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THE BLUEBERRY BULLETIN

A Weekly Update to Grower

Visit the Blueberry Bulletin webpage: extension.rutgers.edu/blueberry-bulletin
[2026 Commercial Blueberry Pest Control Recommendations for New Jersey]

Blueberry Culture

Dr. Gary C. Pavlis, Atlantic County Agricultural Agent

Stunt Disease: The removal of a bush with stunt disease should never be attempted before some effort has been made to control the leafhoppers in it. The removal process could actually facilitate the spreading of the disease. The agitation of the bush will dislodge the leafhoppers, causing them to hop to another healthy bush, thereby transmitting from a diseased bush to a healthy bush. Spray each diseased bush with a garden knapsack sprayer before it is rogued out. Malathion is safe to use and is effective against all stages of leafhopper. Spraying the entire field is not necessary currently. In fields severely infected with stunt disease and in nurseries seeking NJ Department of Agriculture Certification, a special spray for leafhopper adults is needed.

The leafhoppers are still in the wingless nymph stage and usually do not start the flight period until late in August.

Stunt Symptoms are described as an overall dwarfing of the bush, hence the name stunt. **See photo below.** Small leaves that are cupped downward or puckered are characteristic symptoms. Leaves on infected bushes are often chlorotic, with chlorosismost pronounced among the leaf margins and between lateral veins. Midribs and lateral veins usually retain normal green coloration. Chlorotic areas often turn a brilliant red in the later summer. Stem internodes become shortened and growth of normally dormant buds cause twiggy branching.

Gary C. Pavis, 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 15 conventional and organic blueberry fields in Burlington and Atlantic Counties.

Monitoring of developing fruit indicated an overall decrease in pest activity, including feeding and/or oviposition by leafrollers, plum curculio, and cherry and cranberry fruitworm (Table 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
7/31	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
7/31	0	0	0	0

Aphids

Aphid populations have decreased significantly for the past few weeks due to hardening of newer shoot development (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
7/31	0	0

Aphid Colony Size: A: 1-5, B: 6-10, C: 11-15, D: >16

Trap Monitoring

Spotted-wing drosophila adults continue to be captured in monitoring traps. Trap counts on average increased in Atlantic County from 40 to 52 males per trap and decreased from 79 to 59 males per trap in Burlington County. This is the primary pest for sprays if still harvesting (Table 4). Blueberry maggot is also present, but flight activity has slightly decreased (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
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
7/31	52.3	199	58.8	167	0.04	2	0.04	1

Sharp-nosed leafhopper activity in the field continues to be low (Table 5). Oriental beetle flight activity has decreased significantly from previous weeks (Table 5).

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
7/31	0.90	5	0.25	2	27.68	132	35.3	85

Scale

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

Observations of fruit infested with scale decreased last week due to harvest (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
7/31	12.6	64	11.3	27

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
7/31	0.006	0.1

Diseases

The IPM team is still observing anthracnose as well as Alternaria due to the increased use of mechanical harvesters. For reference on what fungicide products to use refer to the Rutgers Blueberry Commercial Guide or

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	% 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
7/31	0	0	0.89	9.7	0.05	0.3

Black Shadow

This week, the IPM team will begin monitoring fields for black shadow. For growers participating in the IPM program, the percentage of fruit exhibiting black shadow symptoms will be included in your weekly report. These observations will help assess disease incidence and assist in determining whether a fungicide application may be warranted toward the end of August.

Weeds

Last week, the IPM team monitored 86 fields for weed pressure. The predominant weed species observed across production fields were nutsedge and goosegrass followed by marestail and barnyard grass. This was the last week for assessing weed pressure in the fields.

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 .

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TOPICS:

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- Best practices for pruning and maintaining plants
- Effective IPM scouting strategies for operations of all sizes
- Key considerations for selecting blueberry varieties
- Production challenges and solutions

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