

Orchard **O**bservations
Lorraine P. Berkett
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Orchard 1



Orchard 2

This past week we started the applications of **kaolin** in both orchards. We have applied two applications so far and you can see in the pictures above and below that there is definitely a white coating on the trees. In walking through the orchards this morning, I did not notice any **Plum Curculio** damage yet. I also did not see any **European apple sawfly (EAS)** damage but it is difficult looking for damage when everything is coated with kaolin. Our trap captures were just at threshold levels in Orchard 2 for EAS.



Ginger Gold fruitlets with kaolin residue

The only insects that I did see were one lone **Tarnished plant bug** in a late blossoming cluster and a few **Green apple aphids (GAA)** on young terminal leaves that are starting to develop. However, I was very happy to see an **immature of a lady bug** already seeking out and devouring the GAA !



Green Apple Aphids (GAA)



Lady Bug immature feeding on GAA

The most disturbing thing that has happened this week is that yesterday and today we are at a very high risk for **Fire Blight** infection for any blossoms still open. And, both Macoun and Honeycrisp still have blossoms. They are at high risk for infection if we have a “wetting event” today -- and as I write this the clouds are thickening and the wind is whipping up.



Macoun blossoms



Honeycrisp blossoms

The cool temperatures I mentioned last week turned warm/hot -- it was 88F yesterday! The Maryblyt computer program predicted that temperatures have been warm enough to allow fire blight bacteria in the orchard to reach threshold levels. That is why we made sure that we cut out part of one tree in Orchard 2 this past Tuesday that we suspected had a fire blight canker. We cut the limb at least two feet beyond any signs of infection and removed it from the orchard. The limb had been flagged last season to be removed during winter pruning but somehow it was missed -- these things happen.



Suspected Fire Blight Canker



Cutting out the Cankered Limb

Hopefully, we will not get infection but the Maryblyt program also has a component that will predict when symptoms will appear if infection does take place so we will be following that closely.

The trees also received an application of liquid lime sulfur and stylet oil this week which will provide protection against apple scab infection and will help with European red mite management, respectively. This combination will also help to thin the crop. We also applied nutrients to the foliage in both orchards.

We were fortunate to have **Dr. Elena Garcia** visit the orchards today to see how the fruitlets were progressing. Dr. Garcia is a principal researcher on the OrganicA Project providing pomological expertise. Elena was the Tree Fruit Specialist here in Vermont and is currently the Fruit Specialist at the University of Arkansas. It is great to have her here !



Elena Garcia checking fruitlet development

It has been a busy week -- Terry Bradshaw has started his M.S. graduate research project in Orchard I where he is evaluating two organically-certified growth regulators concentrated from Norwegian Kelp (*Ascophyllum nodosum*). He will be determining if there are any differences between these treatments compared to a non-treated control in terms of fruit size and yield, thinning response, tree growth, and insect/disease incidence among the various cultivars in the orchard.

And, finally, I am happy to announce that two students who have been associated with the OrganicA Project received their degrees last weekend. Ben Crockett was an undergraduate intern and received a Bachelor of Science in Plant & Soil Science from the University of Vermont; Morgan Cromwel was a graduate intern and received her Master of Science degree in Plant & Soil Science. Congratulations to you both !!



Also, I am very, very happy to announce that we have received word that the OrganicA Project has received funding from the **USDA Organic Research & Extension Initiative** Program for the next three years so we will be able to continue the project !!!

IMPORTANT: It is the grower's responsibility to ensure that any crop production practice or material used in the orchard is acceptable in their particular state's organic certification program. Some materials deemed organically acceptable on the National List may not be acceptable in some states. Contact your [federally accredited certifying agency](#) to know what is acceptable and to ensure compliance with regulations in your state.

Where trade names or commercial products are used for identification, no discrimination is intended and no endorsement is implied. Always read the label before using any pesticide. **The label is the legal document for the product use. Disregard any information in this document if it is in conflict with the label.**

We Value Your Input and Want to Address Your Needs
Please send your comments and suggestions to lorraine.berkett@uvm.edu

For more information on the OrganicA Project please see:
<http://www.uvm.edu/organica/>

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