

OrganicA

a resource for organic apple production

Orchard Observations

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July 2, 2009

August 13, 2009 -- Please Mark Your Calendars -- There will be **presentations and a tour of the organic apple orchards** at the UVM Hort. Farm in South Burlington. This event is co-sponsored by NOFA-VT and the OrganicA Project. What has been learned about organic apple production will be discussed. Discussion and tour will be from **2:00 pm - 5:00 pm**. Details are at: http://www.nofavt.org/upcoming-event-details.php?e_id=1819 [Cost: \$10 for NOFA members, \$15 for nonmembers]
Hope to see you there !

Last week we started to notice more **fire blight** strikes in the organic orchards, particularly in Orchard 2. So, we took the time to look at each tree and cut out any 'strikes' (infected shoots and/or blossoms). We chose a day when the likelihood of rain was low -- which is a rare occurrence lately -- so that not to potentially expose the cut surfaces to more rain-splashed inoculum. Where possible, cuts were made at least 12 inches below any signs of infection. An "ugly stub" was left and flagged for removal in the winter.



Shoot Blight on Ginger Gold at the UVM HRC

Approximately 25 trees had some fire blight strikes (1- 12 strikes per tree) in Orchard 2. In particular, there was a cluster of infected trees around that Macoun tree which I had mentioned a few weeks ago (May 22 Orchard Observations) that had fire blight last year and which we had not cut out during winter pruning. A definite lesson was learned -- make sure to cut out

any “ugly stubs” and cankers during the winter !! Now we have to hope that the hail and severe thunderstorms that are coming through the area miss us and that we do not get further infection or ‘trauma’ blight (which is when hail makes wounds that are then infected or severe winds damage young tissue and infection occurs).

The continuing wet and humid weather definitely has increased the risk for summer diseases , including **flyspeck**. Flyspeck disease development is favored by frequent showers, high humidity, prolonged cloudy weather, poor air circulation, dense tree canopies, and clustered fruit. Fortunately, we have relatively good air circulation and the trees are not dense but, our weather has been very favorable for infection. At **270 hours of leaf wetness** from Petal Fall, it is expected that flyspeck inoculum will be available from non-managed, alternate host plants around the orchard perimeter. As of Monday morning (June 29) , we had accumulated **260 leaf wetness hours** from petal fall at the farm. Thus, we applied a lime sulfur spray this week.

Silver Leaf - This year seems to be a year where symptoms of silver leaf are appearing. Silver leaf is caused by a fungus that infects wounds on the tree. The fungus produces a substance that separates the leaf tissue causing a silvery appearance. When we were assessing trees for fire blight strikes we noticed silver leaf symptoms in two trees in Orchard 2.



Silver leaf symptoms on leaves

A brief overview of the disease can be found at:

<http://www.hortnet.co.nz/publications/hortfacts/hf205015.htm>

Apple Maggot Flies -- We hung apple maggot fly traps last Tuesday, June 23, in the organic orchards and in the other orchards at the farm and we had already started trapping flies by last Thursday, June 25. *Flies are active!* We will continue to monitor trap captures to determine if threshold levels for intervention are reached.



Apple Maggot trap and lure

Obliquebanded Leafroller (OBLR) DD Update - The biofix at the farm for when moths started to be captured in pheromone traps was June 22. As of Tuesday afternoon (June 30), 246 DD (base 43F) had accumulated from that biofix. At 600 DD from the biofix, it is estimated that 50% of eggs have hatched and it is the time when the earliest larvae are at a stage that is large enough to be seen while scouting. We will be using the sampling procedure outlined on page 80 of the 2009 New England Tree Fruit Management Guide. The threshold for intervention is 3% infestation sites. If under this threshold, it is recommended to scout again in 3-5 days (or when approximately an additional 100 DD have accumulated) -- which we plan to do.

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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