

July 14, 2026

Vol. 42, Issue # 18

THE BLUEBERRY BULLETIN

A Weekly Update to Growers



Visit the Blueberry Bulletin webpage: extension.rutgers.edu/blueberry-bulletin 2026 Commercial Blueberry Pest Control Recommendations for New Jersey: <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.php?pid=E265>

Blueberry Culture

Dr. Gary C. Pavlis, Atlantic County Agricultural Agent

Amazingly, it is mid-July, and the blueberry harvest season is largely over. There are still some Bluecrop to be harvested and if a grower has Elliott, that is coming on. It has been a very tough season due to the freeze, but growers should not let their blueberry plants go into any extreme stress due to weed pressure, drought, disease, or nutrient deficiencies. Fruit bud initiation will begin in August, and those buds are the fruit for next year. Any stress will decrease the number and quality of those buds.



Magnesium-deficient highbush blueberry; note the lovely red coloration.

During farm visits this week, I noticed numerous cases of magnesium deficiency. This shows up on the older leaves and the symptoms are leaves with green veins and the interveinal area is red. I believe the reason for so much of this throughout the area is the fact that the pH levels in many fields is very low, many below 4.5, quite a few below 4.0. Magnesium becomes much less available when the pH gets that low. Plants need magnesium to **complete enzyme reactions**,



including those involved in photosynthesis. Without it, a plant can't make chlorophyll, which is responsible for green leaf color. Magnesium also makes it possible for plants to absorb and use other essential elements, such as the macronutrients nitrogen, sulfur and phosphorus.

Epson salt is usually a quick fix but raising the pH closer to 5.0 will fix the problem for a longer period of time. Realize that any nutrient deficiency in mid to late summer will affect fruit bud formation and yield next year.


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

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 105 conventional and organic blueberry fields in Burlington and Atlantic Counties.

Monitoring of developing fruit indicated an overall decline in pest activity, including feeding and/or oviposition by leafrollers, plum curculio, and cherry and cranberry fruitworms (Tables 1 and 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
7/3	0.005	0.3	0	0
7/10	0.01	0.4	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
7/3	0.001	0.1	0.001	0.1
7/10	0	0	0	0

Aphids

Populations have declined substantially compared with previous weeks, likely due to recent weather conditions and the hardening of new shoot growth, which has reduced the availability of suitable feeding sites (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
7/3	2.6 A	48
7/10	0.05 A	6
Aphid Colony Size: A: 1-5, B: 6-10, C: 11-15, D: >16		

Trap Monitoring

This week, spotted-wing drosophila trap counts decreased in Atlantic County but increased in Burlington County. In fields where harvesting is still ongoing, spotted-wing drosophila remains the primary target for insecticide applications (Table 4). Blueberry maggot activity has been increasing in the last two weeks (Table 4), likely due to reduced insecticide applications in fields where traps are located and where harvest has been completed for the monitored varieties.



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
7/3	29.78	273	50.9	81	0.33	27	0	0
7/10	31.2	130	86.1	177	0.15	12	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
7/3	1.5	15	0.55	2	466.7	2025	182.7	510
7/10	1.40	14	0.33	2	396	1970	393	2025

Cranberry fruitworm and cherry fruitworm traps were checked and removed due to minimal activity detected in both traps and fields (Table 6).

Table 6. Cranberry/Cherry Fruitworm Trap Data

	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
7/3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7/10	0.14	1	1	2	0.5	2	0	0
AC: Atlantic County, BC: Burlington County								

Scale

Crawler activity on Terrapin scale traps has increased; however, Putnam scale activity has decreased slightly compared with last week (Table 7). Scale infestations on fruit have also increased slightly from the previous week (Table 8).

Table 7. Scale Traps

	Putnam Scale		Terrapin Scale	
	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
7/3	41.7	315	27.5	46
7/10	16.26	74	24.6	61

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
7/3	0.06	1.8
7/10	0.07	3.1

Diseases

The IPM team continues to observe anthracnose in fields where fruit has not yet been harvested.

The IPM team is also likely observing an increase in *Alternaria* fruit rot due to the increased use of mechanical harvesters. 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
7/3	0.005	0.2	0.227	4.1	0.07	1.2
7/10	0.002	0.1	0.20	2.5	0.13	3