

July 2008 Regional Fruit Grower Newsletter

CALENDER OF EVENTS

7/1	Enrollment Begins for USDA SAFE Program
7/3	Saskatoon Update Benzonia
7/7-11	Cherry Connection
7/11	Grape IPM Update L. Mawby Vineyards, Leelanau Co.
7/7	Deadline for Emergency Loan Applications for 2007 drought losses
7/14	Deadline for Emergency Loan Applications for 2007 frost/freeze losses
7/14	Deadline for Water Sampling
7/15	Deadline Date for Reporting Crop Acreage to Insurance Provider
7/15-17	Cutting-edge Sprayer Technology Demonstrations Ag Expo, MSU
7/21	Deadline for Emergency Loan Applications for 2007 Hail, Excessive Rain and High Wind Losses
7/25-26	Composting Program NWMHRS
8/1	Grape IPM Update NWMHRS
8/15	FSA Deadline for Reporting Acreage
8/21	NWMHRS Open House

SASKATOON WORKSHOP UPDATE

Steve Fouch, CED, Benzie Co.

Date: Thursday, July 3, 2008

Location: Leslie Putney U-Pick Berry Patch, 7603 Love Road, Benzonia 49616

Time: 10:00 – Noon

Those interested in an update on the selection, planting and marketing of saskatoons are invited to this on-site workshop. Mr. Putney planted 60 saskatoon plants in the spring of 2005. This will be the first significant fruiting season for these plants.

There is no charge for this educational program. Berries should be ripe enough to taste test. Refreshments will include coffee, juice, and homemade Saskatoon berry crisp. RSVP by calling Cathy at the Benzie MSUE Office (231-882-0025).

THANK YOU!

Erin Lizotte
IFP/IPM District Educator, MSU-E

On behalf of myself, Nikki Rothwell, and all of the Update attendees, I would like to thank our hosts of the 2008 Summer IPM Update Series. Jim Bardenhagen, Dave White, Josh Wunsch, Frank, Brian, and Adam Putney as well as their families, extended their hospitality to us again this year. We would also like to thank the LaCross family, Jan Bardenhagen, and Elaine Putney for providing treats. I would also like to thank Nikki Rothwell, Stan Moore, Duke Elsner and Rob Sirrine for attending and contributing to the materials provided at the Updates.

Attendance was up this year (two new records in two counties!), a trend we are hoping to continue in the years to come. We hope growers find the Updates and the handouts useful, and we appreciate all the suggestions for subject matter and materials. We wish everyone the best of luck with harvest this year and look forward to seeing you at the Updates next year!

BIRD DAMAGE IN MI FRUITS

Erin Lizotte, IFP/IPM District Educator, MSU-E

As all fruit growers know, bird damage causes significant loss of fruit crops each year in this region. The last bird damage survey in Michigan was performed in 1972 and estimated tart cherry damage at 17.4%. These numbers are considered minor compared to losses in the wine grape and blueberry industries each year. We are lucky to have attracted the interest of Dr. Catherine Lindell, Dept of Zoology, MSU, who has worked extensively with bird pests in Costa Rica and has been visiting apple, cherry, and grape growers to learn more about our industry. Dr. Lindell will be helping us gather information on species structure and bird behavior in fruit systems.

We are distributing surveys to growers to record your observations on your farm. These surveys are meant to determine what species of birds are in the fruit, what they are doing in the orchard/vineyard, and how many of them are present. These surveys will be used to develop a season-long bird species profile for different crops. As we go into the busy harvesting season, this information becomes even more important, as most of the damage will take place as the fruit ripens. Bird surveys will be available from the Research Station in paper form, and via the FruitNet fax or e-mail. The data collected in these surveys will be used to prove impact during grant application and will help direct future research.

NON-INSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NAP)

Due to the frost events that occurred the week of May 19th, NAP policy holders are reminded that they must submit a "Notice of Loss" (FSA-576) within 15 days of when the loss becomes apparent. If you have noticed that your crop might be affected due to the frosts this spring, contact the FSA office at (941-0951, Ext. 2) so that they can send you a FSA-576 and take a look at your crop. For those of you that have already filed a notice of loss, keep FSA informed of your harvest decisions. If you are not going to harvest all or part of a block, an appraisal will need to be completed on that block. This appraisal will be used in calculating your loss claim.

Growers must also remember to contact their private insurance company for apple and sweet cherry losses. The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) also requires policy holders to report their crop losses within 15 days of when the loss becomes apparent.

Policy holders must also report their crop acreage to your insurance provider's office by **July 15th**. Please call the office for an appointment in order to report your crops.

DEADLINE FOR FILING FARM SERVICE AGENCY EMERGENCY LOAN APPLICATIONS IS FAST APPROACHING

Traverse City, MI, November 14, 2007 -- In a continuing effort to assist the agricultural industry in Michigan, the **Farm Service Agency (FSA)** reminds farmers of the July deadlines for filing Emergency Loan applications for 2007 disasters.

Last year Eighty-three Michigan Counties were designated as primary natural disaster areas making farmers immediately eligible for USDA / FSA production loss emergency loans. The designations provided farmers eight months to file loan applications

- **July 7, 2008** is the deadline to file Emergency loan applications for losses caused by drought in 2007
- **July 14, 2008** is the deadline to file Emergency loan applications for losses caused by frost and or freezing temperature that occurred between April 4, 2007 and June 13, 2007
- **July 21, 2008** is the deadline to file Emergency loan applications for losses caused by hail, excessive rain, and high winds that occurred between May 15, 2007 and ending September 11, 2007.

James Monroe, Farm Loan Manager, indicates that Emergency loan assistance can aide farmers devastated by these weather events.

Last year's designations makes qualified farm operators in primary disaster counties eligible for low-interest production loss EM loans from the **Farm Service Agency**, provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the time of the designation to apply for the loans to help cover part of their losses. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merit, taking into account the extent of loss, ability to obtain other credit, security available and repayment ability.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY ANNOUNCES ACREAGE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINE

East Lansing, MI, June 19, 2008 -- In a continuing effort to assist the agricultural industry in Michigan, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) announces the acreage reporting deadline. Please remember that filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Farms where the acreage is not timely reported will be assessed a late-filing fee in order to retain program benefits.

Producers are required to report all of their cropland, **including the field planting date**, in order to qualify for several program benefits. These benefits include:

- ◆ Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (**DCP**) payments;
- ◆ Commodity Loans and Loan Deficiency Payments (**LDP**);
- ◆ Conservation Reserve Program (**CRP**) Annual Rental Payments;
- ◆ Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (**NAP**) Payments.

The **acreage reporting deadline** has been extended to **August 15, 2008**.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date to ensure eligibility and to maintain crop history.

Reminder:

- ◆ All disaster-affected crops must be reported before the crop is destroyed.

CONGRESS PASSES CONSERVATION TAX INCENTIVE FOR FAMILY FARMS and RANCHES

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The hotly debated Farm Bill, which Congress enacted, renews a powerful tax incentive which has helped conserve a million or more acres of farms, ranches and natural areas across the US. The incentive had expired January 1st, but is now retroactive to the beginning of the year and will last through 2009.

A broad coalition representing sportsmen, outdoors enthusiasts, farmers, ranchers and national conservation groups, embraced the measure. Rand Wentworth, president of the Land Trust Alliance, said "This renewed tax incentive for donations of conservation easements is one of the best things Congress could do this year to help landowners choose the conservation option over sprawl. Especially for family farmers and ranchers of modest income, this is a great way to help them keep productive agricultural land from being lost."

Wentworth gave special credit to Senators Max Baucus (D-MT) and Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Representatives Mike Thompson (D-CA) and **Dave Camp (R-MI)**, saying "They are all true conservation leaders who have worked tirelessly to save a conservation measure that has already had benefits in hundreds of communities across the country." In conserving land, Wentworth added, "We also are protecting clean air, clean water, wildlife habitat, local food sources, historic landscapes and scenic beauty."

The incentive, which applies to a landowner's federal income tax, will:

- Raise the deduction a donor can take for donating a voluntary conservation agreement from 30% of their income in any year to 50%;
- Allow farmers and ranchers to deduct up to 100% of their income; and
- Increase the number of years over which a donor can take deductions from 6 to 16 years.

Landowner donations to conservation organizations known as land trusts have resulted in millions of acres of working lands and natural areas being conserved for the future. According to the Alliance, many conservation groups reported an annual doubling of the number of conservation agreements completed in 2007, in response to the same incentive that had expired in January. Land trusts in America have together saved more than 36 million acres from development, an area the size of New England.

TEST YOUR DRINKING WATER

☐ **Free Screening for nitrates, nitrites and triazine pesticides.** It is suggested that households do this testing annually because of groundwater movement properties.

☐ Pick up your instruction sheet at your local Michigan State University (MSU) Extension office (Benzie, Leelanau, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Otsego, Emmet, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Chippewa or Mackinac)

☐ **Take and deliver your sample to your county Extension office on July 14th.** Check with your local office on how late they are receiving samples. All offices in the Lower Peninsula are receiving samples at least until noon. If you are located in a county not listed above, contact your local Conservation District office to see if they are participating in this project.

☐ Testing is sponsored by the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program and partners (Michigan Department of Agriculture, MSU Extension, Michigan Conservation Districts, and AmeriCorps).

☐ For folks wishing to save a trip to the local Extension office, you may use a clean jelly, baby food or other small jar can be used to collect tap water. Sampling directions and the sample form can be found on the web: www.msue.msu.edu/GrandTraverse. Click on Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program on the left hand side of the page.

☐ **For bacteria and trace minerals testing, contact your local health department.**

□ For further information, call your local MSU Extension office or 231-922-4858.

TWO-DAY INTENSIVE PROGRAM ON COMPOSTING OFFERED JULY 25/26TH BY MSUE-

LEELANAU

Pam Schmidt, Home Horticulturalist and Master Gardener Coordinator

Leelanau County MSU Extension is offering an intensive two-day “Master Composter” workshop, on July 25-26th at the NW Michigan Horticultural Research Station. In this two day workshop, taught by MSU Extension Educators, you will have the opportunity to discover how to recycle organic materials into a usable soil amendment product that can provide micronutrients to your soil and act as a mulch protecting plants from water loss and soil erosion. Compost has is a valuable way to increase the fertility of your soil, and recycle waste materials in your garden. Topics covered during the workshop will include: Introduction to Composting, Compost Basics, Compost Methods, Building Healthy Soils, Vermicomposting, Compost Tea, Using Compost, and Waste Reduction. This workshop is intended for small-scale farmers, backyard gardeners, Master Gardener Volunteers, and anyone with an interest in composting. The cost for the 2-day program is \$65 (or \$75 after July 7th). The program is scheduled to take place from 5-8 PM on July 25th and from 8 AM to 5 PM on July 26th. Registration includes resource materials and two meals. A registration brochure is available at www.msue.msu.edu/leelanau, or by contacting the MSUE-Leelanau Office (231-256-9888).

Participants interested in earning a “Master Composter” Certification, may elect to take a final exam and fulfill a volunteer service requirement following the class. The workshop also counts as 11.5 hrs of *Master Gardener Continuing Education* hours.

2008 HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE AND CLEAN SWEEP COLLECTIONS

Dan Busby, Groundwater Stewardship Coordinator

You can properly dispose of old, unusable pesticides through the Household Hazardous Waste/Clean Sweep collections. The remaining collections for 2008 are scheduled for **Thursday, July 31** and **Thursday, September 25**. You must call the Grand Traverse County recycling hotline at **941-5555** to schedule your appointment or you may go online at www.recyclesmart.info to schedule an appointment for a collection. Clean sweep (pesticide) material is accepted **free** of charge to all Michigan residents. Funds to properly dispose of these pesticides come from the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program. If you are not a resident of Grand Traverse County, there may be a fee for household hazardous waste material – call for details. Check your county on possible Household Hazardous Waste and Clean Sweep collections held in your area.

2008 PESTICIDE CONTAINER RECYCLING PROGRAM

What do you do with all your empty pesticide containers? It is illegal to dispose of them on the farm (burning or burying them)! You can legally dispose of properly rinsed (triple rinsed or power rinsed – free of product or residue) at the landfill, but that will cost money. Recycle those plastic containers at: Ellsworth Farmers’ Exchange in Atwood, Wilbur-Ellis in Acme, UAP Great Lakes in Bear Lake, and Hamilton Agronomy in Traverse City.

- All 2.5 gallon containers (and smaller) and 5-55 gallon plastic drums are accepted.
- **Containers will only be collected starting August 1 during normal business hours.**
- Containers must be properly rinsed and free of product and labeling.
- **September 1** is the deadline for this pesticide container collection!!
- Get your containers in after harvest!

CUTTING-EDGE SPRAYER TECHNOLOGY TO BE SHOWCASED AT AG EXPO

EAST LANSING, Mich. -- Farmers looking for the latest technology in sprayer applications won’t want to miss the newest event at the Michigan State University (MSU) Ag Expo: side-by-side comparisons of self-propelled and pull-behind sprayers. The sprayer demonstrations will take place at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. daily during the show, which takes place July 15-17.

Ag Expo demonstrations manager Tim Rogers said the sprayer demonstration will showcase such new features as automated boom height control, autosteer and advanced tracking systems. "Many of these newer systems use ultrasonic sensors, hydraulics and sophisticated software to automatically adjust boom height with the terrain to improve application accuracy," Rogers said. "As a result, efficiency is improved because of reduced operator fatigue, average operating speeds are greater, and rough fields can be sprayed at night."

This demonstration offers an opportunity for producers to examine and contrast a wide array of equipment before making an investment.

Private and commercial applicators can earn restricted-use pesticide applicator credits by taking part in a sprayer calibration workshop July 16 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The registration fee is \$30 before the event or \$35 at the door. To register or learn more, visit www.pested.msu.edu/Training/AgExpo08.htm or call Carolyn Randall in the MSU Pesticide Safety Education office at 517-353-5147.

The event runs from **9 a.m. to 5 p.m. July 15 and 16** and **9 a.m. to 3 p.m. July 17**. Admission to the grounds and parking at Farm Lane and Mt. Hope Road are free. Because of construction on Farm Lane, the Ag Expo parking area and grounds will be accessible only from Mt. Hope Road.

For more information about Ag Expo, call 800-366-7055 or visit www.agexpo.msu.edu. Ag Expo is sponsored by the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

SAVE THE DATE!

Nikki Rothwell, Station Coordinator

Dan Busby, Groundwater Stewardship Coordinator

The Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station annual Open House will take place on **Thursday, August 21** this year. This year's event will not include an equipment show, but we will have campus specialists and NWMHRS staff on hand to talk about all the great research going on in northwest Michigan! Educational programs will begin in mid-afternoon, which will be followed by a social hour and dinner. In addition, a Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) educational session will be held in the Station conference room beginning at noon. The session will start with a **Free** salmon/trout boiled lunch courtesy of Lake Michigan. Lunch will be followed by an update on the changes to the Water Use Legislation and what it means to agriculture. Come learn more about the benefits of the MAEAP program. To RSVP for the program or learn more about the program or to volunteer for the lunch or help provide fixings for the fish boil, contact Dan Busby at the new GTCD office at 941-4191 or 883-9962 or by email at dbusby@gtcd.org.

The event is hosted by the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, Michigan State University Extension, the Leelanau Horticultural Society, and the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Foundation.

CHERRY CONNECTION IS ON AGAIN FOR 2008

Nikki Rothwell and Jennifer Berkey, MSU-E, Grand Traverse Co.

Michigan State University Extension, the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station, and the Cherry Marketing Institute work together each summer to place the "cherry" on top of the National Cherry Festival. Since 1995, MSU Extension and the NWMHRS staff have treated National Cherry Festival participants to a five-day cherry promotion event at the NWMHRS. The event combines Extension's work in Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H, the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program, and research and extension done through Agriculture and Natural Resources. All of these groups come together to provide Cherry Festival goers with a behind the scenes look at the cherry industry.

Cherry Connection participants can take a guided tour through the NWMHRS orchards and learn why northwest Michigan is the best area to grow cherries. MSU Extension educators share information about harvest procedures, best practices for growing cherries, and the use of integrated pest management to help make cherries safer for the environment and for consumers. The 4-H staff organized a petting zoo with animal projects from 4-H youth. Family and Consumer Science staff provided participants with a delicious taste of local cherry products--jams, salsas, sausages, and breads were on hand to sample and cherry skin care products were available to try. This venue is also a chance for customers to learn about the health benefits of tart cherries.

The main goal of the Cherry Connection is to educate participants about the varied uses of cherries, introduce them to cherry production, and increase sales of regional cherry products. We want Cherry Festival visitors to go home with a better understanding and appreciation of the cherry industry and all the growers' hard work and innovation.

MEET OUR 2008 SUMMER RESEARCH CREW

This year we are glad to have three hard working summer technicians join our research crew at the NW MI Horticultural Research Station. Read on for a chance to learn more about their unique backgrounds and great attributes they bring to our team. If you see them in your orchard or vineyard, stop and say hello!



Renae Tuller has returned to the station for another fun filled summer. After finishing her degree in Environmental Science at Lake Superior State University, she has returned to the station for her third season as a summer research technician. Currently, Renae is collaborating with the other technicians in a variety of projects including plum curculio migration, fall foliar nitrogen trial, sweet cherry variety trial, RAMP projects, hornfaced bees, pheromone mating disruption of the codling moth, and vineyard scouting.

Melinda Mitchell has done previous field research in vegetable entomology at Michigan State University and in wheat breeding at the University of Minnesota. She was also a tomato breeder for Campbell Soup Company in Davis, California. As a research technician at the NWMHRS this summer, she is working on the hornfaced bee project, weed control experiments, scouting in cherries, apples and grapes, plum curculio management studies, the sweet cherry variety trial, and bioremediation of copper toxicity in cherries. She holds a B.S. in Crop and Soil Sciences from MSU and a M.S. in Plant Breeding from the University of Minnesota. Melinda lives in Traverse City where she tends a large garden, an old house, one husband, and two kids.



Lee Terres-Crouch is a Biology major from Central Michigan University. Lee's past work experience includes environmental sciences and laboratory analysis. As a seasonal research technician, Lee has assisted in hornfaced bee observations, orchard and vineyard insect scouting and codling moth mating disruption. Lee is also involved in RAMP projects and Brown Rot investigative studies.

LEELANAU FARMERS' MARKETS ARE UNDERWAY

Rob Sirrine, Leelanau MSU Extension Director

The Leelanau Farmers' Markets are underway! The markets present a great opportunity for farmers to market fresh produce and locally made products directly to the consumer. Products and produce sold at the Leelanau Farmers' Markets must be grown or produced **within 60 miles** of the Leelanau Farmers' Markets; some locations in neighboring counties **may** be eligible.

There are currently four markets: Empire (downtown near the Post Office), Leland (parking lot across from The Bluebird), Glen Arbor (behind the township hall), and Suttons Bay (corner of Broadway & Lincoln). The dates and hours of operation will be as follows:

Suttons Bay:	Saturdays	May 17 – October 18	9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Empire:	Saturdays	June 14 – September 27	9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Leland:	Thursdays	June 19 – September 4	9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Glen Arbor:	Tuesdays	June 17 – September 2	9:00 am – 1:00 pm

For market rules, eligibility and application form go the Leelanau Farmers Markets website at www.leelanau.cc/farmersmarkets.asp or call the Leelanau MSU Extension office at 231-256-9888.

***Note:** George Anderson is leading the effort to establish a Northport Farmers' Market on Fridays from 10AM-1PM in the deport Parking lot. If you are an interested vendor please contact George at 386-5188, gwanderson@chartermi.net