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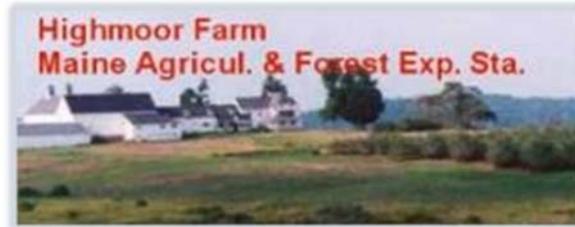
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Maine Tree Fruit Newsletter

Wednesday, July 11, 2018 Vol 25:10

Notes from Highmoor Farm

Fire blight. Fire blight has occurred in a few orchards including Highmoor Farm where I found only one strike. The first week of July is prime shoot blight season when initial blossom strikes spread to actively growing shoots. If you find any and want to remove them now, prune them out by cutting back 12 to 18 inches from symptomatic foliage. Periodically clean pruners with a solution of bleach diluted with water. The upside of this latest heat wave is a slowdown of fire blight bacterial growth. The dry weather helps limit its spread within the orchard.

Sunburn. We have a bad case of sunburn on most varieties of European plums. It looks like spray burn, but is showing up on the sun-exposed side of the fruitlets in both sprayed and unsprayed orchards. Not much can be done about it now, but keep in mind that it was caused by bad luck rather than spraying if you find it in your orchard.

Signs of Water Stress. Rainfall has been below normal this season, and trees are suffering because of it. It may not affect this year's crop much, but could have consequences for next year. Flower buds for next year's fruit will begin to develop soon and will be stunted if the dry weather continues. As a result, next year's apples could be small. If you can, I recommend irrigating trees on dwarfing rootstocks or trees in sandy soil. Trees planted this spring or last year should be irrigated for survival. Peach trees may be in jeopardy of winter injury if they dry out too much.

Order Trees Now. Nurseries will begin budding trees for future orders soon, so this is a good time to contact nurseries for ordering trees and for getting the best tree quality.

Leaf and Soil Tests

Next week is optimum timing to collect leaf samples for foliar analysis, one of the best tools for making a plan for fertilizing trees. Samples can be brought to the Summer Tour July 18. Please, fill out the form and submit with each sample. Cost for each sample is probably unchanged from last year. For more information on soil and leaf testing, visit the UMaine soil lab website <https://umaine.edu/soiltestinglab/>.

Instructions for Collecting Leaf and Soil Samples

Leaf Samples

1. Samples should contain leaves from only one variety. Different varieties should be sampled separately, if possible. Mid to late July is ideal for collection of leaves.
2. Take a random sample from throughout the orchard. Select trees in good health that are typical of the orchard in tree size, age, crop load and vigor. Do not take leaves from sick trees. Avoid yellow leaves on Honeycrisp.
3. Collect 50 to 100 leaves from this year's shoot growth. Pick leaves that are midway down the shoot. Avoid leaves from shaded parts of the canopy or that are yellowing from stress.
4. Ideal block size is 10 acres or smaller. However, larger areas can be sampled if tree age, crop load, weed control and soil fertility are the same from one end to the other.
5. Allow leaves to fully dry.
6. Place leaves in paper bags labeled with the orchard name, your mailing address, block name, and variety.

Soil samples

1. The soil should be a composite or mixture of 15 separate samplings scattered over each block. Each block should be uniform in weed control, soil texture, fertility and past soil management.
2. Use a sampling tube, augur or spade. Take the soil from within the tree row and to a depth of 8 inches.
3. Place the composite sample in a container and mix thoroughly. Transfer soil to the Soil Testing Box and fill it fully. Boxes are available from the Highmoor Farm.
4. Label the box with the orchard name, block name and your phone number or address.

Each leaf or soil sample must be accompanied by the Plant and Soil Analytical Lab form (see next page). This information is used for your fertilizer recommendation. If leaves and soil are sampled from the same block, only one form is needed. The form can also be emailed to rmoran@maine.edu.

Leaf and soil samples can be brought directly to Highmoor Farm, the Soil Testing Lab in Orono or mailed to:
Highmoor Farm
PO Box 179
Monmouth, ME 04259.

Plant and Soil Analytical Lab

Orchard Leaf Sample and Soil Sample Information

Analytical Lab: (207) 581-2917

Highmoor Farm: (207) 933-2100

<http://anlab.umesci.maine.edu>

Lab Use Only:

Leaf Sample No. _____

Topsoil Sample No. _____

Subsoil Sample No. _____

Grower name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Daytime phone: _____

(Optional) email results: _____

Sample or block name: _____

Variety or strain (indicate if spur or standard): _____

Average tree age: _____

Average tree spacing or number of trees per acre: _____

Please circle the appropriate descriptors

Crop load	Pruning	Ground cover	Soil drainage
light	light	sod	good
moderate	moderate	mulch	fair
heavy	heavy	herbicide	poor

Fertilizer and foliar sprays
(check all that you applied):

	This year	Last year	Check or list any problems:
Nitrogen (grade and lbs. per acre)	_____	_____	Biennial bearing _____
Foliar urea	_____	_____	Bitter pit _____
Lime	_____	_____	Shoot dieback _____
Magnesium	_____	_____	Lack of fruit color _____
Boron (ground or foliar)	_____	_____	Interveinal chlorosis _____
Manganese	_____	_____	Foliar injury (specify): _____
Zinc	_____	_____	Other _____
Copper sprays	_____	_____	

Pomological Society Summer Meeting

The agenda for the summer meeting on July 18 has changed. Jim Schupp is unable to attend. Instead, Win Cowgill will be speaking about making the jump to high density apple production and a recent study on "Branching Young Apple Trees with Plant Growth Regulators". (See attached PDF).

Win has over 40 years of applied fruit-growing experience. He worked as Extension Professor at Rutgers University from 1978 to 2016, where he was the state apple specialist and worked on peach, cherry (sweet and tart), pear (Asian and European), apricot and small fruits. He now operates a private consulting and contract research firm focuses on all aspects of commercial tree fruit and small fruit production. He is also an editor/advisor for several leading horticultural publications (Horticultural News, Massachusetts Fruit Notes, American and Western Fruit Grower).

Another addition to the meeting will be a remembrance of Tom Gyger.
"Our friend Tom Gyger passed away on July 4, 2018. We will be taking a few minutes in our business meeting to share a few kind thoughts and have a moment of silence out of respect for Tom and his family."

- Joel Gilbert, President Maine State Pomological Society.

Closing Words

"We don't inherit the earth from our fathers, we borrow it from our children."

~ Chief Seattle

[Glen W. Koehler](#)

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<http://pmo.umext.maine.edu/apple/>

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Extension Tree Fruit Specialist

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Monmouth ME 04259-0179

<http://extension.umaine.edu/fruit/>



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