Northern Michigan FruitNet 2016
Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Center

Weekly Update

FruitNet Report – October 05, 2016

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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What’s New?

- Statewide wine grape virus survey underway
- USDA offers share dollars for organic certification
- Agricultural Survey Responses Needed

SWD Summit - SAVE THE DATE!

Michigan State University and Cherry Marketing Institute are hosting a third annual spotted wing Drosophila (SWD) Summit on November 9, 2016 at the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Center. This day-long meeting will bring together growers, researchers, consultants, processors, and other industry leaders to discuss the challenges of SWD during the 2016 and past field seasons. This pest has profoundly impacted the way we manage insects in cherries in Michigan. This meeting will be an in-depth discussion to continue to develop an industry approach to sustainably manage SWD in Michigan cherries.
More information and the agenda will follow in the coming weeks. For now, we hope that you will save November 9th for the 2016 SWD Summit. We really want your input, so we hope you will be able to attend this important meeting.

Thank you!
NWMHRC and CMI

Please contact Jenn at 231-946-1510 or goodr100@msu.edu to RSVP for this event.

Agricultural Survey Responses Needed

We still need at least 7 more completed surveys! Please forward the link on to other Leelanau growers who may have not filled out the survey yet. Here is the link for the agricultural survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9CX3VRP

Leelanau Peninsula Economic Foundation Technology Committee Seeks Community Input!
High-speed Internet and broadband capabilities can no longer be considered a “luxury.” Indeed, Internet is considered a utility and a critical necessity for schools, families, libraries, business owners, and emergency services personnel.

The Leelanau Peninsula Economic Foundation (LPEF) Technology Committee has partnered with Connect Michigan to survey Leelanau County residents and stakeholders to identify needs and priorities. The survey will be helpful to efforts designed to identify areas lacking broadband access and for developing mechanisms to promote expansion of services via attracting additional providers.

Connect Michigan has worked with providers to identify Internet needs throughout Michigan. In the image below, the areas shaded in red represent un-served, or inadequately served Leelanau residents. Areas shaded in yellow, according to Connect Michigan, have at least some level of broadband availability. As depicted, significant portions of Leelanau County are without adequate service.

The Technology Committee’s Chair, Commissioner Patricia Soutas-Little, says, “Broadband is vital for so many businesses and residents. Leelanau County has such a diverse landscape, knowing current accessibility and resident needs, will help us plan for the future.”

The Committee is striving to have survey result tabulated in early September. Survey results will be used to develop action plans and work with potential providers to address gaps and improved service goals. The Survey is open until September 3 and only takes ten minutes to complete. You can take the survey as a resident, business owner, or as a designated representative of another organization. The survey is available online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9CX3VRP - or a paper copy can be obtained from any library or by calling the Leelanau Peninsula Chamber of Commerce at (231) 994-2202. For additional information about this effort, contact Patricia Soutas-Little at (231) 218-8496.

BLOSI PLATFORM – NEWEST ADDITION TO THE NWMHRC

The Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Center (NWMHRC) recently received their newest piece of equipment thanks to funds provided by the Michigan Tree Fruit Commission.

The NWMHRC staff had the opportunity to test three orchard platforms last spring. Orchard platforms have the potential to increase efficiency in orchard tasks, such as pruning, harvesting, and hanging mating disruption. The NWMHRC staff saw the value in the motorized and automated features of all the platforms, but they chose an Italian model made by the company N.Blosi Di Natalino Blosi (S.N.C.).
The Blosi Platform has been used for harvest and pruning of apples and cherries that are produced in high-density orchard systems. They are made to move both horizontally, like a vehicle, as well as vertically to reach the tops of taller trees. They are engineered with technology that is able to lift the platform up in the air, as well rotate the platform to lean into the tree canopy. The flexibility of this machine will allow station staff to work in small and large trees and will accommodate work in orchards planted on side hills.

Because the Blosi Platform was manufactured in Italy, the NWMHRC staff had to wait a few months for the platform to be constructed and delivered. NWMHRC coordinator, Dr. Nikki Rothwell, said “We are so excited to finally have the platform; there were at least 50 times that I wished we had it this season for various research projects at the station.” Rothwell explained that this platform would make it easier for plant growth regulator projects, as they need to collect data throughout the canopy of larger sweet cherry trees. “We can also collect fruit for various studies from the tops and bottoms of the tree--before the platform, we have been using ladders to access the upper most parts of the tree. This platform has the potential to drastically increase our efficiency here at the station.”

Mark Miezio, a Leelanau County grower that serves on the board of the Michigan Tree Fruit Commission, was on hand when the platform was delivered. “Many growers are starting to embrace some of the new technology that is available for orchards--having a platform at the research station where growers can actually see the impacts of this technology will likely increase the rate of adoption. The Tree Fruit Commission was pleased to help make this platform happen at the NW Station, and we look forward to the further research that will be conducted as a result of this new technology.”

The NWMHRC and Michigan State University would like to thank the Michigan Tree Fruit Commission for making this purchase possible.
From left to right: Karen Powers (NWMHRC), Mark Miezio (MTFC), Bill Klein (NWMHRC), Nikki Rothwell (NWMHRC), and Bruce Gelder (Louis Gelder and Sons)

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**Fall tasks for apple orchards**

**Have a to-do list ready for downtime between harvesting apple varieties.**

Posted by [Amy Irish-Brown](https://example.com), Michigan State University Extension, MSUE News

While everyone feels very busy this time of year in apple orchards and the crop potential is huge, there might occasionally be a few open days between harvesting varieties as you wait for fruit maturity. If you have a need to guarantee hours per work week for employees, it would be prudent for apple producers to plan ahead to have a few to-do tasks ready to fill the time void. [Michigan State University Extension](https://example.com) offers the following suggestions to consider.

**Catch up on tree training**
Perhaps there are a few blocks you weren’t able to limb train in the summer that you can come back to, such as:

- Tying limbs down to trellis wires.
- Tying trees to posts, conduit or wires.

**Get a jump on pruning**

There are some do’s and don’ts you need to pay attention to if pruning in the fall. Of course, pruning prior to full winter hardiness comes with some big warning signs, but there are some limited pruning tasks to consider in September and October after harvest is complete.

- Consider pruning only in processing blocks that have been harvested.
- In low density blocks only, removing large limbs can be done. You will need to think through brush placement or removal if there are trees in nearby rows with fruit yet to be harvested.
- Pruning root suckers.
- Pruning vegetative suckers on limbs.
- Avoid early pruning to known cold-sensitive cultivars such as Fuji and McIntosh.
- Avoid early pruning in any high density, high value dwarf blocks.

**Repairs, etc.**

If you are growing any high density apple systems, you know there is always something that needs to be fixed:

- Repair trellis – anchors that have pulled up, loose or broken wires than need fixing, etc.
- Inspect and repair deer fencing.
- Bin repair.
- Trunk painting to prevent southwest injury.
- Put on tree guards for rodent management.
- Set up baiting stations for future post-harvest rodent management.

**Work on irrigation systems**

If the early harvest shortened your time to get over your irrigation systems, keep workers busy with:

- Irrigation line repairs – send workers through to identify problems row by row and follow up with necessary repairs.
- Winterizing irrigation lines or systems (with all the rain recently, you won’t need irrigation any more in 2016).

**Fall weed control on solid variety blocks**
There are some fall herbicides that have rather lengthy pre-harvest intervals, so you might only be able to treat in your solid variety blocks at this time.

**Clean out ditches and fence rows for air drainage**

The Farmer’s Almanac is predicting a treacherously cold winter once again, but it’s always a good idea to keep open air flow in orchards to help with winter cold and spring frosts.

**A note of using H2A workers**

With the higher utilization of H2A workers in Michigan apple orchards, and the need to guarantee their hours per work week, having a few tasks on a “to-do” list is a good plan, but some special considerations are needed:

- Before you assign jobs, go back to your H2A contract and make sure you listed that task on the contract. You cannot ask H2A workers to do tasks outside of what the contract states.
- If you are working with a farm labor contractor, make sure they understand what you need workers for on any given day so they aren’t in violation of their contracts.
- Make a list of possible tasks to be included in a future H2A contract – when you fill out the paperwork in February, these minor jobs don’t always come to mind, so take some notes now.

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**Grower Training Course - Produce Safety Alliance**

This event is brought to you by Michigan State University Extension, MDARD, Michigan Farm Bureau and the Produce Safety Alliance

9 AM – 5:30 PM  
November 2, 9 or 10, 2016

The PSA Grower Training Course is one way to satisfy the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirement outlined in § 112.22(c) that requires ‘At least one supervisor or responsible party for your farm must have successfully completed food safety training at least equivalent to that received under standardized curriculum recognized as adequate by the Food and Drug Administration.’

The course will provide a foundation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements, and details on how to develop a farm food safety plan.
After attending the entire course, participants will be eligible to receive a certificate from the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) that verifies they have completed the training course. To receive a AFDO certificate, a participant must be present for the entire training and submit the appropriate paperwork to their trainer at the end of the course. Trainings are being offered in the following locations:

- Wednesday November 2  Hart Community Center, Hart MI
- Wednesday November 9 Krysiak’s house, Bay City MI
- Thursday November 10 Jordan Tatter Center, SWMREC, Benton Harbor

**Agenda**

8:30 am Registration  
9 am Welcome and Introduction  
9:15 am Introduction to Produce Safety  
10 am Worker Health, Hygiene, and Training  
11 am Break  
11:15 am Soil Amendments  
Noon Wildlife, Domesticated Animals, and Land Use  
12:45 pm Lunch  
1:30 pm Production Water  
2:15 pm Postharvest Water  
3:15 pm Break  
3:30 pm Postharvest Handling and Sanitation  
4:30 pm How to Develop a Farm Food Safety Plan  
5:15 pm Final Questions and Evaluations

For More Information or to Enroll Online visit:  
[http://events.anr.msu.edu/2016growerproducesafety/](http://events.anr.msu.edu/2016growerproducesafety/)

**Statewide wine grape virus survey underway**

This survey will help determine the prevalence of grape viruses in Michigan that cause production problems. Samples included in survey can be submitted until Oct. 14, 2016.

Posted by Annemiek Schilder, Michigan State University Extension, Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences, MSUE News
For virus sampling, collect five leaves per vine with petioles attached. Do not touch the petiole ends.

Funded by the Michigan Grape and Wine Industry Council, a statewide survey in wine grapes is currently underway in Michigan to determine the prevalence of grape viruses that can cause vine decline, low yields, poor fruit quality or other production problems. Leaf samples are taken in 100 randomly selected wine grape vineyards in the main grape-growing regions in Michigan. Samples will be tested for 22 different viruses and 2 types of specialized bacteria (Xylella and Phytoplasma) known to infect grapes. While we already know that a number of these viruses are present, others have not been confirmed yet in Michigan. The goal of the survey is to more accurately determine which viruses are present and how common they are in Michigan vineyards.

Wine grapes were chosen because they tend to have more virus problems than juice grapes. Both Vinifera and hybrid grapes are included in the survey. Once viruses have been identified, a course of action needs to be decided on: leave the vines in place, remove vines, and/or plant new vines using virus-tested plant material. Virus vectors such as mealybugs and nematodes also have to be taken into account to determine the risk of spread or reinfection. In general, using virus-tested planting stock is the best way to prevent virus infection.

If you have been wondering about leaf discoloration, stunting or other symptoms on your grapevines and would like to have some samples included in the survey, please contact me at schilder@msu.edu or 517-355-0483. This is the last chance for free virus testing of grapevines; typically, testing by a commercial lab runs about $300-350 per
sample. Just as a reminder, not all leaf reddening is caused by viruses, as nutrient deficiencies, low soil pH, and crown gall can cause symptoms similar to virus infection. For nutrient analysis, send leaf petioles to the Michigan State University Soil and Plant Nutrient Laboratory or A&L Great Lakes Laboratories in Indiana. Sample instructions can be found on the respective websites.

For virus-testing, the sample has to be as fresh as possible. Select symptomatic vines (up to five vines per vineyard) and collect five leaves of about intermediate age – not too young and not too old – per vine. Snap the leaves off at the cane, thus including the petiole, stick them in a plastic Ziploc bag and place them in a cooler. If leaves are wet from rain or dew, pat them dry with paper towels and wrap them in dry paper towels. Do not leave samples out in the sun for any length of time as the bags can quickly heat up, inactivating viruses.

Place leaves in plastic bag, seal and place in cooler or refrigerator immediately.

When taking samples, make sure not to touch the cut end of the petiole, as virus particles can be present in plant sap and can cause contamination among samples. Keep the leaves refrigerated and send them by overnight mail or deliver them to our lab at: Center for Integrated Plant Systems, 578 Wilson Road Room 15, East Lansing, MI 48824. Provide the following information: cultivar/rootstock, vine age, vineyard/vine number and grower name and contact information to send the report to. Please make sure to inform us that samples are coming so we’ll be prepared to receive them.

If you have any questions, please contact me at schilder@msu.edu or 517-355-0483. Samples can be submitted until Oct. 14, 2016.
USDA offers share dollars for organic certification

Producers who paid for organic certification are eligible for reimbursement through MDARD.

Posted by Rob Sirrine, Michigan State University Extension, MSUE News

Organic producers who paid for certification through the National Organic Program are eligible for up to $750, or 75 percent, of certification costs. The application and instructions can be found on the MDARD website. Based on the MDARD application, there are four possible certifications: crops, wild crops, livestock and handler/processor. You can request reimbursement for all certifications that apply.

Please visit the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for specific instructions. In order to qualify, you must complete all of the following steps:

Complete, sign, and date the application for organic certification that occurred between Oct. 1, 2015 and Sept. 30, 2016.

Obtain and include copies of: A) proof of certification, B) an itemized invoice of certification expenses (ex. application fees, inspection costs, travel cost for organic inspectors, etc.), and C) confirmation of payment (cancelled check or receipt).

Make a copy of all documents for your records.

Register as a state vendor to receive electronic funds transfer (EFT) reimbursement directly into your bank account.

Mail your application and all required documentation to:

    Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development  PPPM
    Division  Attention: Josh Grant  PO Box 30017  Lansing, MI 48909

You can find the application form and instructions here.
All applications must be postmarked by Oct. 1, 2016.

For questions please contact Josh Grant. Phone: 517-284-5789 Email:
grantj5@michigan.gov. For questions on organic certification please visit Michigan State University Extension.

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WEB SITES OF INTEREST:

Insect and disease predictive information is available at:
http://enviroweather.msu.edu/homeMap.php

This issue and past issues of the weekly FruitNet report are posted on our website:
http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/nwmihort/faxnet.htm

60-Hour Forecast:
http://www.agweather.geo.msu.edu/agwx/forecasts/fcst.asp?fileid=fous46ktvc

Information on cherries:
http://www.cherries.msu.edu/

Information on apples:
http://apples.msu.edu/

Information on grapes:
http://grapes.msu.edu

Fruit CAT Alert Reports:
http://news.msue.msu.edu