

COLUMBIA GORGE FRUIT GROWERS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2011

2011 FROST FORECAST

CALENDAR

March

- 18 Orchard Manager's Meeting-The Dalles
- 25 Orchard Manager's Meeting-The Dalles

2011 Frost Report

March 14-May 31, 2011

The recorded notice may be heard at 541-387-2732
(preliminary recorded at noon, forecast recorded at 5:00 pm)

Or tune to the radio stations:

	AM-KIHR	FM-K105.5	KACI FM 97.7
April			
19 Natural Resources Day at the Capitol	12:20 preliminary		
June			
1 Golf Tournament—Indian Creek	6:40 pm forecast 7:40 pm forecast 8:40 pm forecast	6:40 pm forecast 7:40 pm forecast 8:40 pm forecast	6:40 pm forecast 7:40 pm forecast

Or on-line at: www.erikmoldstad.com/FrostForecasts.htm

SWCD Still Accepting Plant Sale Orders!

Spring is in the air! Looking for a low-maintenance alternative for your landscape? The Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is still taking orders for our annual native tree and plant sale. We've got a great selection of native plant species at fantastic prices!

We offer a variety of native conifers, deciduous trees and shrubs. These

bare-root seedlings are 1-2 years old and will be delivered to the SWCD in early April. Order now while supplies last!

Check out our website at www.hoodriverswcd.org to download your order form and gather information on plant descriptions and site suitability. Tree and shrub orders can be placed now by mail, e-mail (hswcd@gorge.net)

or phone (541-386-4588). You can also stop by our office at 3007 Experiment Station Rd in Hood River, for more information or guidance when making your selection. Purchases will be available for pick up on Friday and Saturday, the 1st and 2nd of April, 2011.

OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Fri 9am-1pm
Afternoons subject to change. Call 387-4769 for hours.

TRAINING MATERIALS

The following training materials are available at the CGFG office.

For sale on DVD - \$4 each

- EPA Worker Protection Standard - Orchard Workers
- EPA Worker Protection Standard - Pesticide
- Tractor Safety
- Orchard Ladder Safety & Forklift Training

For Loan on VHS

- Load & Lift (English)
- Tripod Orchard Ladder Safety

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Managing Spotted Wing Drosophila, *Drosophila suzukii*, in Mid-Columbia Sweet Cherries: The 2010 Story

Peter W. Shearer, Ph.D., Professor of Entomology, Oregon State University Mid-Columbia

The spotted wing drosophila, *Drosophila suzukii*, (SWD), one of several types of vinegar flies, is a relatively new pest in our area. It originated from Asia and was first found in California in 2008 and quickly spread to Oregon, Washington, British Columbia and Florida by 2009. It is now in Utah, Michigan, various states in the eastern USA and in Italy and Spain. SWD is different from the common vinegar flies, which prefer to lay eggs in overripe, fallen and decaying fruit. In contrast, SWD females lay eggs in sound, ripening fruit before harvest. This contaminates fruit with larvae and makes the fruit soft and unmarketable. SWD are known to infest cultivated crops such as cherry, raspberry, blackberry, strawberry, blueberry, peach, nectarine, and plum. It also had been found in other plants including soft rosehips, laurel and wild blackberries.

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A NOTE FROM EXTENSION

A note about the two fact sheets by Todd Einhorn on freezing injury to pear buds that are included in this CGFG newsletter: These were originally sent to recipients on Steve Castagnoli's Extension newsletter email list serve. If you would like to be added that list, send Steve an email at steve.castagnoli@oregonstate.edu. Electronic versions of the two facts sheets with high resolution color versions of the photos are available on the MCAREC website: <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/mcarec/>

FOR SALE

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For more information call Don Wanzek at 386-3025 or 541-490-1417.

RANDOM NOTES

#1 The Orchard Manager's Meetings are scheduled for Fridays, at **The Riverenza Gathering Hall, 401 E. 10th, The Dalles**, on the corner of Federal and 10th St. As always we will start with a light breakfast sponsored by Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers at 6:30.


On March 18, the topic will be about Avoiding Pesticide Resistance with Dr. Clive Kaiser, OSU Extension, Umatilla County and a panel of growers.

#2 The Oregon Farm Bureau has organized a Natural Resources Day at the Capitol for April 19th. This will provide Oregon industries with an opportunity to showcase their products and meet with state legislators. CGFG will be sampling and handing out pears, and if you would like to participate, please call the office.

#3 We are looking for 3-4 growers to participate in a pear sampling at Mt. Hood Meadows on March 20th. Please call the CGFG office if you are interested.


#4 The Hood River County Board of Commissioners has formed an exploratory committee to determine what method of support the community is willing to provide for the Experiment Station and Extension Office. In the meantime, if you have not returned your survey form, please do so. Your opinions will help to determine the direction that CGFG takes on this subject. The future of research for the tree fruit industry will be greatly impacted by the decision that must be made in the next few months.


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The threat SWD poses to sweet cherries is real. Reports from the California cherry industry in May 2009 indicated that SWD rapidly built up and damaged unprotected sweet cherries and caused significant loss to the industry. Shortly after SWD larvae were observed in Willamette Valley blueberries in late summer, 2009, traps were deployed in Hood River and The Dalles and immediately started to catch SWD adults. Fortunately, this was after cherry harvest and we did not experience problems with local crops. However, our cherry industry was alerted to the threat for 2010 and this set several things in motion.

The first thing to happen was that university and USDA researchers, Extension personnel and private industry mobilized and created a proposal that was submitted to the competitive and anonymously reviewed USDA Specialty Crop Research Initiative at the end of January 2010. We were notified by the end of April that the proposal, "Biology and Management of Spotted Wing Drosophila on Small and Stone Fruits," (award number 2010-51181-21167), was recommended for funding and incidentally, was the top-rated proposal that was submitted for funding consideration. Unfortunately, the initial funds for the 4.5-year project were not made available until October, however, the State of Oregon and the Oregon Sweet Cherry Commission stepped up and provided us with key funding to conduct a monitoring program and initiate research to find ways to control SWD. These initial funds were instrumental in allowing us to develop some stopgap management tactics and initiate Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs based upon results of our research and trapping program.

Another important aspect was that representatives from our local cherry industry met in early Spring 2010 and collectively developed management guidelines that helped steer the industry through the first year of growing cherries in the presence of SWD. One important result of the meetings was the industry's willingness to be transparent with the process. They felt it was important to share any and all available information so that the local industry and general public would know what was happening, where flies were trapped and that commercially produced Mid-Columbia cherries was free of SWD and safe to eat. I believe our collective awareness of the risk-potential of SWD plus information transparency were key to our not having SWD problems last

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year compared with other districts that did not have a mechanism to openly share information.

So what's in store for this year? That's a great question for which we have no definitive answer because several things are different this year compared with last. For one thing, there were huge numbers of flies going into the current winter and numerous flies were caught in December in the Mid-Columbia. Another disquieting fact is that male and female SWD were recently trapped in Hood River (16 SWD found in traps on Jan 30 and 2 on both February 6 and 13) and a female fly was caught mid-February in The Dalles. This was surprising because we thought the cold winter would knock down overwintering SWD to very low levels. We will need to wait until the next warm spell to determine how the recent February 26 freeze impacted local overwintering SWD populations. Additionally, while numbers captured in traps in the Willamette Valley and Medford area have decreased after the latest cold front went through, flies were regularly being trapped in substantial numbers in those locations. This means that even if our local overwintering populations can only survive at low levels, there are plenty of flies west of here that could serve as sources to re-infest our area. I do think we may catch more SWD this spring compared with numbers last year and if indeed they are present, the question is what host plant they could build up on before cherries start to show pink color.

Now that we have SWD populations in our area, I will be able to conduct efficacy trials in orchards to look at how well insecticides work to protect cherries in the field. In 2010, there were no populations to test in cherry orchards around here so field-treated fruit and leaves were brought back to the laboratory and exposed to adult SWD. Initial results from indicated that aerial applied Malathion ULV is effective. Other studies demonstrated that airblast applications of Delegate, Entrust/Success, malathion and some of the newer pyrethroids are very effective, Sevin works OK and the neonicotinoids imidacloprid (Provado/Couraze and Assail) have slower knockdown but appear to have systemic activity. We still are not recommending GF-120 until we gain confidence in how to make it more effective. This year's research effort will partly be determined by input received at an upcoming industry meeting with local field representatives to help refine last year's recommendations. Regarding research, I will at least look at length of control of various products and develop recommendations for their use.

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Our research into SWD biology and management is really just beginning but we have already made some progress and have interesting observations and findings. In addition to the initial management strategies that were developed, my crew has found a very tiny local wasp that parasitizes SWD pupae. This wasp stings the SWD pupae and either lays an egg inside of it or feeds directly on the juice that flows from the wound. Feeding on the pupae inevitably kills it as does the egg that hatches into a larvae that eats the SWD from the inside out. We are currently building up populations of this parasitic wasp to levels high enough to allow us to study it in more detail. We have also observed that SWD adults that emerge in the fall have a different appearance from those observed during the summer. We are speculating that these changes in size and color might be related to overwintering survival capabilities and this obviously needs to be investigated.

The spotted wing drosophila is here to stay and we are working with colleagues from around the world to find solutions to manage it with minimal disruption to our IPM programs and the environment. The 2010 SWD story, at least for us here in the Mid-Columbia area, had a good ending because it did not damage our cherries. However, 2011 is likely to be different but I know our industry will be prepared. For more information on SWD, please visit the following web-sites: <http://swd.hort.oregonstate.edu/> and <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/mcarec/>.

COLUMBIA GORGE FRUIT GROWERS

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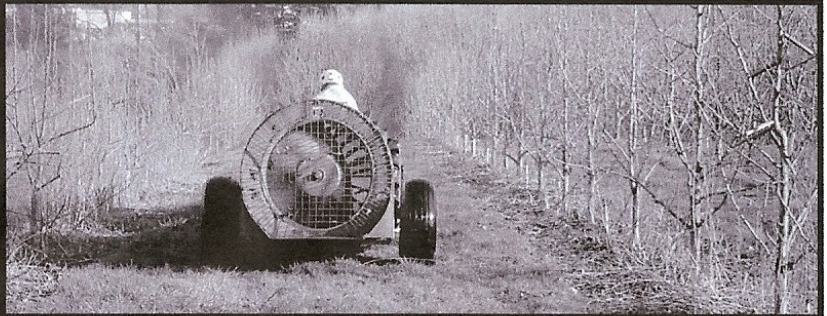
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Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers cooperates with Hood River County on a low-interest (3%), 10-year loan program that is eligible for farm worker housing projects; conversion to propane orchard heaters; micro-sprinkler systems; and wind machines. Each grower can apply for \$25,000 on a first-come, first-served basis. Although there are no funds available at this time, you may submit an application for your project to CGFG and you will receive funds as soon as they become available.

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