



# UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION

College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences

## *Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News*

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*a newsletter for commercial growers of fruit and vegetable crops*

*"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." Aristotle*

Address any questions or comments regarding this newsletter to the individual authors listed after each article or to its editor, Rick Weinzierl, 217-244-2126, [weinzierl@illinois.edu](mailto:weinzierl@illinois.edu). The *Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News* is available on the web at: <http://www.ipm.illinois.edu/ifvn/index.html>. To receive email notification of new postings of this newsletter, call or write Rick Weinzierl at the number or email address above.

### *In this issue ...*

**Upcoming Programs** (IL-IA Fruit and Veg Conference, Illiana Veg School, Illinois Specialty Crops and Agritourism Conference, and a list of January-March extension programs)

**Regional Updates** (from Elizabeth Wahle – including notes on strawberries and apple diseases – and from Maurice Ogutu)

**Notes from Chris Doll** (apple harvest, strawberry management, winter pruning, orchard mowing)

**Fruit Production and Pest Management** (apple diseases in 2008)

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### *Upcoming Programs*

- **Illinois/Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Symposium, Friday November 21, 2008** ... Scott County Extension Office Bettendorf, Iowa. Registration is \$25 per person. For more information, contact Maurice Ogutu ([ogutu@illinois.edu](mailto:ogutu@illinois.edu)) or refer to this web site: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson/news/fruitandvegemtg.htm>
- **Illiana Vegetable Growers School, January 6, 2009** ... Teibel's Restaurant in Schererville, IN. Contact Liz Maynard ([emaynard@purdue.edu](mailto:emaynard@purdue.edu)) or Maurice Ogutu ([ogutu@illinois.edu](mailto:ogutu@illinois.edu)) for more information.
- **Illinois Specialty Crops and Agritourism Conference, January 7-9, 2009** ... Crowne Plaza, Springfield, IL. In addition to concurrent program tracks on fruits, vegetables, herbs, and agritourism and marketing January 8 and 9, three full-day workshops will be held on January 7; topics for these workshops are pumpkin production and marketing, biological control in greenhouses and high tunnels, and federal grant-writing basics. For more details, stay tuned to future issues of his newsletter, or contact Diane Handley of the Illinois Specialty Growers Association at 309-557-2107 or [handley@ifvb.org](mailto:handley@ifvb.org).
- **And more information will follow on the following programs (and more), but mark your calendars ...**
  - Midwest Organics Conference (in conjunction with the Indiana Horticultural Congress), January 21-22, 2009 Indianapolis, IN
  - Illinois Horseradish Growers School, January 21-22, 2009, Collinsville, IL
  - Southern Illinois Tree Fruit School, February 3, 2009, Mt. Vernon, IL
  - Southwestern Illinois Tree Fruit School, February 4, 2009, Hardin, IL
  - Southern Illinois Vegetable Growers School, February 11, 2009, Mt. Vernon, IL
  - Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Conference, February 16, 2009, Harvard, IL
  - Kankakee Area Vegetable Growers School, February 18, 2009, Kankakee, IL
  - Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Association, February 19-21, Springfield, IL
  - Illinois Small Fruit and Strawberry School, March 3-4, 2009, Mt. Vernon, IL

## ***Regional Updates***

**From southwestern Illinois ...** Strawberries in the southern region are starting to flatten out after receiving a few light frosts, indicating that plants are entering their winter period of dormancy. Sinbar is labeled for application just prior to mulching and should provide some early season weed control for many seedling grasses and broadleaves. For varieties sensitive to Sinbar, other options for fall application include Dacthal, Devrinol, and Chateau. Unlike Devrinol and Dacthal, Chateau has little if any grass activity, and complete strawberry dormancy is required before application. Devrinol requires rain or irrigation for activation. In all cases, do not apply to frozen ground.

This has been a banner year for plant diseases, so dormant applications following pruning this winter should be on everyone's checklist. Anthracnose on grape, *Phomopsis* cane and twig blight on blueberry, fire blight on apple, and peach leaf curl, San Jose scale, and mites on peach are the main overwintering pests that are targeted for dormant pesticide control. All have specific timing in terms of growth stage and/or air temperatures. For complete details, be sure to study our spray guides and then specific product labels.

In attending the Great Lakes Fruit Workers meeting recently in Holland, Michigan, I picked up a tip to help identify black rot in the field. You may know that bitter rot usually forms a cone-shaped rot and white rot forms more of a column-shaped rot, and these patterns are visible when the fruit is sliced through to the core, making initial field diagnosis at least partially possible. Black rot, as I learned from David Rosenberger, pathologist at Cornell University, has another potential identifier as well. When black rot is suspected, look for a mummy nearby the infected fruit – most likely a thinned apple that failed to drop. Attached are photos of apples infected with black rot and the associated mummy.

One final note: The Midwest Strawberry Production Guide has been available in hardcopy since 2006 and is now available online at: <http://ohioline.osu.edu/b926/>.



Black rot on Gala apples (photo by David Rosenberger, Cornell University).



Black rot mummy, Honeycrisp (photo by James Schupp, Penn State University).

**In northern Illinois ...** Early November has been characterized by day temps in the mid 30s to low 70s and night temperatures in the upper 20s to low 50s. The first frost occurred on October 27-28 in most parts of the region. The region received 1-2 inches of rainfall during the last three weeks of October and the first week of November. Most of the vegetable operations are now closed except in some farms where they are still harvesting cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, collards, and other cool season vegetables such as spinach. There was a good apple crop in the region compared to last year, and through October 31 there were still some u-pick operations with fruit on the trees. Some will remain open for picking through November 15. The pumpkin crop in the region was much better than last year despite incidence of phytophthora in some fields. It is very important for growers that had flooded spots in their fields or areas with higher incidence of phytophthora to plow deep crop residues left on those areas and to look for alternative sites to grow pumpkins and other cucurbits next year. Rye cover that was planted in September/October in many farms, particularly areas with sandy soils, has established well. Cleaning up fields is still going on in many farms in the region.

*Maurice Ogutu (708-352-0109; [ogutu@illinois.edu](mailto:ogutu@illinois.edu))*

### ***Notes from Chris Doll***

I'm sending this note on November 11, which is Armistice Day and a memorable day for those of us who can remember back to 1940 when a severe cold spell with high winds and snows killed many apple trees in the Midwest. For fruit growers, it is one of those days remembered like Pearl Harbor, President Kennedy's assassination, and 9/11. The freeze in early November 1991 was almost as memorable.

It has been a nice fall for most fruit growers who had many nice weekends for direct marketing. Apple maturity was later than normal, especially for the late varieties like Fuji and Goldrush. In fact, I am still waiting for more maturity of these two varieties in the Back 40. The freeze of 23 degrees on November 10 made for some hard apples on non-harvested trees, but those have thawed out to edible condition. This freeze followed a lighter freeze with frost on October 28. October was a fairly dry month, and rain crack on Goldrush was less than expected.

Peach trees are pretty well defoliated except for those in a high vigor situation. Bud set looks good. Grape leaves have frozen and are dropping. Brambles look good and are generally green. Blueberries are showing off with good fall color.

Strawberry plantings are in good condition with a nice growing season this fall. It is about time to apply the straw mulch on matted rows. A couple of freezes have started the plants toward dormancy, and the old advice to mulch before the plants are exposed to 20 degrees F remains in force. Generally, Thanksgiving is a normal target date to have it on in this area. If broadleaved weeds are present, a 2,4-D amine spray can be applied at any time. Grass problems can be attacked now or in early spring. The critical treatment before mulching is a pre-emergent herbicide for wheat seed and spring germinating weeds.

After orchard clean-up and mouse control is completed, there is a tendency to break out the pruning equipment. Technically, winter is about six weeks away. Any injury resulting from early pruning will depend on the weather, primarily severe drops in temperatures shortly after pruning. I have not seen much cold damage from late fall pruning during my career, just enough to be cautious about

okaying the go ahead. If green leaves remain when pruning is ongoing, there could be a slight reduction in fruit size and yield due to loss of vigor, but it is difficult to determine.

Other tasks before heading off to the Michigan Fruit EXPO in Grand Rapids early next month and the Illinois Horticulture Society meeting in Springfield in early January could be to use the rotary mower to reduce cover for voles and to chop up dropped fruit and leaves for more rapid decomposition. There is some evidence of reduction of apple scab inoculum from chopping infected leaves. The latter was mentioned at the Great Lakes Fruit Workers meeting last week. Also discussed were difficulties in controlling codling moth, with incomplete spray coverage being a major component in some orchards. The most interesting discussion was the study in Michigan on using 50-100 pound pigs to eat the fallen apples infested with curculio and anything else. Early results also indicated a reduction in codling moth entries and apple scab (from induced leaf decomposition) and less weed growth. The illustrated talk by Dr. David Epstein included the data gathered to date and interesting research methods.

## ***Fruit Production and Pest Management***

### ***Apple diseases in 2008***

**Cedar-apple rust** was present in almost all apple orchards visited this year. Infections generally were limited to leaves, except in one orchard in the south where spectacular fruit infection was also observed. Incidence and severity of cedar-apple rust in some orchards in western Illinois were much higher in 2007 than 2008.



**Fruit rots:** Scattered white rot of fruit was observed in most commercial orchards in September. Overall, incidence was low. The occurrence of white rot was believed to be due to discontinuation of fungicide spray application beyond August while weather was still wet. There was an estimated 25% incidence of bitter rot in one commercial orchard in western Illinois in early September. The grower had not used effective fungicides for control of the summer diseases.

**Sooty blotch-flyspeck:** Although the sooty blotch/flyspeck complex was observed in most commercial apple orchards, incidence and severity of this disease complex were negligible. In an organic block of apples in southern Illinois a severe infection of sooty blotch-flyspeck resulted in nearly 100% incidence on fruit.



Apple: White Rot

Babadoost,  
Illinois



Apple: Bitter Rot



Babadoost,  
Illinois



Apple: Sooty Blotch/  
Flyspeck

Babadoost,  
Illinois

**Fire blight:** Fire blight (shoot blight) was present in almost all commercial apple orchards, but with relatively low incidence. However, in western Illinois, unprecedented shoot blight and fruit blight were observed in several orchards. This was the second year of high incidence of fire blight in some orchards in western Illinois.



**Uncommon diseases:** In one orchard in the south, heavy defoliation occurred in the blocks of Golden Delicious in September. The symptoms of the disorder were very similar to damage caused by pesticides. The causal agent of this disorder is not known. It may be related to nutrient deficiency.

In three locations (one home yard and two commercial orchards) freeze-damage of the trunk was observed, and it resulted in death of trees. In one commercial orchard in northern Illinois, due to freeze-damage and bark split and the use of high doses of glyphosate (roundup) herbicide in 2006 and 2007, a block of Jonathan trees died. In another orchard, freeze-damage followed by development of the *Botryosphaeria* canker resulted in splitting bark, weakening trees, and death of trees. Most of the affected trees were Gala.



**Blister spot:** Another unusual fruit problem in 2008 was “blister spot” in orchards in central and northern Illinois. Blister spot is a bacterial disease, caused by *Pseudomonas syringae*.

**Fruit blotch:** One more uncommon disease observed in a few orchards in 2008 was fruit blotch caused by the fungus *Phyllosticta solitaria*.



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***Less seriously ...***

- If you ate pasta and antipasti, would you still be hungry?
- Why is it called tourist season if we can't shoot them?
- Why do they report power outages on TV?
- Is there another word for synonym?
- Shouldn't there be a shorter word for "monosyllabic"?
- Did you hear about the invisible man who married the invisible woman? Yeah, their kids aren't much to look at either.

## *University of Illinois Extension Specialists in Fruit Production and Pest Management*

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