

# Weekly Berry Call – June 15, 2011

**Participants:** Kevin Schooley (Ottawa, Ontario Berry Growers Assoc., NASGA Exec. Director), Debby Breth (Lake Ontario Fruit Team), Laura McDermott (Eastern NY/Upper Hudson/Lower Adirondack), Marvin Pritts (Finger Lakes region/Ithaca), Cathy Heidenreich (Western NY/Finger Lakes region/Geneva), Dale Ila Riggs (Stephentown, Eastern NY), Jeff Miller (Oneida County, Marcy),

**Growing conditions:** (courtesy NY NASS)

**Week ending June 13, 2011:** The week started out with temperatures below normal with some scattered showers ahead of a warm front. Rainfall was very scattered and below a tenth of an inch where it did fall. Once the warm front pushed north of the region Monday well above average temperatures occurred Monday through Thursday with highs well into the 80's and lower 90's. Scattered showers and thunderstorms occurred Wednesday and Thursday ahead of a cold front with many areas receiving a tenth of an inch to a half inch of rain. A cold front tracked through the region late Thursday and early Friday cooling temperatures back to normal, in the upper 70's to lower 80's. The cold front stalled over the region and an upper level disturbance and wave of low pressure tracked through our region later Friday and Saturday. Temperatures were below normal Saturday with highs in the 60's to near 70. Rainfall Friday night through Saturday ranged from a few tenths of an inch in western and northern New York to 1 to 2 inches in eastern and southern New York

## Reports from the Field

### Stephentown, Eastern NY

Two weeks picking everything from Wendy to Bounty. Huge problem with cedar waxwing – have used owls on posts, propane cannons still estimate 15-25% of crop lost. 1-1.5" of rain on Thursday, and then all day rain on Saturday – still need to remember to water tunnels! Blueberries are swelling and not as erratic looking as earlier. All look good except for Toro.

### Eastern NY/Upper Hudson/Lower Adirondacks

Very erratic strawberry picking season – need less rain and more sun. Seeing some poor foliar growth on berries that looked fine a month ago – kind of like they just stopped moving. Blueberry set looks variable depending upon location.

### Oneida County

GDD 86/50 – 583. Very hot last week with wide ranging rainfall on Saturday – total accumulations from that even a little under 1". Early fruit set on strawberries is a bit disappointing – possibly due to poor pollination. Monday picking began in earnest. So far it looks like the blueberry crop is half what it should be. Growers are monitoring sap beetles and also seeing some leaf spot and leaf scorch symptoms (more on this on next page).

### Western NY/Finger Lakes region/Geneva

Western southern tier – strawberries are in full swing. Some cold injury to berries that have been in cold storage was evident. Look for a brick red color (which is caused by oxidation) when sliced down the middle. For blueberries – a good year for mummyberry, botrytis blossom blight and for raspberries, keep a look out for Phytophthora. Nutrient issues with strawberries due to heavy rains. Noticed lots of deer damage on strawberries – they seem to love alpenes and they are eating leaves even while berries are ripening. Deer browse on currants and gooseberries as well.

### Lake Ontario Fruit Production region

Strawberry picking just began last weekend. Weather made it very difficult for growers to get fungicides on crop, so there may be more disease issues, specifically concerned about anthracnose. Root weevils in strawberries – lots of problems for those growers that are landlocked and tied to a market. (more on root weevil discussion later in summary). Blueberry season will be later than elsewhere due to lake effect.

### Ontario

Similar weather challenges as mentioned in other regions. Picking has begun. Strawberry crop looks good, but weather from here on in will be the key.

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**Guest Speaker Kevin Schooley** – private consultant in the Ottawa area, Exec. Director of the Ontario Berry Growers Assoc. and North American Strawberry Growers Assoc. (NASGA). We asked Kevin to speak at the Berry Call because we wanted educators to better understand the role of NASGA. Kevin explained that the group focuses on education and research for strawberry growers. It sponsors summer tours and winter meetings that focus on production issues but also offer growers an opportunity to explore marketing ideas and allows for networking that might not be available elsewhere. Most of the membership is from the eastern US and Canada, although there is decent membership from the mid-western US and professional membership is very strong from Florida and California, making it a very representative organization.

NASGA provides seed money for research as 25% of grower dues goes to fund the research foundation. The research foundation works with plant suppliers to further increase the monetary support for applied work on strawberries. Funding is available for research and extension proposals. Dr. Marvin Pritts has been the chair of the committee and described the panel as being open to proposals from many sources – NASGA membership is not required. The panel scores the proposal according to criteria set by the foundation and NASGA membership.

NASGA also tries to support state and provincial berry growers organizations.

Questions for Kevin included – What is the status of the Journal ‘Advances in Strawberry Research’? This journal went on hiatus – the last issue has yet to be published and there are still questions about when that will be available. The issue is not dead, just undecided.

Would NASGA support work on cyclamen mites, despite the fact that there is evidence that some of the problems may be due to contamination of nursery stock? The Research foundation is composed of reps from nurseries, so can growers depend on them to develop a protocol or procedure for testing for this pest? Marvin said he will bring this up with them.

Upcoming summer tour is in New England – centered in the Boston area. This looks like a great opportunity for local growers and extension educators to attend a high quality strawberry meeting that will involve little travel. For more information and to register: <http://www.nasga.org/tours/nasga-summertour-2011.htm>.

### Troubleshooting Topics:

**Strawberry Root Weevil:** Debbie Breth continued the discussion that was started when Greg Loeb was our guest speaker. The concern is that root weevil problems are growing in severity and growers are resorting to chemical materials that either are not effective or are not legal. An example of a reportedly effective but illegal use is Corragen which is labeled for Japanese beetle only. Platinum 2EE label had an April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011 expiration date so Greg Loeb is looking into that, but Richard Cowles did not recommend Platinum for root weevils. Dr. Cowles also mentioned to Debbie that the worst plots he has are where he uses Brigade. Please see the announcement below about an upcoming effort to address root weevil issues. Hopefully we can entice some growers to get involved in this project.

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### ***Commercial Berry Growers Needed to Participate in Strawberry Root Weevil Trials***

Members of the Cornell Berry team under the direction of Entomologist Dr. Greg Loeb are interested in setting up Strawberry Root Weevil trials in the next 3 weeks in commercial berry plantings with confirmed root weevil populations. Data collected from these plots will provide efficacy information for the products under trial which may then be used to support 2ee label applications for the products in NYS. Products to be tested include Coragen, Platinum, and Lorsban, along with an untreated control plot.

#### Team members:

- Will solicit product from companies.
- Will set up plots and make applications.
- Will return in spring to sample root weevil populations in treated blocks.

#### Participating growers:

- Must have a confirmed history/presence of root weevils in the planting for trial.
- Agree to provide 6 row test plot 180 ft in length.
- Must have capacity to irrigate after applications are made.
- May harvest and sell fruit from the trial plot area.

#### To participate contact:

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**Garden Symphylans** were found to be the cause of significant damage on strawberries again this year. This same primitive bug caused some problems in the Mohawk Valley last year. The damage was widespread, nearly 1/3 of the 3 year old planting was completely destroyed. Lorsban Advanced has a label for this, and it also has a 2ee label for Brown marmorated stink bug. For symphylans you will need to soil apply in the early spring as it has a 21 day PHI. For management information, <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/r734301311.html>.

**Wildlife Problems:** Continued problems have developed with heavy pressure from deer, but seemingly exceptional pressure from birds. Cathy mentioned that a large SCRI grant being coordinated by Catherine Lindell from Michigan State will address a systems approach of management and also involves the National Fish and Wildlife Service. To learn more about this and other wildlife control strategies, check out:

<http://wildlifecontrol.info/newdm/Pages/default.aspx>

A question surfaced about how to go about getting a permit to remove nuisance birds. This question was more difficult to answer than expected. Currently we are waiting to hear from several folks at DEC and one person at the National Fish and Wildlife Service. A follow up report will be included when the information is received.

**Discussion on Berry Pricing:** Pricing varies widely across the state. Low prices for strawberries reported in the Mohawk Valley, \$2/quart for picked strawberries at a roadside stand with high prices reported in the Capital District at \$6/picked quart at a Farmers market. Hard to pinpoint a median price as they seem to be all over the board depending upon locale and whether they are sold at a Farmers market, farm stand or U-pick.

## **Weekly Berry Call – June 15, 2011**

**Weather Data for Week Ending Sunday, June 12, 2011**

Station	Temperature (°F)				Growing Degree Days Base 50° <sup>1/</sup>			Precipitation (Inches) <sup>1/</sup>			
	High	Low	Avg	Dep. from Norm	Week	Season	Dep. from Norm	Week	Dep. from Norm	Season	Dep. from Norm
<b><u>Hudson Valley</u></b>											
Albany	93	54	70	+6	143	714	+259	2.30	+1.43	11.64	+3.77
Glens Falls	91	50	68	+5	124	582	+210	1.01	+0.24	10.62	+2.71
Poughkeepsie	95	54	72	+7	157	766	+263	1.10	+0.19	11.08	+1.69
<b><u>Mohawk Valley</u></b>											
Boonville	86	49	65	+5	104	404	+137	0.62	-0.49	16.96	+6.06
<b><u>Champlain Valley</u></b>											
Plattsburgh	94	47	66	+4	116	480	+102	0.76	+0.04	15.19	+8.30
<b><u>St. Lawrence Valley</u></b>											
Canton	88	51	67	+6	119	492	+169	0.85	+0.08	13.31	+6.18
Massena	89	52	70	+9	142	543	+187	0.21	-0.49	10.80	+4.44
<b><u>Great Lakes</u></b>											
Buffalo	84	56	70	+6	141	599	+175	0.19	-0.65	14.36	+6.91
Wales	86	52	67	+7	123	488	+166	0.47	-0.51	13.82	+4.79
Niagara Falls	87	53	70	+6	140	554	+112	0.30	-0.51	12.36	+4.89
Rochester	91	56	72	+9	153	615	+178	0.00	-0.70	10.67	+4.14
Watertown	85	46	67	+7	122	502	+179	0.87	+0.17	11.33	+4.96
<b><u>Central Lakes</u></b>											
Dansville	95	55	74	+11	169	743	+320	0.71	-0.20	10.30	+3.07
Geneva	92	53	70	+7	143	604	+199	0.72	-0.15	10.94	+3.58
Honeoye	92	51	70	+7	145	617	+199	0.72	-0.15	11.16	+3.90
Ithaca	92	49	70	+8	141	580	+220	0.67	-0.21	14.32	+6.62
Penn Yan	94	55	72	+10	156	653	+248	0.28	-0.59	9.60	+2.24
Syracuse	97	54	70	+10	159	774	+331	0.12	-0.74	12.60	+4.54
Warsaw	85	51	66	+6	117	466	+174	0.65	-0.35	15.59	+7.01
<b><u>Western Plateau</u></b>											
Hornell Almond Dam	92	48	69	+8	133	529	+204	0.87	+0.03	14.58	+7.50
Elmira	93	48	71	+9	148	634	+246	1.03	+0.16	12.88	+5.52
Franklinville	88	49	69	+10	131	489	+244	0.60	-0.39	16.79	+8.30
Jamestown	91	51	70	+9	138	547	+252	0.68	-0.38	15.87	+6.32
<b><u>Eastern Plateau</u></b>											
Binghamton	91	55	71	+9	147	588	+215	1.37	+0.53	16.42	+8.49
Cobleskill	90	50	67	+6	120	519	+180	1.93	+0.95	11.00	+2.38
Morrisville	87	52	66	+6	117	477	+160	1.22	+0.24	12.71	+4.28
Norwich	93	48	69	+8	136	547	+206	1.20	+0.22	14.54	+5.78
Oneonta	91	48	68	+9	131	540	+234	0.62	-0.36	15.41	+5.94
<b><u>Coastal</u></b>											
Bridgehamton	89	55	70	+7	142	591	+207	1.89	+1.02	8.93	-0.35
New York	97	57	75	+6	178	847	+170	0.89	+0.08	9.99	+0.97

<sup>1/</sup> Season accumulations are for April 1<sup>st</sup> to date. Weekly accumulations are through 7:00 AM Sunday Morning

The information contained in this weekly release is obtained in cooperation with Cornell Cooperative Extension, USDA Farm Service Agency, the National Weather Service, Agricultural Weather Information Service and other knowledgeable persons associated with New York agriculture. Their cooperation is greatly appreciated.

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