom aphid control where scorch virus transmission is an issue.
- Make preparations for bringing in bees around 10% bloom.

### Blackberries

- Scout for Purple Blotch lesions in Marion berries to assess field disease levels for later treatments.
- Can apply lime sulfur for Redberry Mites and/or disease management.
- Can drench for crown borer management.

### Evergreen Blackberries

- Can still apply a delayed dormant spray of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur for Redberry mites and Blackberry Rust.

### Raspberries

- Burn back primocanes as needed.
- Scout for Clay Colored Weevil feeding and treat as needed.
- (northern areas) Scout for Clay Colored Weevil feeding and treat as needed.
- Can still apply Ridomil for Phytophthora root rot management.
- Can still drench for crown borer management.
- Scout for Cane Blight and Cane Botrytis symptoms.

### Strawberries

- As plants start to grow, watch for weak growing areas and check plants for weevil larvae, root rot and/or cold damage.
- (Southern strawberries) Can scout for Strawberry Crown Moth larvae.

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## Archived Small Fruit Updates

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(For older Updates [click here.](#))

[03-29-11](#)

[03-23-11](#)

[03-15-11](#)