

## May 2009 Regional Fruit Grower Newsletter

### CALENDER OF EVENTS

#### 2009

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|-------------|---|
| <b>5/12</b> | <b>Antrim &amp; Benzie Tree Fruit IPM Updates Begin</b>   |
| <b>5/13</b> | <b>Leelanau &amp; Grand Traverse Tree Fruit IPM Updates Begin</b>   |
| <b>6/5</b>  | <b>Grape IPM Update</b><br>Shady Lane Cellars   |
| <b>7/10</b> | <b>Grape IPM Update</b><br>L. Mawby's Tasting Room  |
| <b>7/29</b> | <b>20<sup>th</sup> Annual MSU Viticulture Field Day</b><br>SW Michigan Research & Extension Center<br>Benton Harbor |
| <b>8/1</b>  | <b>New FARM Application Deadline</b>  |
| <b>8/7</b>  | <b>Grape IPM Update</b><br>To be announced  |
| <b>8/14</b> | <b>Sign-up Deadline for DCP and ACRE Programs</b>   |
| <b>8/20</b> | <b>Open House &amp; Equipment Show</b><br>NWMHRS  |

### MSU RESEARCHERS LOOKING FOR *ARMILLARIA* SITES

The NWMHRS is looking to assist MSU campus researchers in addressing *Armillaria* problems faced by stone fruit growers. Dr. Ray Hammerschmidt of the Department of Plant Pathology is looking for orchard sites (in or out of production) with a history of *Armillaria*. Sites would be utilized for upcoming genetic surveys and possible treatment studies. Organic blocks are of particular interest as Dr. Hammerschmidt looks to determine the relationship between copper and *Armillaria* biology. If you would like to participate or know of an *Armillaria* site please contact Erin Lizotte at (231)946-1510. Thanks!

### 2009 SUMMER IPM TREE FRUIT UPDATE SERIES DATES HAVE BEEN SET!

Erin Lizotte, IFP/IPM District Educator

A series of hands-on IPM workshops will again be held throughout northwest Michigan for the 2009 growing season. Each meeting will characterize a different time in the season and distinct weather patterns, which in turn will present a unique set of pest and disease problems and management strategies. These meetings are free and will offer Pesticide Recertification Credits from the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Feel free to attend the meeting that best fit your schedule or location, regardless of county. For more information call Erin at 231-946-1510!

#### ***Leelanau County***

Location: Jim and Jan Bardenhagen Farm, Pertner Road, Suttons Bay

Dates: May 13, May 20, May 27, June 3, June 10, June 17, June 24

Time: 1-3pm

### **Grand Traverse County**

Location: Josh Wunsch Farm, Old Mission Peninsula, Phelps Road (look for cars on the road)

Dates: May 13, May 20, May 27, June 3, June 10, June 17, June 24

Time: 4-6pm

### **Benzie County**

Location: Putney Farms, 4290 Joyfield Road, Frankfurt

Dates: May 12, May 26, June 9, June 23

Time: 3-5pm

### **Antrim County**

Location: Jack White Farm, M-31, just south of Elk Rapids on the right, Elk Rapids

Dates: May 12, May 26, June 9, June 23

Time: 11-1pm

### **SAVE THE DATE FOR THE FIRST FRIDAY GRAPE IPM UPDATES!**

Erin Lizotte, Nikki Rothwell, and Duke Elsner

Dates have been set for the Summer Grape IPM Updates (formerly the First Friday meetings). Topics to be covered include horticulture, pathology and entomology. Feel free to bring along insect and disease samples for diagnosis and management recommendations. These free updates run from **3-5 PM** and Pesticide Recertification Credits will be available. Dr. Annemiek Schilder will be at Shady Lane Cellars on **June 5** to discuss organic disease management, with special emphasis on powdery mildew and bunch rot. We also look forward to Dr. Rufus Isaac's visit on **July 10**. Dr. Isaacs will be at Mawby's tasting room to discuss insects of interest. Our final Grape Update on **August 7** will include Paul Jenkins and focus on sustainable winegrape production, location TBA. We hope to see you all there!

### **YOUNG FARMER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

Rob Sirrine, Nikki Rothwell, and Erin Lizotte

As we move into the busy field season, we hope you will have time to apply to participate in the young farmer leadership program--now known as the New FARM (*Farmer Assistance and Resource Management*) Program. We intend to kick-off the Program series this fall.

The New FARM Program is an extensive commitment but well worth it! For more details on the proposed topics, visit our website at <http://www.maes.msu.edu/nwmihort> and click the "New FARM Program Application" link. The final program agenda will be presented at the October Kick-off Meeting at the Kettunen Center and will include four overnight trips and nine monthly evening educational sessions over a two-year period. No activities will take place during the growing season, and all efforts will be made to avoid scheduling programming during regular business hours.

The registration fee is \$500 per participant. We will supplement this program through private donations, and potential funding from the US Department of Agriculture and NCR SARE. Pending the grant awards, the \$500 fee will cover all travel and lodging costs associated with the program. To apply, please visit <http://www.maes.msu.edu/nwmihort> and click on the "New FARM Program Application" link.

If you would like a paper copy, please contact Nikki or Erin at 231-946-1510, and we will send one out right away. If you know of other young/beginning farmers who may be interested, please spread the word. The deadline for the application is **August 1**. We look forward to hearing from you!

## **DO YOU NEED A BIRD PERMIT?**

**Erin Lizotte, IFP/IPM District Educator**

There's nothing worse than working all season to produce high quality fruit and then watching a flock of seagulls or a group of cedar waxwings descend on your orchard or vineyard. If you need a bird permit or are looking to hedge your bets, be sure to start the application process now. Migratory Bird Depredation Permits are available and the USDA can walk you through the process. For more information, please contact the USDA APHIS office at 517-336-1928.

## **USDA GAP AUDIT ASSISTANCE MANUALS AVAILABLE**

**Erin Lizotte and Nikki Rothwell, NWMHRS**

Michigan State University is now offering USDA GAP audit assistance manuals to help growers establish a food safety plan. Paper copies are available for \$18 or can be downloaded for free from the NWMHRS website: [http://www.maes.msu.edu/nwmihort/msu\\_GAP\\_Manual\\_5\\_4\\_09.doc](http://www.maes.msu.edu/nwmihort/msu_GAP_Manual_5_4_09.doc)

This manual can serve as a general guide to food safety plans for certifying agencies other than USDA, but much of the information is specific to the USDA requirements. Many buyers/packers/processors are requiring some type of food safety certification for 2009; growers should communicate with their respective buyers before completing a food safety plan. If growers intend to undergo a USDA GAP audit this year, they will need to obtain the mandatory spring water testing analysis. For more information, please contact your local Extension Educator.

## **WATER TESTING FOR GAP GROWERS**

Just a reminder, if you are becoming GAP certified this year, it is time to get your water tested! There are a number of testing facilities available, including: Great Lakes Water Quality (1-888-371-3335), Pure Water Works, Inc (1-231-941-7873), SOS Analytical (1-231-946-6767). Call the lab of your choice to get the proper water sampling protocol.

## **FOOD SAFETY DVD'S AVAILABLE**

**N.L. Rothwell and E.M. Lizotte, NWMHRS**

The Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station (NWMHRS) has a stock of food safety DVD's available for growers. These DVD's serve as food safety training for on-farm employees; growers that will undergo a food safety audit in 2009 will need to train employees and verify this training. These DVD's were created by Cornell University and have fulfilled New York grower needs for on-farm training. DVD's in English and Spanish are available at the NWMHRS for \$20. If you have further questions, please call 231-946-1510.

## **PESTICIDE APPLICATION RULE CLARIFICATION**

**Rob Sirrine, CED, Leelanau Co.**

On page 3 of the Private Applicator Addendum, it INCORRECTLY states that: "If you apply pesticides other than ready to use pesticides as part of your employment, you need to become a certified applicator or a registered applicator."

After speaking with Larry Swain at the MDA, the rule should state something to the effect of:

"If a farmer is a certified applicator, then anyone who works under them can spray general use pesticides, but for any restricted use pesticides, you must read the label to determine if certification is necessary to legally apply that chemical."

Larry also said it's best to follow this law closely as it is a federal law.

## SEASONAL FRUIT INFORMATION

Nikki Rothwell, District Fruit IPM Educator

The **code-a-phone** will be up and running again for the 2009 season, and it will be updated every **Tuesday** and **Friday** or more frequently if needed. To access this information, dial 231-947-3063. Press 1 for stone fruit information and 2 for pome fruit information and 3 for grape information. Thanks to the area horticulture societies for supporting this program.

**FruitNet** will also be available for 2009 by email or fax for NW Michigan fruit growers. This weekly information is compiled by area extension educators and sent out through the NWMHRS. Past subscribers will remain on the list, but contact the NWMHRS (231-946-1510) to be added to, or removed from, the subscription list. Thanks again to our local horticulture societies for their support.

**60 Hour Weather Forecast**, which is a weather forecast tool for the Grand Traverse region that predicts weather in 3-hour increments, is also on hand this season. This information can be obtained through the internet at <http://www.agweather.geo.msu.edu/agwx/forecasts/fcst.asp?fileid=fous46ktvc> or a grower can subscribe to receive this information via email. Please contact the NWMHRS (231-946-1510) to sign up for the emailed version. This will also be available at the new MSU IPM/weather site, Enviroweather at [http://www.enviroweather.msu.edu/home\\_map.asp](http://www.enviroweather.msu.edu/home_map.asp)

## WATER USE DEADLINES

**July 1, 2009**- The new *Water Withdrawal Tool* must be used for all new or expanding pumps. We are currently in the testing phase. Growers should use the tool right now but it is not mandatory. Registering on the water withdrawal tool is not the same as registering with MDA. Users will still need to send in their registration form.

## BUY-IN WAIVER EXTENSION APPROVED FOR DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Michigan Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that producers who did not obtain statutorily required crop insurance from the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) or Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for 2008 can pay a buy-in fee through **May 18, 2009**, to become eligible for 2008 disaster assistance programs authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

"Producers have an additional opportunity to become eligible for several programs if they suffered 2008 agricultural losses due to the natural disaster.

Paying such a buy-in fee does not provide the producer with crop insurance or NAP for the 2008 crop year; it merely permits the producer to become eligible for the 2008-crop disaster assistance programs.

Producers who have not already taken the necessary steps to become eligible for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised (ELAP), and the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), may now become eligible for such programs by completing the following steps by May 18, 2009:

- ◆ Paying a \$100 buy-in fee per crop. The maximum fee for insurable or non-insurable crops is \$300 per county, per producer, not to exceed \$900 for multi-county producers.
- ◆ In the case of each insurable crop (those for which insurance is available from FCIC), excluding grazing land, agreeing to obtain a policy or plan of insurance for the next insurance

year for which crop insurance is available; coverage level should equal 70 percent or more of the yield at 100 percent of the price.

- ◆ In the case of each non-insurable crop, agreeing to file the required paperwork and pay the applicable administrative NAP coverage fee by the applicable state application closing date for the next available year.
- ◆ Producers who choose to buy in under this provision will be considered, for insured crops for the 2008 Farm Bill disaster assistance programs only, to have obtained a policy or plan of insurance for the 2008 crop year at a level of coverage not to exceed 70 percent of the yield at 100 percent of the price. For non-insurable crops for the 2008 Farm Bill disaster programs only, producers will be considered to have a level of coverage equal to 70% of the yield. These levels of coverage will be used to calculate the 2008 SURE guarantee. Producers who buy in will not be eligible for actual crop insurance or NAP benefits for the 2008 crop.

Producers who meet the definition of “Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource,” or “Beginning Farmer or Rancher,” are not required to pay the buy-in fee.

## **FARM BILL STRATEGY**

Curtis Talley, District Farm Management Educator  
Central/North Region

The sign-up deadline for the DCP and ACRE programs has been postponed from June 1 to August 14. At that time we will know the 2008-09 average crop prices within pennies. The August crop Report will be released August 12, so we will also have a very good idea of the U.S. crop situation, i.e., likely 2009-10 U.S. prices, the state yield outlooks, and you can observe your own situation. In other words, by the time you are required to sign up for DCP/ACRE, the odds are very high that you will know whether the decision to enroll in ACRE will pay in the first year. Kind of like you receive a weather forecast that hail is very likely coming later in the day, and you can still sign-up for hail insurance.

So here is the plan: Producers need to do all the necessary paper work with their FSA offices to be ready to sign up as soon as possible after the crop report on August 12. Prepare all paperwork and records except for the signature. Then make the final decision after the crop report. You will have the August 12-14 window to sign your name. But you will NOT have time to do all the paperwork. If the signal is to not to sign-up in the first year for ACRE, your work is not wasted, because that increases the odds that you should sign-up the second year.