

Northern Michigan FruitNet 2013

Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Center

Weekly Update

March 5, 2013

BENZIE-MANISTEE HORT SOCIETY BUS TOUR

The Benzie-Manistee Horticultural Society is sponsoring a bus tour that will take fruit growers on a day trip to some apple and cherry orchards in the Ridge area of Grand Rapids on **March 19, 2013**.

Itinerary

- 7:30 am Leave Blaine Christian Church
- 10:30 Arrive at River Ridge Produce: tall spindle 3 x 10ft, raspberries under tunnels, higher density sweet cherries
- 11:30 Joe Rasch Farms: high density sweet cherries
- 12:30 LUNCH
- 1:30 Don Rasch Farms: high density apples, perhaps a pruning demonstration at this farm or the next stop
- 2:30 Chuck Rasch Farms: tall spindle apples
- 3:30 Leave for NW Michigan

The cost for the tour is \$30 per person for the bus and a box lunch. Please make check payable to the *Benzie-Manistee Horticultural Society* and mail to Adam Putney, 4281 Joyfield Road, Arcadia, MI 49613. For those wanting to participate in the tour, payment should be received by **March 15**. Since there will only be one bus for the tour, space is limited to the **first 56** registered. No late registrations will be accepted. Eight young farmers (ages 18-35) are also welcome to participate in the tour at no cost. For more information, call Adam at 231-499-4436 or Mike Evans at 231-383-0101.

Blaine Christian Church
7018 Putney Road (Corner of Putney and Joyfield)



MARCH 7 SPRING TREE FRUIT MEETING IN FLINT, MICH.

Hear ag meteorologist Jeff Andresen speak about the freeze events of spring 2012 and predictions for the 2013 season, as well as other presentations designed to help you get ready to grow another high-quality crop.

Posted on **February 28, 2013, MSUE News**, by **Bob Tritten**, Michigan State University Extension

[Michigan State University Extension](#) is pleased to announce to east Michigan fruit growers the annual Spring Tree Fruit Meeting on March 7, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at [Walli's Family Restaurant](#) in Flint, Mich.

There will be an outstanding line-up of all-star speakers for this meeting. The featured speaker will be MSU state agricultural climatologist [Jeff Andresen](#), talking about the freeze events of last spring and predictions for the 2013 season. Also speaking will be MSU's [George Sundin](#), [Larry Gut](#), Amy Irish-Brown, Bill Shane, Phil Schwallier and others. All will be covering topics designed to help you get ready to grow another high-quality tree fruit crop.

There will also be a presentation to honor our two cider contest winners from east Michigan: Mary Emmett and her crew from [Plymouth Orchards and Cider Mill](#) in Plymouth, Mich., and Jim Goldstein from [Hy's Cider Mill](#) in Romeo, Mich.

MDARD Pesticide Credits have been applied for.

This article was published by [Michigan State University Extension](#). For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>. To contact an expert in your area, visit <http://expert.msue.msu.edu>, or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464).

PRUNE OUT FIRE BLIGHT IN THE WINTER

Winter is the perfect time to remove fire blight cankers and reduce the disease in the spring.

Posted on **February 28, 2013** by **Mark Longstroth**, Michigan State University Extension

I often wonder where fire blight comes from in the spring. Often, fire blight strikes are localized in several areas in an orchard. If I get to the orchard early enough when the symptoms are just starting, I usually find shoot blight symptoms on a limb that has an old canker from last year. The old canker was the source of the infection. Fire blight bacteria do not survive well outside the tree and do not overwinter outside of a host. That means the fireblight must come from trees that are already infected. Next year's fire blight will come from trees that had active infections last year. Bacterial ooze from overwintering cankers is the cause of infections during bloom.



A fire blight canker is visible at the base of these shoots. Fire blight

ran down the branch at the lower right and into the base of these shoots. The edges of the canker are easy to see. All the infected tissue should be removed.

There are antibiotics that most growers use during bloom to reduce the spread of this disease, but relying on antibiotic sprays at bloom and ignoring other culture practices to reduce the disease only sets you up for an unpleasant surprise if the antibiotic sprays fail due to timing, conditions or resistance. [Michigan State University Extension](#) teaches that one of the keys to fire blight control is sanitation. I believe that growers need to reduce fire blight when they can.

Winter is the perfect time to remove fire blight. The disease is inactive because of the cold, so you won't spread the disease with your pruning tools. Even if you do cut into wood that contains bacteria, their numbers are small and they can't survive on the exposed surfaces of tools or pruning cuts. I suggest you prune out all the visible symptoms of fire blight.



The pruner should have taken this canker, not just cut off the infected branch leaving the canker behind to start the disease cycle again this spring.

Affected tissues are easy to recognize. They appear black and dry. Often the leaves are still on in the early winter and the leaf stems usually remain until spring. During the growing season, fire blight spreads rapidly in young tissue. In old tissue, fire blight forms cankers, sunken areas on the trunk and shoots. These cankers are always associated with shoots that were killed last year. The fire blight quickly kills young tissue and moves down the shoot to larger stems.

All cankers should be cut out. It is commonly accepted that if the canker has a well-defined margin, the tree has walled off the infection and further movement is unlikely. While this is generally true, I have seen enough movement from old cankers that I don't recommend leaving a canker even if you think they are walled off. It is very hard to tell.

The walling off of a canker does tell you how far back to cut. If the canker is well-defined, you can make the cut close to the edge of the canker. If it looks like the canker has spread past the margin or the canker has a poorly defined margin, then you should cut off more. I usually recommend at least 12 inches or to the next branch, whichever is more. If the canker margin is not well-defined, that indicates the canker was growing late in the season. If the edge of the canker is well-defined on all sides, then growth of the canker stopped in the summer and the tree continued to grow after the canker stopped growing.



This entire mess should have been removed with a cut between the canker and the trunk on the scaffold in the upper left.

Several years ago I visited an orchard in the spring that had widespread fire blight the year before. I was looking for cankers and wanted to document the beginning of oozing at bloom time. The grower had made an effort to remove all the cankers and I found very few cankers in the orchard that he and his pruning crew had missed. There was very little fire blight in that orchard in the spring. It would have been easy for the grower to remove the fire blight in the early season because that year there was very little blossom blight and cutting it out early would have been worthwhile.

After you have made every effort to cut out fire blight, it is a good idea to walk through the orchard a few more times to look for cankers that were missed the first time. You often are looking up into the sun when pruning, so it is easy to miss a canker that you would have easily seen at another time of the day. It is a good idea to walk through the orchard in the morning and evening so that the sun is in different positions in the sky and lights the tree from different angles.

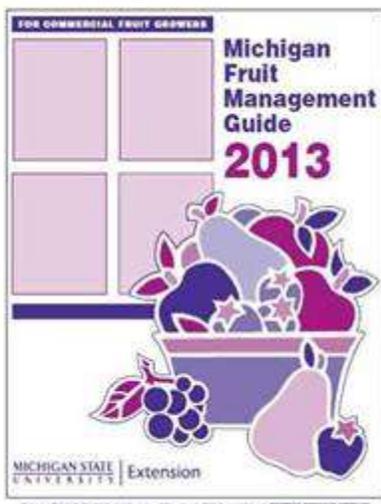
Trees that show symptoms of fire blight for several years in a row should be removed. This continuous infection is an indication that the fire blight bacteria is systemic in the tree and will continue to express symptoms each year and serve as an infection source inoculating the orchard every year. Continuous pruning of the same infected trees year after year make no sense.

This article was published by [Michigan State University Extension](#). For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>. To contact an expert in your area, visit <http://expert.msue.msu.edu>, or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464).

2013 MICHIGAN FRUIT MANAGEMENT GUIDE AVAILABLE AT MSU EXTENSION BOOKSTORE

Annually updated fruit bulletin contains current information and pesticide recommendations for Michigan fruit growers.

Posted on **February 28, 2013, MSUE News**, by **Mark Longstroth**, Michigan State University Extension



The [2013 Michigan Fruit Management Guide](#) is the key to effective pest control in Michigan fruit crops. Michigan is an ideal place to raise temperate fruits because of the moderating effect of Lake Michigan on the climates and winter cold. Growing fruit in Michigan is not easy because there are many insects and diseases that thrive here and attack Michigan fruit crops. A few of these pests are natives like [cherry fruit fly](#), [apple maggot](#) and [blueberry maggot](#). Most Michigan fruit pests are invasive pests that are not native to Michigan, but established themselves long ago like [apple scab](#) and [codling moth](#) when we imported their hosts to grow and enjoy here in America. Some pests are new [invasive species](#) such as the [spotted winged Drosophila](#) (SWD), which is threatening Michigan berry crops

To effectively control these fruit pests, [Michigan State University Extension](#) recommends that growers practice [integrated pest management](#) (IPM). IPM uses as many tools as possible to control pests so that pesticide applications are managed and kept to a minimum. The [Michigan Fruit Management Guide](#) is updated every year so that Michigan fruit growers have the most current information at their fingertips during the growing season. The guide assists fruit growers in selecting pest control. It includes general pesticide and crop-specific information, as well as up-to-date tips on related issues such as the safe use of pesticides, environmental protection, integrated pest management and new and emerging pests.

Most of MSU Extension's bulletins are available at the [MSU Extension Bookstore](#). You can search by subject, title or bulletin number. The print version of "E-154," the [Michigan Fruit Management Guide](#) is available for \$25. A PDF version of the [Michigan Fruit Management Guide \(PDF\)](#) is available for \$20.

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2013 EASTERN APPLE PRECISION ORCHARD MANAGEMENT SUMMIT

The apple industry is challenged by a changing weather climate, increased national and international competition, higher production costs and labor shortages. The Cornell Program Work Team is calling for an "Eastern Apple Precision Orchard Management SUMMIT" to be held **March 14-15** at the Ramada Geneva Lakefront, Geneva, NY. For more details and registration form, see the [attached flyer](#).

ONLINE WATER USE REPORTING MUST BE COMPLETED BY APRIL 1

Large volume agricultural water users have one month left to file their 2012 report with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Posted on **February 28, 2013, MSUE News**, by **James DeDecker**, Michigan State University Extension

Since 2003, the state of Michigan has required commercial water users with **the capacity** to withdraw over 100,000 gallons per day (70 gallons per minute) to report their water withdrawals and water conservation practices. Agricultural users report this information annually to the [Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development](#) (MDARD), while all other industries report to the [Michigan Department of Environmental Quality](#) (MDEQ). Completed reports for the 2012 season are due April 1.

Water use reporting is mandated by the [Great Lakes Compact Agreement](#) ratified by eight U.S. governors and two Canadian premiers of basin states in 2008. Under the Compact, states and provinces agreed to ban diversions outside the basin and are required to account for new and increasing water withdrawals within their borders. Water use reporting is Michigan's contribution to regional water stewardship. Participation by large volume agricultural users is essential for accurate accounting of our freshwater resource.

In the past, [MDARD](#) provided Michigan producers with paper forms to submit through the mail. However, beginning this year the agency is moving to an [online reporting system](#). The new online system enhances the reporting process in a number of ways. Accuracy and efficiency are improved by eliminating the need for transfer of data from paper forms. The annual task will also be less redundant for users thanks to an upgraded database that stores pump identification information from year-to-year.

Resources are available to assist agricultural water users with the switch to online reporting. The [MDARD water use reporting webpage](#) provides an overview of the process and links to several resources, including a reporting tutorial available in both [pdf](#) and [video](#) formats.

Those that would like additional assistance with reporting can attend one of [two hands-on workshops](#) to complete their report with the guidance of [Michigan State University Extension](#), [MDARD](#) and [MAEAP](#) professionals. One workshop will be offered Thursday, March 7, from 1 to 4 p.m. at [Alpena Community College](#) in Alpena, Mich. For [more information and registration](#), contact MSU Extension educator [James DeDecker](#) at 989-734-2168.

A second event will be held Wednesday, March 13, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the [Van Buren Conference Center](#) in Lawrence, Mich. For [more information](#) on this program, contact MAEAP technician [Kyle Mead](#) at 269-657-4030 ext. 5.

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WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Insect and disease predictive information is available at:

<http://enviroweather.msu.edu/homeMap.php>

60 Hour Forecast

<http://www.agweather.geo.msu.edu/agwx/forecasts/fcst.asp?fileid=fous46ktvc>

Information on cherries is available at the new cherry website:

<http://www.cherries.msu.edu/>

Fruit CAT Alert Reports have moved to MSU News

<http://news.msue.msu.edu>