

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.

March 13, 2012

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• Save the IR-4 Program!

This program has been essential in facilitating the registration of crop protection materials for many high value specialty crops like berries. The president's proposed FY 2013 budget would eliminate its funding. [Click here](#). To go to the 'Save the IR-4 Project' website.

- [Trends in World Blueberry Production](#) (3/8, Growing Produce)
- [Organic Blueberry Production Webinar](#) (OSU Extension)

[The Weather Cafe](#) by Rufus La Lone [Small Fruit Cold Storage Report](#)

Pest Management Materials Update

Fungicide for Caneberries & Blueberries in the U.S.

- **New Supplemental label for Pristine** (pyraclastrobin & boscalid) [Click here](#) for the label.
 - This supplemental label removes ALL tank mix options allowing for Pristine to ONLY be applied in water to labeled crops in the bush berry AND cane berry groups.
 - This label supersedes ALL current container labels in the field.
 - From this point forward ALL Pristine applications to these crops are to be applied in water with no other pesticides, adjuvants, surfactants, drift retardants, deposition aides or fertilizers of any type.

Regional Reports

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, Raspberries:** (Tuesday, 3/12) A pretty bleak last few days and the same outlook for the coming week. Too wet to do a lot. But some pruning is still finishing up in the blues. Not a huge amount of spraying getting done. Some early mummyberry sprays managed to get on last week in fields that had pushed. I don't imagine a lot of spraying will get done this week without some breaks.

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](#)

National

[North American Blueberry Council](#)

Northern Washington, Whatcom County (Friday, March 9)

It's still cold and rainy up here. This next stretch of crud will put us later than last year.

- **Strawberries:** Strawberries are pushing a bit, trying to get through a wad of old leaves and runners. Not seeing the voles tunneling like last year.
- **Blueberries:** The last of the blueberry pruning is getting done. Lots of vole activity. We're putting on some residual herbicide between the weather events.
- **Raspberries:** Some growers are reporting damage in the baby raspberry fields, I haven't seen it yet. Two weeks away from finishing up tying the baby fields, if we have the labor.

Willamette Valley, Oregon and SW Washington

- **Blueberries:** (Thursday, 3/9) (Organic production) It was nice to have a warm day today. We were cold here (below 25F without frost fans). We ran the fans at 28F. We have buds open but still not sure if it is needed but at least we are working out any mechanical issues with the fans. I guess it's rare but we had one of the fan towers go down on us, the bolts broke off. They appeared to have been faulty. Created a little excitement.

We're finishing pruning next week. Applying some early mummy berry control. Killing some early gophers. Thinking about bloom sprays, I still wonder how much help these organic spray options give us but spraying something always makes me "feel" better at least.

I got a new one for you all, I recently was attending a conference and an organic fertilizer salesman approached me. He proceeds to pull out a vial from his coat pocket with yellow liquid in it. He says, "This is the greatest, newest stuff! Its petrified bat crap and will make everything grow!". I'm still laughing. Lots of new options this year for organic fertilizers, some non-fish stuff looks interesting. We'll see if it'll go through the filters and stay in a stable form. I'll let you know at the end of the year how it all works out.

Overall, things all look pretty good right now, hoping for a less rainy spring.

- **Blackberries:** (Monday, 3/11) Some Sulfur sprays got on Marions and early blacks before all the wetness. All the blackberries continue to look good.



*Present stage of Marionberry buds in the Willamette Valley (3-9-12)
photo by Bill Dinger*

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Disease Alert

Mummyberry (blueberries)- Be ready with a management program by the time fields at risk reach 'green tip stage'. That's when new infections can begin.

- **So, what is "green tip stage"?** [Click here](#) for a PDF of this chart from Michigan State of the various stages of blueberry growth development.
- [Mummyberry primer from MSU](#)

- **Some critical points:**
 - The optimum temperature for spore release and infection is 50 to 57°F (10 to 14°C). Figure on when temperatures go over 45F in our area you're into the danger zone.
 - At least 12 hours of wetness is required for infection.
 - Frost may increase susceptibility of blueberry shoots to infection.

Classifieds

California Blueberry grower looking for an equipment sharing partner in the Northwest

I'm a blueberry grower, packer, shipper in San Diego California. My season is April through about June 22. We've got about 100 acres. I'm looking to develop a relationship with a grower/packer in the Northwest to work out an exchange/sharing the use of equipment.

- We've rented a OXBO 8000 harvester for the 2012 season. Oxbo has agreed to let us shared the rental with another grower. We're light users (about 100 hours a season--mostly cleanup and end of harvest).
 - Approximate cost for a Northwest partner would be half of \$30,000--\$15,000. Include freight.
- Other equipment we have for sharing:
 - AB Packing Equipment.
 - 2 full inspection lines with sizers and BBC softers
 - 1 Fill by weight ,Speedy 9 head unit filler with a index conveyor for 6oz to pints, 1 volume filler.
- Other equipment needed:
 - A jumbo index conveyor for a speedy filler To rent for my very short season, end of May-June.
- If you're interested in discussing an exchange/sharing of equipment season, contact me.
 - Bill Steed, Fairfield Farms: 1-760-696-3005, Website Fairfieldllc.com

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Nutrient Management

We're getting into a traditional time for applying fertilizer. Many growers still apply the first blueberry application just before the buds break. Research has shown that the plant takes up very little nitrogen before late April. Recommended timing for split applications in the Willamette Valley is 1/3 in late April, 1/3 in mid-May and 1/3 in mid-June.

[Click here](#) For OSU's "Nutrient Management in Blueberries" (16 page pdf).

Vole Damage Survey for B.C. Berry Growers

How much damage are voles doing to your crop? This is a primary question for many Northwest growers. The B.C. Ministry of Ag and the B.C. Blueberry Council have put together the following survey to gather some real farm data. We should probably do the same for Oregon and Washington.

- [Click here](#) to download a PDF copy of the 3 page survey. It'll take 5-10 minutes to fill out.
- When finished, turn it in by:
 - Saving it to your hard drive, attaching it to an email and sending it to research@bcblueberry.com.
 - **Or** print it out & mail it to: BC Blueberry Council, #275 32160 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford, BC V2T 1W5.
 - **Ignore/Don't use** the submit buttons on the top of the survey.
 - Questions/comments can be directed to: Karina Sakalauskas, BC Blueberry Council Research Coordinator cell: 604 613-2133, email: www.bcblueberry.com

Ongoing Pest Management & IPM

Vertebrates

- **Voles:** Vole activity is apparent in many blueberry, caneberry, and strawberry fields. Management of voles is most effective in the spring before they start multiplying like...voles. Kind of like weeds—get them before their reproduction cycle kicks in! [Click here](#) for some background and biology information on voles (or meadow mice). [Click here](#) for information on how to construct bait stations.
- **Birds, blueberries. Starling management:** Right now starlings are beginning to fledge. Population control becomes very difficult later into the season because they multiply rapidly. This is a major pest species that needs year round management attention.

- [Click here](#) for a starling fact sheet.
- [Click here](#) for a starling nesting fact sheet.
- [Click here](#) for the Okanagan (B.C.) grape grower starling trapping 2010 program synopsis. This is a well documented and well run starling management plan.

Diseases

- **[Pseudomonas \(Bacterial Blight\)](#) blueberries:** Water-soaked lesions can appear at this time of year on canes that then develop into reddish brown to black cankers. Cankers may extend from a fraction of an inch to the entire length of 1-year-old wood. Buds in cankers die. If girdled, the cane portion above the canker dies.
- **[Mummyberry](#) blueberries:** [See Alert above.](#)

Insects/Mites

- **[Winter Moth/ Bruce Span Worm](#) blueberries:** Scouting for winter moth larvae should start as soon as the buds start swelling. We've had reports in previous years of problems beginning this early but it's usually in a couple of weeks. More of an ongoing issue in the northern growing regions but also an occasional, locally severe problem in some Oregon and SW Washington fields.
- **[Scale](#) blueberries:** A dormant oil or Esteem (pyriproxyfen) can be used while blueberries are dormant.

Usual March Pest Management

In most years these pests and their management would be happening very soon. They're associated with the warming temperatures and renewed plant growth that usually happen in March.

Insects/Mites

- **[Raspberry Crown Borer](#) caneberries:** If you've had borer problems in the past, March is the time to drench for crown borer control in caneberries.
- **[Strawberry Crown Moth](#) southern caneberries:** In Oregon and Southwest Washington, this borer looks to do as much, if not more, damage in caneberries as the Raspberry Crown Borer. The treatment is the same as for RCB- a spring (or fall) insecticide drench.
- **[Clay Colored Weevils](#) southern strawberries:** This early emerging species is usually just considered a pest of raspberries in northern growing areas where it feeds on newly emerging shoots and buds. But in the last couple of years emerged adult Clay Colored Weevils have been recovered from SW Washington southern strawberry fields and blueberry fields.
- **[Redberry Mite](#) evergreen blackberries:** Dormant sprays of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur for Blackberry Rust and Redberry Mite are recommended in March.

Diseases

- **[Phytophthora Root Rot](#) raspberries:** 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.
- **[Blackberry Rust \(Phragmidium Rust\)](#) Evergreen blackberries:** Dormant spray of lime/sulfur or elemental sulfur for Blackberry Rust and Redberry Mites is recommended in March to prevent later problems.
- **[Cane Blight](#) raspberries:** A good time to spot symptoms of cane blight is as the buds break. Infected canes will show either no bud break if the cane has been girdled or one-sided bud break if the infection is on one side. Scrape canes to look for rust colored streaks usually coming up from machine harvester scars. There is no treatment for cane blight once it's present only prevention. The time to prevent next year's canes from getting infected is to apply an appropriate fungicide immediately after harvest when fresh wounds normally become infected.
- **[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.

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Industry News/Resources

Newsletters

- [Teasdale B.C. Blueberry IPM Newsletter](#) (3/12)
- [Michigan State Fruit News](#) (3/12)

- [‘The Source’](#) (3/12) Market updates from *The Produce News*.
- [The Bluespaper](#) USHBC Newsletter for March.

Magazine compilations

- The Packer’s Market scope: [blueberries](#) [blackberries](#) [raspberries](#) [strawberries](#)
Recent stories & fresh market pricing for the various berries from The Packer.
- Growing Produce: [Recent Berry Articles](#)

Oregon State University

- [President Obama announces intent to appoint Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy as Director of USDA’s National Institute of Food & Agriculture](#) 9/3/9, USDA) *Dr Ramaswamy is the present Dean of OSU’s College of Ag.*

Research/Breeding

- [Berries Boost your Brain!](#) (3/10, Dailyrx.com)

West

- [Hurst Berry HQ Moving to McMinnville](#) (3/10, News-Register)
- [California kicks in for strawberry fumigant alternatives](#) (3/8, The Packer)
- [Spring holidays kick off California strawberry surge](#) (3/8, The Packer)

National

- (Florida) [New Extension center honors blueberry visionary Alto Straughn](#) (3/12, The Produce News)
- [Florida growers bullish on blueberries](#) (Video, 3/8, Growing Produce)

International

- [Serbian raspberry producers ink deal with Austrian firm](#) (3/9, Serbia-Times.com)

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Event Calendar

For more comprehensive event calendar, [click here](#).

- **March 13 — Oregon Blueberry Commission meeting** ~ 12-noon, regular meeting at Roth’s Salem location. Call (503) 364-2944 for more information or [email](#) Brian Ostlund.
- **March 16 — Oregon Raspberry & Blackberry Commission meeting** ~ 10 am, Langdon Farms Golf Club. For more information, call 541-758-4043 or [email](#) Philip Gutt.
- **March 19 — WSU Extension’s Northwest Washington Sustainable Agriculture Conference** ~ 8-4:30, Mt. Baker Rotary Building, Lynden, WA. [Click here](#) for the agenda & registration information.
- **March 20 — Oregon Strawberry Commission meeting** ~ Noon, Roth’s West. 1130 Wallace Rd NW, Salem OR. For more information, call 541-758-4043 or [email](#) Philip Gutt.
- **April 2-3 — UC Davis GAP training workshop** ~ One day workshop providing entry-level GAPs training, with optional half-day session to create a food safety manual. Also being offered November 5-6. [Click here for details](#).

Crop work

All crops:

- Scout for voles and treat as needed. Baits cannot be used after bud break.
- Weed management.
- Plan fertilizer program.

Blueberries

- Treat for mummyberry as needed. *You can scout for sprouting mummyberries on the ground but they can be very difficult to find. Base treatments on past history of the field and surrounding fields.*
- Scout for winter moth/span worm and treat as needed.
- Scout for bud damage & determine cause.
- Dormant oil can be applied for scale and winter moth egg control before bud break.
- Can apply Bacterial Blight (*Pseudomonas*) management materials.

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 apply lime/sulfur for blackberry rust.

Raspberries

- Can apply lime sulfur for Redberry Mites and/or disease management.
- Can apply lime sulfur for Redberry Mites and/or disease management.
- Can apply Ridomil for Phytophthora root rot management.
- Can drench for crown borer management.
- Scout for Cane Blight symptoms as buds break.

Strawberries

- Can apply pre-emergent herbicides.
- As plants start to grow, watch for weak growing areas and check rots for weevil larvae, root rot and/or cold damage.

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Archived Small Fruit Updates

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

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