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THE BLUEBERRY BULLETIN

A Weekly Update to Growers



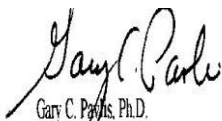
Visit the Blueberry Bulletin webpage: extension.rutgers.edu/blueberry-bulletin
2024 Commercial Blueberry Pest Control Recommendations for New Jersey:
njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs

Blueberry Culture

Dr. Gary C. Pavlis, Atlantic County Agricultural Agent

Growers are very aware that this harvest season has been a struggle due to the freeze we experienced in April. The harvest of the 'Duke' variety is wrapping up and 'Bluecrop' is beginning, **and the new challenge is the extreme heat that is expected this week. High temperatures will result in soft fruit. One possible way to lessen the effects of the heat on fruit firmness is with an application of calcium. In a trial in Chile, fruit firmness was evaluated with calcium treated blueberries and the result was berries were about 8 percent firmer than the grower standard. The increase in firmness after application was double that of the grower standard. This displays Calcium's effectiveness in moving calcium into the fruit and keeping cell wall better intact, which results in greater shelf life and higher berry quality.

In addition, my research over the past two years has shown that the application of Calfuse and Profuse which are PRIVI Life Sciences products, also increases fruit firmness.


Gary C. Pavlis, Ph.D.
Atlantic County Agricultural Agent



Heat-Related Illness Resources from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture

As extreme heat and humidity become more frequent, it is vital for agricultural employers and workers to take precautions to prevent heat-related illnesses before, during, and after outdoor labor. As each person's heat tolerance varies, it is important to be aware of the symptoms, risk factors, and prevention measures you can take to reduce your risk of heat-related illnesses while on the job.

In collaboration with the New Jersey Departments of Health and Labor and Rutgers Cooperative Extension, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture has developed educational graphics for employees and a voluntary Heat Illness Management & Prevention Plan for employers to implement. This plan provides essential guidance for ensuring your farm operation implements measures that will help keep farmworkers safe during periods of extreme heat. A Daily Checklist Template is also provided for supervisors to track heat index or Wet Bulb Globe Temperature throughout the work shift and document implementation of the prevention measures such as providing drinking water, shade access, and rest breaks.

Please visit the NJDA website for these resources and additional information at:

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/anr/agriassist/heatrelatedillnessresources.shtml>.

Pest Management

Dr. Cesar Rodriguez-Saona, Extension Specialist in Blueberry Entomology, Rutgers University

Dr. Janine Spies, IPM Agent – Fruit

Ms. Carrie Mansue, IPM Sr. Program Coordinator – Fruit

Insects

Scouting was conducted last week across 180 commercial and organic blueberry fields in Burlington and Atlantic Counties. Field evaluations focused primarily on inspecting fruit for insect injury and assessing aphid infestations on new vegetative terminals.

Monitoring of developing fruit indicated a decline in feeding and oviposition activity by leafrollers and plum curculio (Table 1). There were also low levels of cherry fruitworm infestation in developing fruit (Table 2).

Table 1. Fruit Monitoring Data

	% Leafroller Berry Infestation		% Plum Curculio Berry Infestation	
	Avg	High	Avg	High
5/9	0.125	1	0.235	2.6
5/16	0.22	1.5	0.67	6.5



5/23	0.04	0.9	0.125	5.8
5/29	0.03	0.8	0.01	0.6
6/6	0.006	0.2	0.003	0.3
6/12	0.002	0.2	0	0
6/20	0.002	0.2	0	0
6/27	0.001	0.2	0	0

Table 2. Fruit Monitoring Data

	% Cranberry Fruitworm Berry Infestation		% Cherry Fruitworm Berry Infestation	
	Avg	High	Avg	High
6/20	0.003	0.3	0.004	0.2
6/27	0	0	0.002	0.2

Aphids

Aphid populations increased compared with the previous week, although average colony sizes remained low, with approximately 1–5 aphids per infested shoot (Table 3).

Table 3: Aphid Infestation on New Terminals

	Aphids % Terminal Infestation	
	Avg	High
5/23	1.5 A	14
5/29	2.83 A	38
6/6	2.189 A	30
6/12	1.9 A	26
6/20	2.9 A	54
6/27	3.07 A	56
Aphid Colony Size: A: 1-5, B: 6-10, C: 11-15, D: >16		

Trap Monitoring

This week, spotted-wing drosophila trap captures increased in Atlantic County but declined in Burlington County. Pheromone lures were replaced this past week, and trap captures are expected to increase over the coming weeks as the new lures become fully effective. Spotted-wing drosophila remains the primary target for insecticide applications at this time (Table 4).

Table 4. Spotted-Wing Drosophila and Blueberry Maggot Traps

	Spotted-Wing Drosophila				Blueberry Maggot			
	Atlantic County		Burlington County		Atlantic County		Burlington County	
	Avg	High	Avg	High	Avg	High	Avg	High
6/6	8.99	35	2.86	7	0.03	1	0	0
6/12	9.9	46	3.7	25	0	0	0	0



6/20	10.24	48	8.22	35	0	0	0	0
6/27	6.96	78	3.6	18	0	0	0	0

Table 5. Sharp-nosed Leafhopper and Oriental Beetle Traps

	Sharp-nosed Leafhopper				Oriental Beetle			
	Atlantic County		Burlington County		Atlantic County		Burlington County	
	Avg	High	Avg	High	Avg	High	Avg	High
6/6	1.42	16	1.25	7	5.78	35	2.57	14
6/12	0.56	12	4.8	46	62	340	47	170
6/20	0.88	6	1.44	12	411	2025	403	2025
6/27	0.77	9	0.37	2	243	2025	458	2025

Cranberry fruitworm and cherry fruitworm traps were checked last week. Trap captures indicate continued flight activity of both cranberry fruitworm and cherry fruitworm remains low in Atlantic County (Table 6).

When selecting insecticide applications, spotted-wing drosophila and blueberry maggot should remain the primary management targets at this stage of the season. However, growers should also consider products that provide effective control of cranberry fruitworm and cherry fruitworm to ensure comprehensive protection of the crop.

Table 6. Cranberry/Cherry Fruitworm Traps

	Cranberry Fruitworm (AC)		Cherry Fruitworm (AC)		Cranberry Fruitworm (BC)		Cherry Fruitworm (BC)	
	Avg	High	Avg	High	Avg	High	Avg	High
5/1	0	0	2.5	5	0	0	3.5	7
5/9	0	0	4.4	6	0	0	6.25	10
5/16	0	0	7.7	11	0	0	9	15
5/23	0.14	1	5.14	15	0.25	1	16	29
5/29	0.14	1	1	3	0	0	1.5	6
6/6	3.57	20	1.43	5	0	0	0.75	2
6/12	0	0	3.4	7	1.25	3	0.2	1
6/20	0	0	0.57	2	0	0	0	0
6/27	0.28	1	0.28	2	0.25	1	0	0
AC: Atlantic County, BC: Burlington County								

Scale

Crawler activity for both terrapin scale and Putnam scale declined slightly compared with the previous week (Table 7).

Scale infestation on fruit increased slightly compared with the previous week, likely because harvesting has made infested fruit more apparent during field evaluations (Table 8).



Table 7. Scale Traps

	Putnam		Terrapin	
	Avg	High	Avg	High
5/23	36.85	230	1.8	8
5/29	65.17	352	21.2	41
6/6	136.25	402	75.25	84
6/12	164	639	96	202
6/20	102	288	85	167
6/27	45	193	32	119

Table 8. Scale infestation on fruit

	Scale % infestation on fruit	
	Avg	High
6/12	0.13	2.1
6/20	0.19	5.7
6/27	0.06	1.5

Diseases

The IPM team has observed anthracnose on 'Duke' blueberries, as well as mummy berry and Alternaria fruit rot. The increased incidence of Alternaria is likely associated with injuries caused by mechanical harvesting, which can create entry points for infection.

For fungicide recommendations, please refer to the Rutgers Blueberry Commercial Production Guide or <https://extension.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/2026-03/bb-v42n01.pdf>

	% Mummy Berry Infested Fruit		% Anthracnose Infested Fruit		% Alternaria Infested Fruit	
	Avg	High	Avg	High	Avg	High
6/20	0.03	0.9	0.06	2.5	0.004	0.7
6/27	0.007	0.3	0.08	2.2	0.07	3

For blueberry production and management recommendations, please reference the recently revised [2026 Commercial Blueberry Pest Control Recommendations for New Jersey](#).

