Integrated Pest Management Program
Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
UConn Extension

Fruit Update – 8/26/25

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CT Pom Society Survey Results

For those interested in the results of the survey you answered following the educational meeting at this summer's Connecticut Pomological Field Day, they are posted below. Generally, we use this information to evaluate the impact of our programming. However, I thought it might be nice to start sharing this information with you so that you can see what you and your peers are thinking.

Respondents: 20

- 100% of you said you learned something new that would benefit your farm.
- 90% of you said you intend to change something based on what you learned.
- 80% of you said you have implemented changes in the past based on previous events.

Aphids on Raspberries

Above are some photos I took at a farm last week. The grower noticed this small, contorted growth habit on many of his raspberry canes. There are multiple species that feed on raspberries, congregating on the underside of leaves and causing leaves to curl or otherwise have a stunted/deformed appearance. We are most concerned about the aphids' ability to spread viruses.

Management includes starting with certified stock, resistant varieties (Royalty, Canby, Titan) removing wild brambles within 600 feet, rogueing any plants with virus symptoms, and insecticide applications. Details on rates and materials can be found in the New England Guide.

Strawberry Fertilization

June-bearing strawberries are due for their second fertilizer application. This application can be made any time from now until about mid-September. This application will help with the formation of flower buds and overwintering. As always, applications should be timed before a rain event if you do not have irrigation set up. Look to apply between 20-30 lbs. of actual nitrogen per acre.

Pruning Summer Brambles

Pruning can begin now for summer-bearing raspberries and blackberries. You should be removing any spent fruiting canes (floricanes) as these will not give you another crop next year. Remove these spent canes all the way down to the ground. You do not want to leave long stubs as these will harbor disease. The remaining canes (primocanes) that have yet to flower will give you your crop next year and need to be thinned. For raspberries, thin to 4-5 canes per liner foot of row. For blackberries and black raspberries, thin to 4-6 canes per crown. It will look thin, but this is ok. Next year, laterals will break and fill in, no problem. Not thinning your brambles will negatively impact your yield and quality due to a lack of air flow and light penetration.

At this point, if you have not tipped your blackberries and black raspberries, do so just above the top wire of your trellis. This will help to encourage those laterals to form next year. In late winter/early spring you'll need to head/tip those laterals. Cut them back to about 12-18 inches. Maintaining laterals longer than this will only serve to negatively impact your crop due to the above-mentioned lack of airflow and sunlight penetration.

Fall Brambles

Although the summer-bearing brambles may be done, we are still looking at fall brambles. Right now, SWD, Gray Mold, and the rusts are all a concern for our fall-bearing brambles. Although SWD numbers were incredibly low this year and remain low, scouting should continue. Moisture, rain, and dew will all trigger Gray Mold sporulation. Vigilant pruning should help to introduce air and light into the planting, helping to reduce the time fruit remains wet.

Reminder about Rusts

Late Leaf Rust only affects red and yellow brambles. It is not systemic. It can be managed in a similar way to Botrytis (Gray Mold): pruning, sanitation, and fungicides (Pristine, Cabrio, Rally, etc.).

Orange Rust is a systemic disease. The only recourse is to remove infected plants to prevent infection of others. Wild brambles should also be removed from around the planting area as they serve as hosts.

Please consult the New England Guide for more information on materials and rates.

Early Harvest of Certain Apple Varieties?

I've gotten some reports of some varieties being a bit early. I've gotten two calls about early Macs, ready to harvest as of last week. Jon Clements shares updates from the UMass Orchard in the Apple Maturity Report. Please check the link below for the ongoing report.

2025 Apple Maturity Report

Water Core


M. Farcuh

Water Core is a serious physiological disorder of apples which leads to this translucent, brown, water-soaked interior of the fruit. This of course compromises quality and marketability. There are no external symptoms to this disorder, making it difficult to detect. However, once fruit is harvested, the disorder does not continue to develop. In mild cases, symptoms often disappear in storage. In more severe cases, this will lead to a rapid breakdown of fruit and a complete loss in marketability.

The cause of these symptoms is due to an accumulation of sorbitol in the fruit. This sugar alcohol attracts water to cells in the interior of the fruit. Eventually, the increase in liquid reduces gas levels/exchange which causes browning and even fermentation in the presence of the fruit's sugars. There are many factors associated with water core incidence including: maturity at harvest, calcium deficiency, excessive nitrogen, low temperatures (below 50 degrees) prior to harvest, and water stress.

Management includes proper harvesting times, pruning, thinning, dialing in nutrient management, and maintaining adequate water status through ripening.

More information here and here and here.

Save the Date: CT Pomological Annual Meeting – December 2, 2025

Middletown Elks Lodge, Middletown, CT

An All-day Event

Request for Farmer Participation

The School of Engineering at UConn is hoping to team up with an orchard or two this semester for a student project. The project looks at innovative ways to scrub ethylene from apple storage facilities. If you are interested, please check out the link below for more information! This is a fantastic opportunity for collaboration across colleges at UConn and with local agriculture.

Mechanical, Aerospace and Manufacturing Engineering Senior Design – More Information

Please let me know if you are interested!
