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# Orchard Outlook Newsletter

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The technical information contained in this Orchard Outlook publication is the result of the combined professional opinions of personnel from AFHRC, AgraPoint and industry.

## Crop Development

Apple drop is continuing and may be excessive where aggressive thinning treatments were applied. By next week growers should be able to get a fairly accurate feel for crop load. Sweet cherries are colouring with the harvest of early sweet cherry cultivars beginning next week.

## 2006 Degree Day Accumulations

(Temperature data provided by Jeff Franklin, AFHRC, Kentville)

Table 1.0 Degree day accumulations as of July 03, 2006 taken from Kentville weather data. Degree day accumulations are calculated using the single sine method and are based on a start date of January 1, 2006.

Category	2003	2004	2005	2006	5-year average
Plant development (Base 5°C)	664.3	597.6	636.7	819.9	657.8
Insect development (Base 10°C)	342.7	280.8	303.0	423.6	333.3

Weather data from the Atlantic Food & Horticulture Research Centre for the month of June reported 220 mm of rain which compares to the 45-year average of 67 mm. Last year Kentville only recorded 39 mm for June. The mean temperature for June was 18°C which compares to the 45-year average of 16 °C and last year's mean of 17.1°C.

## **Diseases**

### **Apple Scab**

I don't know if growers will see this as good news, but there were no infection periods recorded at Kentville during the past week. The 220 mm of rain for June has resulted in one of the worst years for apple scab infection that I can recall. While there are orchard blocks where apple scab is under control, there are, however, an above-average number of blocks where growers failed to obtain adequate control. In these blocks growers should continue with a precover fungicide program for the remainder of this month. In blocks where there are no scab lesions or it is difficult to find them, growers can use a cover spray program for the remainder of this month. Let's hope that July is a drier month than June.

### **Powdery Mildew**

As stated in last week's Orchard Outlook, this disease will continue to spread during July and will slow down once terminal fruit buds have set. New leaves are more susceptible to infection than older leaves. Consider using a fungicide that will control both mildew and scab in orchard blocks where this disease is easy to find. Do not overlook your young blocks where this disease can reduce tree growth.

### **Fire Blight**

In the past, fire blight has only been a minor disease in Nova Scotia showing up in pockets within the Valley. After this growing season fire blight can no longer be thought of as a minor disease in Nova Scotia, as it can now be found in most areas of the Valley. It has shown up in areas where there was none last year and in the blocks that only had a trace last year it can be easily found this year. Most growers will now need to consider the application of streptomycin spray during the bloom period in future years. I strongly encourage growers to check susceptible cultivars, such as Idared, Gala, Jonagold, Golden Delicious and Honeycrisp, for signs of fire blight. If you find shoots that are showing symptoms, have it checked so appropriate steps can be taken. Growers who have orchard blocks with fire blight strikes – you are encouraged to monitor the blocks every 2 to 3 days and prune out shoots that are showing signs of fire blight. Fire blight will continue to spread while there is active shoot growth. Check young and new plantings as one producer reported fire blight in a Gala planting that was set out this Spring. In young plantings of susceptible cultivars, grower would be advised to remove the infected tree when signs of fire blight appear on the central leader or trunk of the tree. Things are likely to get worse before there is a slow down in the appearance of new shoot infections. If you have not received the new fact sheet or the CD on fire blight, I still have a few copies left which can be picked up in the Kentville AgraPoint office.

### **Brown Rot**

Sweet cherries have begun to ripen, thus growers will need to stay on top of brown rot control. During periods of wet weather fungicide treatments will need to be applied every 3 to 4 days to obtain good control. Check the *Stone Fruit Management Schedule* for products and also check the days to harvest intervals so that an appropriate fungicide is applied.

## **Insects**

### **Codling Moth**

Continue to monitor traps and treat when thresholds are reached. In orchard blocks that were treated for codling moth, a second treatment is warranted when trap captures reach 10 or more.

### **Rosy Apple Aphid**

This insect appears to have slowed down in the past week. Winged adults are leaving apple trees to go to their alternate host, evening primrose, and natural predators can be found cleaning up colonies. Assess trees for active colonies before treating for this insect.

### **Green Apple Aphid**

This aphid will be found in orchards throughout July and August and can damage fruit when they move onto fruit clusters. They can be found on the terminal shoot growth, of which there is lots of this year, so keep a check on young and mature orchards and treat when it is easy to find. A few infected terminals does not warrant treatment.

### **Obliquebanded Leafroller (OBLR)**

Treatment period for OBLR is fast approaching and the 240 degree day mark has been reached for Confirm and Intrepid treatments for this pest. Consult with your scouting service for the treatment period aimed at newly-hatched OBLR.

### **Apple Maggot**

As of Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup>, there have been no reports of flies being caught. Captures should occur any day now but in most cases treatment for maggot will not need to go on prior to the third week of July.

## **Horticulture**

### **Weed Control**

Check orchard blocks that were treated early in the season for weed control. There is a second flush of weed that may require treatment. Controlling weed growth in July should carry you for the remainder of the growing season. Weed growth in late August and September has very little impact on tree growth and the crop. It is more of an inconvenience for the harvesting crew.

### **Young Tree Maintenance**

I continue to see young trees on dwarfing rootstock that have yet to be supported, which has resulted in tree losses from wind breakage. June has been a windy month and the movement of unsupported trees can result in tree breakage and reduced growth. Considerable time and expense has gone into these plantings and it is a shame to see these tree losses.

### **Deer Feeding**

It is bad enough when deer feed on new shoot growth but they can also spread fire blight if they feed on infected shoots.

## **Foliar Nutrients**

Foliar application of calcium should be going on where bitter pit is a concern. Calcium chloride or calcium nitrate are the most economical products for increasing fruit calcium. However, they can cause foliar burn if applied in the wrong manner. If applied in a concentrated spray, use no more than half of the recommended rate and avoid spray over-lap. Epsom salts can be applied as a foliar spray on orchard blocks that are showing signs of a magnesium deficiency. When applying foliar nutrients, apply them during periods when there are good drying conditions. Some of the fruit russetting that has shown up this year is attributed to the application of foliar nutrient that was applied under slow drying conditions.

## **Honeycrisp™ Orchard Renewal Program (HCORP)**

HCORP applications for 2007 planting are due in the NSFGA office on **July 31<sup>st</sup>**. Please note that there is a newly revised application form. The Technical Guidelines have not changed and are available from the NSFGA office or can be downloaded from the NSFGA website ([www.nsapples.com](http://www.nsapples.com)).

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