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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

Leaf Tissue Analysis: Readers of this newsletter are aware that fertilizer recommendations for blueberries are based on leaf analysis. We have found that there is no correlation between the soil analysis and the amount of nutrients that actually enter the blueberry plant. Soil analysis is useful to determine pH, and maintain pH in the proper range, 4.5 - 4.8. Thus, leaf analysis is critical to maintain the blueberry plant in a healthy, efficient, productive condition. Now is the time to take leaf samples for analysis.

Leaf tissue analysis is a way of determining the actual nutritional status of plants. It is an excellent and inexpensive way of finding out if your fertilization program is working or if changes need to be made. The analysis provides information on foliar N, P, K, Ca, Mg, Mn, Fe, Cu, B and Zn levels for the leaves sampled, a fact sheet on what the levels should be for these plant nutrients, and recommendations for corrective measures if needed. Leaf tissue analysis can help pinpoint the source of problems and determine what measures may be needed to ensure proper nutrition of the crop. Interpretation of leaf tissue analysis is most accurate when the soil pH is within the proper range for blueberries, 4.5 - 4.8.

When to Sample: Sample healthy leaves during late July or early August.

How to Sample: Collect 30-50 leaves per sample. Leaves should be from the middle shoot, not old ones/not new ones. Sample different varieties separately, if possible.

Collect leaves from as many bushes as possible in the sample area. Gently wash the leaves in tap water to rinse off soil or spray residue. Allow the leaves to air dry until they are brittle before placing into a paper bag.

The following laboratories can be considered:

Rutgers Soil Testing Lab
ASB-11 Cook Campus
57 US Highway 1
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
https://extension.rutgers.edu/soil-testing-lab

Midwest Laboratories Inc
13611 B Street
Omaha, NE 68144
(402) 334-7770
www.midwestlabs.com

A & L Eastern Agricultural Labs, Inc.
7621 Whitepine Road
Richmond, VA 23237
(804) 743-9401
www.aleastern.com

Agri-check Inc.
Reg. Mail: P.O. Box 1350
UPS: 323 6th Street
Umatilla, OR 97882-1350
(541) 922-4894
www.agri-check.com

Agricultural Analytical Services Lab
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 863-0841
www.aasl.psu.edu

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

Monitoring of developing fruit indicated an overall decrease in pest activity, including feeding and 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
7/18	0.06	0.2	0	0
7/25	0	0	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
7/18	0	0	0	0
7/25	0	0	0	0

Aphids

Aphid populations have decreased significantly due to weather conditions and the hardening of new shoot growth (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
7/18	0	0
7/25	0	0
Aphid Colony Size: A: 1-5, B: 6-10, C: 11-15, D: >16		

Trap Monitoring

This week, spotted-wing drosophila trap counts increased in both Atlantic and Burlington County. If harvest is still underway, spotted-wing drosophila remains the primary target for insecticide applications (Table 4). Blueberry maggot adults are also present at low numbers, likely because traps are located in fields where pesticide applications have not been made.

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
7/18	28.3	110	59.3	125	0.07	5	0.16	1
7/25	40.22	227	79.1	223	0.07	6	0.06	2

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
7/18	0.98	13	0	0	191.1	2025	235	1350
7/25	1.11	7	0.11	1	64.4	340	136.6	675

Scales

Crawler activity of Putnam scale had a slight increase over the past week (Table 7). Monitoring will continue throughout the fall to detect the emergence of the second crawler generation and determine the appropriate timing for pesticide applications. Continued monitoring will help ensure that management recommendations are based on current pest activity and that insecticide applications are made when crawlers are most susceptible.

No scale infestations were detected last week likely due to the ending of harvest activities (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
7/18	6.06	25	12	24
7/25	10.5	73	11	24

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
7/18	0.02	0.9
7/25	0	0

Diseases

The IPM team continues to observe anthracnose and Alternaria, likely associated with mechanical damage caused by picking machine activity.

For recommendations on fungicide products, 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
7/18	0.001	0.1	1.23	13.1	0.43	9.3
7/25	0	0	0.42	2	0.11	0.6

Weeds

Last week, the IPM team monitored 86 fields for weed pressure. The predominant weed species observed across production fields were crabgrass and goosegrass. Based on current field conditions, postemergence herbicide selections should prioritize products with strong activity on annual grass species while considering the existing weed spectrum within individual fields. Refer to the 2026 Rutgers Blueberry Commercial Guide: https://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.php?pid=e265 .