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Washington County Ag Report
June 21, 2005

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

Quote

"The reason grandparents and grandchildren get along so well is that they have a common enemy." -- Sam Levenson

Announcements

FIELD CROP SCOUTING, COME EARN A PESTICIDE RECERTIFICATION CREDIT BY SCOUTING WITH ME FOR ONE HOUR:

Call me for the time and place. AG

Tuesday, July 5 – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Hoophouses: What do they offer the Fresh Market Farmer? This meeting will be held at Ted and Jan Blomgren's Wind Flower Farm, 585 Meeting House Road, Valley Falls. The Blomgren's have several different styles of hoophouses and experience growing a wide variety of crops in them. They will also be reporting on results of a SARE grant on cut flower quality in hoophouses. Directions will be forthcoming, but please give us a call if you plan on attending – 746-2560.

Wed. & Thurs., July 6 & 7, 2005 Tractor Safety Certification course in Greenwich. Pre-registration is required. Call John Bowe for more info, 1-800-548-0881.

Sun – Tues, July 17-19 – New York State Maple Tour, Batavia. For more information go to http://maple.dnr.cornell.edu/ or give us a call and we can send you the registration information. Registration is due by June 24th.

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	**1.19**	0.55	**1.90**	0.58	**3.54**	0.68	**1.53**	0.00
So far this month	**3.77**	2.24	**2.75**	2.70	**5.04**	2.93	**3.02**	1.00
Total since April 1st	**9.27**	8.51	**8.37**	9.28	**11.67**	9.56	**9.35**	6.18
GDD Base 41 Growing Degree Days = [hi temp + low temp]/2 – 41								
Past Week	**183**	178	**182**	185	**198**	200	**190**	195
Since April 1st	**1175**	1155	**1237**	1236	**1493**	1356	**1269**	1225
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	**121**	122	**122**	123	**136**	136	**131**	131
Since April 1st	**804**	767	**871**	852	**972**	899	**914**	855

Midwest Commodity Prices - from the Wall Street Journal

Corn per bushel	$2.15/bu	Cotton Seed Meal per ton	$/ton
Soybean per bushel	7.29/bu	Corn Gluten Feed	49/ton
Hominy Feed per ton	43/ton	Wheat, soft white	3.88/bu
48% Soybean meal per ton	233/ton	Tallow per pound	/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

Advertising accepted in accordance with rules of Cornell Cooperative Extension and subject to final determination of acceptability by the Executive Director. Advertising space is limited to subscribers only.

Wanted: Milking equipment and milkhouse equipment for goats. Argyle – 638-5403.

Wanted: Buyer looking for working or potentially working dairy farm in Kingsbury, Hartford, Argyle, Ft. Ann, Ft. Edward, Greenwich, Salem, Whitehall area. Please call 745-5065 ext. 115.

DAIRY NOTES: Tracking information around a dairy barn can allow a manager to notice problems before they become issues that require expensive solutions with the vet, foot trimmer or beef man. An interesting point was tracking the number of cows laying down, standing in stalls and eating. The goal is to have 95% of the cows laying down in the stalls that aren't eating. Standing in the stall may occur at a low level but may also indicate that the cows do not find the stalls comfortable. However, data collection without planned associated management changes or interest is to be avoided. But that doesn't mean that it is not important.

Source: Niles, Don, "Monitoring and Evaluating Dairy Herd Performance", Northeast Dairy Producers Conference, New York 2004

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: Farmers' markets are in full swing, Saratoga just hosted their Sundae on the Farm event and there are lots of places coming up like Fairs where the general public will have some interaction with animals and agriculture. Finding ways to provide these teachable moments in order to educate on the importance of agriculture is crucial. But it is important to keep in mind several things so that everyone will have a positive experience, farmers must understand some basic safety issues that you have to be responsible for.

Many members of the public view these types of events like going to an amusement park. They have 'paid' their admission and now have little or no responsibility for the safety of their family or themselves. Handwashing or at least sanitizing, supervision around animals and equipment are the major issues that spring to mind. In order for each person to enjoy this experience with a low level of risk, all of these points are extremely important to keep in mind

CROPS

Beneficial Insects: At this time of year, natural enemies numbers begin to increase. You can find all stages of lady beetles in the field: eggs, larvae, and adults. The big question is will natural enemies be sufficient to control our pests. It takes observation and experience to answer this question. Begin now to scout fields and make observations each year. Below are an adult and immature lady beetle (or ladybug).

Alfalfa: Alfalfa weevil feeding is on the decline. Many fields had feeding damage, but I saw none that needed any treatment. **Potato leafhopper** is now our insect concern in alfalfa. Keep an eye on this pest. I have found low to moderate numbers of adults so far, none over the action threshold. Heat and moisture will have the greatest influence on this pest. Remember that the adults will migrate from a cut field to an uncut field. New seedings still need a week or more before harvesting. Monitor new seedings to be sure a flood of PLH do not migrate into them during second cutting.

An emergency exemption (FIFRA section 18) has been granted to New York State by EPA for the use of lambda-cyhalothrin (Warrior) to control potato leafhoppers on alfalfa/clover/grass mixed-stands. Access to the use directions and label image is possible from our website at http://pmep.cce.cornell.edu/regulation/sec18/2005/index.html.

Field Corn: European corn borer are here. I found my first worm in corn yesterday. This is the first of the first flight of adults. Time will tell if we have a severe year. Resistant and transgenic hybrids are the only economical defense for field corn. Corn is looking a bit variable within many fields. I have not been able to investigate the reasons. Look at your fields and take a walk. Why are there big skips? Did bugs or disease get the seedlings early in the season? Are there problems from just one or two planter units? How uniform is your tillage and soil quality in the field? **Check for weed escapes** and apply a post spray if needed.

Harold van Es has been monitoring weather conditions around the state and nitrogen mineralization and losses from soil. Except for areas that got severe thunderstorms, there has been little loss of nitrogen from the soil by leaching or volatilization. So, Cornell's guidelines for N fertilization on corn are on target and Harold makes the following suggestions. "Due to the fairly uniform dry weather in the state during May and early June, the suggested adjustments do not vary much across the climate regions. **As of June 13, we suggest no change to the standard Cornell N recommendations for fine-textured soils at this time. We suggest a reduction of 15-25 lbs/ac for medium-textured soils and 10-15 lbs/ac for coarse-textured soils, depending**

on location." [Obvious increases in nitrogen must be made where we have had recent severe rainfall.]
Grasses: Are there seed heads in second cutting. If so, then some were still low inside the stem and did not get clipped off with first cutting. It seems to me that reed canarygrass seed heads emerge over a longer period of time than other grasses. Keep an eye out for diseases on second cutting orchard grass. Call me if you see anything interesting.

Pasture: Now is the time to apply nitrogen to grass pastures, or 0-10-40 to legume pastures to smooth out the summer slump.

VEGETABLES: Crops making up for slow May. Very rapid growth in corn to the point where all different planting times are overlapping and may present a challenge at harvest. Peas that were doing quite well earlier did not fair well in the 90+ heat, so there was some loss for that crop. Still seeing lots of uneven growth in high tunnels and a big problem with **weed escapes** in all crops. Unfortunately the combination of weather we've had has made it difficult to deal with weed problems. Targeted sprays or tillage might be your best option, because crops are doing a lot of catch up growing. It's a really great time to make a few notes about the type of weed and it's size at this time of year, the exact location, and your method of control. Many weeds are best controlled in the fall, but you cannot accomplish this if you haven't noted the problem.

I did see **powdery mildew** in squash already. The transplants in this small planting were being held in a greenhouse for too long and were in rough shape anyway, but powdery mildew has made the grower decide to rogue them out. In this case we are not sure where the PM came from, but if you are growing cucurbit transplants, be aware that verbena seems to be a host for PM that then can move to your field crop transplants. This has been seen elsewhere in the region and state. Check out the website for info and photos of PM. http://vegetablemdonline.ppath.cornell.edu/factsheets/Cucurbits_PM.htm. Because of the ongoing conversation about an above average number of hurricanes predicted this season, you might want to move **Downy Mildew** further up on your radar screen as well. This disease is carried by southern storms to our region. Upper surfaces of leaves may show angular pale-green areas bounded by leaf veins that give the impression of mosaic. These areas change to yellow angular spots and become necrotic as the disease progresses.

Other considerations especially for northern areas of the county are low lying fields. We have had very heavy rain in certain areas, unfortunately the same areas where soil is on the heavy side. Standing water is a real boon for **Phytopthora**, so if you have to till up crops or create barriers do it now before Phytophthora gets started. This soil borne fungal disease is a problem for peppers and cucurbits . A good crop rotation and improved drainage are two good ways to "out-manage" the disease.

John Mishenac, the Regional Vegetable IPM Specialist has seen lots **of Colorado Potato Beetle** adults on both tomatoes and potatoes. Also, lots of **European Corn Borer**. John has the following guidelines for scouting your sweet corn: "For bare ground sweet corn, you can wait to scout the corn till it is in late whorl. Don't waste time in the field when your best time to do anything is later when the corn is in tassel. Attempting to control insects in bare ground whorl stage corn is a total waste of time. Corn is growing quickly so your earliest corn may be in late

whorl soon anyway. When scouting, you need to look at least 5 locations in the field. This will give you a good idea of what is in the field. Look into the center of the whorl for tiny windows where the larvae has not chewed through the leaf. When the larvae get bigger, they begin to chew holes and you will see frass, (sawdust) on the leaf. Keep a running count of the number of plants where you find feeding signs of larvae. If you are over 5% than you will need to control the larvae at tassel. When you are scouting, assess when the corn will start to come into tassel. The absolute best time to control the larvae is when the individual tassels are just beginning to separate but have not completely spread out. The larvae are riding up the center of the plant and will be feeding on the tassel flowers. They are out in the open and easy to kill. Applying a control at this time will give you almost complete suppression of the larvae. Make your first application when 40% of the field is in tassel and then wait another 4-6 days for the rest of the field to come into tassel for another application. This will ensure you make a control application at the right time. Applying a control in whorl will not give good results because the larva are deep in the plant. Applying after tassel will not work as the larvae drop down to the ear and again be inside the plant and protected. Tassel is the perfect time to control the larvae. For organic growers, Entrust (the organic name for Spintor) works well. Conventional growers can use a variety of products - check the Cornell recommends.

For plastic or floating row cover corn, normally it is very difficult to find signs of ECB. This year, we are finding ECB larvae in the tassel of plastic and row cover corn. It is probably best to spray row cover or plastic corn on a 5 to 7 day schedule while the flight is going on as this corn is more advanced and attractive to the moths. The larvae usually go directly to the ear and it is very difficult to scout and find signs of damage.

Vegetable Pest Status Report via E-mail

By John Mishanec, IPM Program, CCE

The Vegetable Pest Status Report (PSR) will continue though late September. Information is obtained from CCE agents, field scouts and growers from New Jersey up to the Canadian border. To receive the Vegetable Pest Status Report, send an e-mail message asking to receive the PSR to **jjm27@cornell.edu**

Landscape: **Arborvitae Leafminer** was found this week. This pest is fairly common, but the symptoms are often confused as winter burn. A good hand lens or diseccting scope reveals the small mine entrances. Adult arborvitae leafminers (*Argyresthia thuiella*) appear starting around mid-June into July or 533-700 growing degree days. Chemical cover sprays can be applied at this time. During the known flight period, gently shake the foliage, if adults are present they can then be observed in this forced flight. Once the larvae are in the foliage, systemic pesticides may be necessary. These may be applied either by soil or trunk injection. Many natural controls exist for this pest in the form of parasites. After 2-3 years of building leafminer populations, these parasites may reach levels high enough to severely reduce the numbers of this pest. Arborvitae can withstand heavy defoliation from this pest and still live, but the aesthetic value of the planting may be greatly reduced this pest and still live, but the aesthetic value of the planting may be greatly reduced.

The **viburnum leaf beetle** was found in Troy earlier this month. This pest will be a real nuisance for managed plantingsand potentially devastating to natural or unmanaged plants. If you are not familiar with this pest, please check out the Cornell website for an excellent fact sheet. http://www.hort.cornell.edu/vlb/.

Viburnum Leaf Beetle larvae munching on underside of leaf.

Sincerely,

Aaron D. Gabriel
Extension Resource Educator
Crops and Soils