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Washington County Ag Report July 5, 2005

Contributors are Sandy Buxton, Aaron Gabriel, and Laura McDermott. Thanks to Connie Havens for compilation and formatting.

Quote

“Middle age is the awkward period when Father Time starts catching up with Mother Nature.” -- Harold Coffin

Announcements

Tuesday July 26 - IPM Walk -Diagnosing Problems of Landscape Plants and Turfgrass, 6:30-8:00 pm at the Horticulture Education Center, Chaires Lane, Schenectady, NY 12308. Join Cornell Cooperative Extension educators to learn to identify and control these pests. Pesticide recertification credits available; Category 3a=1.5 credits; 3b=1.0 credits. Contact: Chuck Schmitt at 518-765-3500 or email [cgs34@cornell.edu](mailto:cds34@cornell.edu)

Thursday July 28-30 - NYS ReLeaf Conference, Syracuse, NY. Contact: Paul O'Connor at 315-424-9485 x 232 or email: pro3@cornell.edu

Thursday July 4, 10 am – 12:30 pm – Washington County Dairy Farm Tour – Chambers Valley Farm – Chambers Rd., Salem. A tour for farmers and the agricultural community. In recent years the Chambers family has implemented their expansion plan with new facilities and milking parlor.

Weather Data – 2005 and average of 1999 - 2004

	Argyle		Easton		Whitehall		Jackson	
	2005	Average '99 – '04	2005	Average '99 – '04	2005	Average '99 – '04	2005	Average '03 – '04
Rain Past Week								
So far this month								
Total since April 1 st								
GDD Base 41 Growing Degree Days = [hi temp + low temp]/2 – 41								
Past Week								
Since April 1 st								
GDD 86/50 [hi temp + low temp]/2 - 50 High's >86°F are set to 86°F, low's <50°F are set to 50°F								
Past Week								
Since April 1 st								

Midwest Commodity Prices - from the Wall Street Journal

Corn per bushel	\$2.01/bu	Cotton Seed Meal per ton	\$155/ton
Soybean per bushel	6.63/bu	Corn Gluten Feed	49.5/ton
Hominy Feed per ton	44.5/ton	Wheat, soft white	/bu
48% Soybean meal per ton	208/ton	Tallow per pound	.19/lb

These prices are provided only to show where the general market trends are moving and to help you determine appropriate ration ingredients. Local prices will vary due to shipping, processing, and discounts.

TRADING POST

For Sale: Purebred Nubian goat buckling. Bottle raised – A.I. offspring from ‘Star’ milking lines, \$100. **Buskirk, 686-0879**

DAIRY NOTES: Keep your eyes on your cows’ feet! The frequent rounds of hot weather may be having enough of an impact on their eating program that it could result in subacute rumen acidosis (SARA) and eventually laminitis. While we can’t change the weather, paying attention and taking action can help to keep it in control. Dr. Bill Stone’s recommendation is to increase dietary physically effective fiber and decrease non-fiber carbohydrates during heat stress periods to try and reduce the risk of SARA and the hoof and production issues that it will bring. Source: Harrison, Bobbie, “Sore Feet, Just a Few Weeks Away”, Profit Manager, June 2005.

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: In preparation for trying out the new national Tractor Safety curriculum, John Bowe was going over some of the information with me and I wanted to pass on a couple of facts that I was unaware of despite having taught Tractor Safety for several years. According to the National Safe Tractor regulations, tractors that are being used by employees must have working ROPS (roll over protective system) and a seatbelt. Another OSHA requirement is that safety training about equipment be provided at the time the employee begins to use the equipment and then again annually. Good training with follow-up is always a challenge but keep in mind the importance of it.

CROPS

Beneficial Insects: Wasps and yellow jackets often seem to be a nuisance. However, they can be grouped with the beneficial insects. Most species of wasps are predators of caterpillars; like the tent caterpillar, cabbage worms, and many other insects. They sting their host to paralyze it, then bring it to their nest. The paralyzed caterpillar is put into a cell where the wasp has laid an egg. A maggot hatches from the egg and eats the caterpillar. After a while the maggot pupates and emerges as an adult wasp. AG

Alfalfa: Our main pest concern during the summer is potato leafhopper. Remember that they will migrate from one field to the next after harvest. Do not allow a new seeding to be inundated by PLH from a field harvested close by. Potassium is less available in dry soils. Summer is a good time to apply need potassium based on your soil test. For every ton of dry matter, alfalfa removes about 15 lbs of phosphorus and 50 lbs of potassium.

Field Corn: Corn is not only gaining height at this time, but also developing the tassel and ears within the plant. The number of rows of kernels will be established, then the number of kernels per row. Moisture and other stresses on the plant at this time will affect the final yield. Rootworm larvae are also active feeding on roots. In the next week or two, it would be a good time to dig up some roots to see if damage is occurring and how well your rootworm control measures worked.

Grasses: Our hot weather has set us up for a large grasshopper population. During the day everything looks calm in a grass field. However, if you take a flashlight and search at night, you will find grasshoppers and other bugs feeding.

VEGETABLES

Recent hot, humid weather with stagnant air masses may lead to **ozone damage** on crops. Common ozone symptoms are small, irregular, shaped spots that range in color from dark brown to black (stipplelike) or light tan to white (flecklike). These spots are found only on the upper surface of the leaf. Very young and old leaves are less susceptible to ozone while newly mature leaves are the most susceptible. With severe damage, symptoms may extend to the lower leaf surface.

Insect feeding (red spider mite and some leafhoppers) produce flecks on the upper surface of leaves, much like ozone injury. Flecks from insect feeding are usually spread uniformly over the leaf surface while ozone flecks are concentrated in specific areas, usually most pronounced at the leaf tip and along the margins.

The most **sensitive crops** to ozone injury include: Bean, Broccoli, Muskmelon, Onion, Potato, Radish, Spinach, Sweet Corn, Tomato. **Intermediate crops** include: Carrot, Endive, Parsley, Parsnip, Turnip. **Tolerant crops** include: Beet, Cucumber, Lettuce

Our second extended period of **hot temperatures** will have an effect on peas and beans. In peas, daytime temperatures exceeding 78F at flowering and pod fill will significantly decrease yields. In addition, high temperatures near harvest will mature the peas quickly resulting in a shortened harvest window. Beans are more tolerant of heat but still prefer temperatures during the day of 70F to 80F. Daytime temperatures over 86F or night temperatures over 80F at flowering can result in poor set.

Moisture stress can also lead to problems in beans. Although the critical time for optimum soil moisture is at the time of flowering and set, dry conditions when the crop has two trifoliolate leaves can decrease later vegetative growth and affect flower initiation. This may result in lowered yields and uneven crop maturity. (Ozone and Temperature info from Steve Reiners, Cornell Univ. Vegetable Specialist.)

As for problems in the field, **Angular Leafspot** has been reported in many local areas and in the western part of the state. This is a bacterial disease of cucurbits. The disease is less common on cucumber, but a real threat to watermelon and cantaloupe. Leaf spots are variable in size and may be angular in shape because leaf veins limit enlargement of spots. Initial symptoms appear as brown water-soaked spots. Under moist conditions, especially in early morning, small

droplets of bacterial ooze can come from the water-soaked areas; which, when dry, appear as a white residue. The initial brown spots may be surrounded by a yellow halo, become white, and, as they dry, tear away from the healthy tissue, producing irregular holes in the affected leaves. The damage looks like cucumber beetle feeding, but more ragged. The bacteria can survive for possibly 2 years in soil or debris from diseased plants. It is also known to be associated with seed. Bacteria can enter through wounds or stomates. Moisture in the form of rainfall or relative humidity greater than 95 percent for several days is required for infection and later disease development. Dry weather for 2 weeks can arrest the disease. Controls include the selection of resistant cucumber varieties, use of disease-free seed, and a 2 year rotation out of all cucurbits. Copper fungicides can be applied to slow disease spread during particularly wet periods but can be dropped if dry weather continues for 2 weeks.

Powdery Mildew has also been reported by John Mishenac, the Regional IPM Vegetable Specialist. John is also concerned about a **possible virus** that he is seeing in peppers and tomatoes. This seems to affect the center stems, causing the leaves to flag and curl, resembling aphid damage. If you are seeing this problem, give the office a call at 800-548-0881.

Simple Steps to Improving Irrigation Scheduling

- Know the available water of your soils based on soil type.
- Know the approximate rooting depth of your crops for early, mid and late parts of the growing season. (Also know where you have hardpans that restrict root growth and drainage).
- Install several tensiometers or watermark sensor (or use a soil auger and “feel method” charts) to monitor soil water content more carefully
- Try keeping a rough “water budget” after the soil is brought up to field capacity by using the ET tables
- Determine the efficiency and uniformity of your irrigation system.

These steps are based on an article written by Dr. David Wolfe can be found on our website. Go to <http://www.cce.cornell.edu/washington/washington.html> and look for irrigation article.

Landscape: A few weeks ago I reported a leafminer on Amelanchier. I have since identified this pest as the **Pear Slug Sawfly**. The larvae of this sawfly resembles a slug. It does extensive damage, usually later in the season, because it will have a second generation. In this particular case it completely caused complete defoliation of a 6’ Amelanchier and then went to a neighboring hawthorne. It is important to take control steps now, when the adult is laying its eggs, because this pest can become quite a nuisance in the landscape. It is relatively easy to control, as long as timing is correct.

There is a little refoilation occurring in trees that were badly damaged by **Forest tent caterpillar**. Unfortunately we are very likely to see another year of problems from this pest. We are trying to arrange a meeting for municipalities during September, because we are concerned about next years control strategy. Stay posted!

Dr. Frank Rossi, of Cornell University has the following to say about **when new fields**

are ready for play: Increased athletic participation has placed significant demands on athletic fields across the US. Many communities and professional sports clubs have invested in new fields and are anxious to use them. However, trafficking new areas before they have a mature root system and are adequately tillered will result in long term, poor quality turf. The first consideration is to have an alternate field that will allow the new field to rest. Second, if field was seeded, we recommend that one to one and a half years of growth prior to first traffic. Keep in mind, excessive fertilization may enhance top growth but will not necessarily reduce time to traffic. In fact, high N fertility will promote thatch development that if not top-dressed properly will produce an organic layer that will “choke” off the the roots from oxygen. Finally, the sodded field could receive traffic as soon as roots are down 2 to 4” and the sod can no longer be easily pulled from the soil. Also, we recommend that prior to use, but after roots are down 2” that the field be core aerified to promote good water penetration through the sod layer. If you are interested in receiving more in-depth information about turf issues, contact Dr. Rossi at fsr3@cornell.edu and subscribe to ShortCUTT, an electronic newsletter just on turf issues.

Greenhouse - Shore fly and Fungus Gnat control is a real problem in greenhouses. The University of Maryland is doing field research on using rove beetles these tenacious pests. **Rove beetles**, *Atheta coriaria*, are predators that are released at a rate of 2 beetles per sq meter of growing area. It is reported that one release usually works. The adult beetle will mate and lay eggs in the substrate in the greenhouse. They suggested using potato disk or wedges placed on the soil and examined on a bi-weekly basis. You will find the larvae of fungus gnats, larvae of shore fly and the larvae of the rove beetle present on the potato disk. Rove beetles may also feed on larvae of thrips that drop to the substrate to pupate.

Now is the time to clean and disinfest production areas. Remaining crop debris harbors pathogens, insects and mite pests. Debris should be removed and sanitizing agents should be applied according to directions. Many times pervious surfaces do not retain disinfecting products long enough to kill pests. The fabric floors shown in the adjacent photo has perpetuated *Thielaviopsis* problems for several seasons.

If you are interested in detailed greenhouse information, consider viewing the **Northeast IPM Notes**. The newsletter can be downloaded from:
<http://www.rcre.rutgers.edu/pubs/greenhouseipmnotes/>.

Sincerely,

Aaron D. Gabriel
Extension Resource Educator
Crops and Soils