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## Northern Michigan FruitNet 2007 Weekly Update NW Michigan Horticultural Research Station

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**September 4, 2007**

GROWING DEGREE DAY ACCUMULATIONS THROUGH September 3rd AT THE NWMHRS:

Year	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	17yr. Avg.
GDD42	3405	3375	3436	2710	3020	3090	3070.1
GDD50	2289	2243	2339	1657	1950	2110	2008.9

### Weather

During the last week and a half of August, the northwest received just over an inch of rain, although the amounts were variable across the region. Temperatures have been mild, in the mid 70's and a few days in the 80's.

### Crop Report

We have begun testing apples for maturity here in the northwest. Gingergolds are approaching maturity; average firmness is at 21.3 lbs., starch level is 1.2, and brix at 12. Limited harvest has begun in the area. McIntosh are immature; average firmness is about 23 lbs, starch level is 1.6, and brix at 11.9. Some drop has been noted as fruit sizes and tend to crowd each other of the limb. Honeycrisp and Gala are immature but color is improving.

**Apple:** This week in apples we captured only a few **obliquebanded leaf rollers** and **oriental fruit moths**. **Codling moth** did rise slightly with an average of 7.5 moths caught per trap. **Spotted tentiform leaf miners** are up into the 300's on average. No **apple maggots** were caught at the NWMHRS. Apples look great in terms of disease.

**Cherry:** We are beginning to see some **cherry leaf spot** in the tops of trees. Insect numbers are also low in cherry, except for one block where we caught 61 **obliquebanded leaf rollers**.

**Grapes:** Fruit veraison is underway, and in general fruit condition is good. Some **powdery mildew** and **downy mildew** have been found in scattered vineyards. Some **grape berry moth** infestations have been found in clusters, even though adults were not caught in pheromone traps at these vineyards.

### Apple Maturity Testing at the NWMHRS

This year the NWMHRS will be testing apples for maturity. Results will be sent via fax and email to past apple maturity list subscribers and results will be put on the pome fruit section of the code-a-phone (947-3063). The maturity newsletter and code-a-phone will be updated weekly on Wednesdays. If you have not received this information in the past and wish to subscribe to the list, please contact the NWMHRS (946-1510 or [nwmihort@msu.edu](mailto:nwmihort@msu.edu)).

If you are interested in having your fruit tested, drop off a 10 – 12 fruit sample at the NWMHRS on Mondays, if possible. The fruit should be picked randomly from the outside portion of the trees and should be large in size and free of blemishes with the stem attached.

Last "First Friday" Grape IPM meeting of 2007 – September 7, L. Mawby Vineyards  
Duke Elsner, Regional Wine Grape Agent, MSUE

Our last vineyard IPM meeting for 2007 is scheduled for 3 to 5 PM on Friday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at L. Mawby Vineyards in Bingham Township of Leelanau County. We will meet along the entrance drive, on the east side of Elm Valley Road, about ½ mile north of Hiltop Road.

Larry's vineyards are quite different from most in our area, and well worth your time to come out and see some interesting alternative practices. You'll see some unfamiliar insects, I assure you.

The Big Caterpillars of Summer

Three species of sphinx moth caterpillars (also known as hornworms) are commonly found in NW Michigan vineyards this time of year. The official names of these are the Pandora sphinx, Achemon sphinx, and hog sphinx.

The larvae (caterpillars) of the **Pandora sphinx** and **Achemon sphinx** are very similar in appearance. There are several color "forms" of larvae, with base colors ranging from bright green to orange, sometimes pinkish, some even a deep chocolate brown. There is always a series of white blotches along the sides of the larva. Young larvae have long and slender horns on the tail end, which sometimes curl. About mid-way through the larva's growth this horn is lost, and an eye-spot pattern then appears on the tail end. Full-grown larvae may be over 4 inches in length.

The larva of the **hog sphinx** looks much more like the typical hornworms found on tomato plants. The base color is a dull green, there are several light diagonal stripes on each side, and a stout horn on the tail end. Some specimens have a yellow or orange shading along the back. A full-grown hog sphinx larva is about 2 inches in length.

Once the larva is done feeding, it burrows into the soil to pupate. The winter is passed in this stage, and the next generation of adult moths appears in the following summer. The adult moths feed on the nectar of deep-throated flowers in the evening, hovering near flowers like hummingbirds.

These species are heavily parasitized by beneficial wasps and flies, keeping their numbers at a tolerable level in established vineyards. They can be quite a problem on young vines, however, as a single larva can completely defoliate a small vine. They are very susceptible to B.t. sprays (such as Dipel) and several other insecticides, but it may be just as productive to hand-pick and destroy them if the numbers are low.

For great pictures of sphinx moths, please visit the [www.grapes.msu.edu](http://www.grapes.msu.edu) website and click on view the latest 2007 weekly scouting reports.

Seasonal Evaporation & Precipitation				
Beginning May 1, 2007, at NWMHRS				
Date	Evap/week (in.)	75% of Evap/week	Rainfall/wk at NWMHRS (in.)	Rainfall minus 75% of Evaporation
5/2	0.89	0.67	0.92	0.25
5/9	1.52	1.14	0.02	-1.12
5/16	1.5	1.13	1.14	0.01
5/23	1.21	0.91	0.12	-0.79
6/6	1.35	1.01	0.49	-0.52
6/13	2.00	1.50	0.03	-1.47
6/19	2.01	1.51	0.78	-0.73
6/27	1.72	1.29	0.24	-1.05
7/4	1.86	1.40	0.15	-1.25
7/10	1.82	1.37	1.05	-0.32
7/18	1.51	1.13	0.27	-0.86
7/24	1.55	1.16	0.10	-1.06
7/31	1.65	1.24	0.04	-1.20
8/7	1.74	1.31	0.03	-1.28
8/15	1.81	1.36	1.31	-0.05
8/21	1.10	0.83	0.37	-0.46
8/29	1.07	0.80	0.49	-0.31
9/3	1.27	0.95	0.59	-0.36
Totals	28.03	21.02	8.18	-12.84

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

[ACTUAL AND PREDICTED DEGREE-DAY  
ACCUMULATIONS SINCE MARCH 1, 2007](#)

**Please send any comments or suggestions regarding this site to:**

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