



# Integrated Pest Management Program

Department of Plant Science and Landscape  
Architecture

## Fruit Update – 3/27/26

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### Winter Weather Impacts

Reports from around the state indicate that there has been minimal winter injury (from what we can see so far). NEWA weather data queries show that our lowest temps this winter occurred from the last week of January into the first week of February. The minimums were location dependent; however, the lowest temperature we saw this winter was about -10°F. This was only a single day. A handful of other dates had minimum temperatures ranging from -6°F to -2°F. Otherwise, we had some decent snow cover for a good portion of the winter. This will likely benefit our overwintering strawberries. I anticipate a decent strawberry crop this year.

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### Oil and Other Spray Applications

Since Green Tip is just around the corner, we should be planning to make moves on our oil applications. This is a great time to work towards controlling mites, aphids, and scale insects, especially if you had an issue last year. Just keep an eye on the temperatures. Applications need to be made when it is warmer (50-70°F), and it remains warm (>40°F) for about 24 hours after (and before) the application.

Consider your copper and sulfur product applications as well. For those of you who struggled with Peach Leaf Curl last year, we want to get a copper product on before First Pink. Otherwise, you'll have to wait to make an application in the fall, which might be needed anyways if you had a severe infection last year.

Diversified operations have much to contend with early in the season. Below are some early season pests to consider as we move out of dormancy. If you've struggled with management in year's past, getting a jump on management will be beneficial.

#### **Early Season Pest Management to Consider:**

**Apples** – Scale, Mites, Scab (Urea applications)

Materials and Rates: <https://netreefruit.org/apples/spray-table/1-dormant-silver-tip-apple>

**Peaches** – Bacterial Spot, Leaf Curl, Scale, Mites

Materials and Rates: <https://netreefruit.org/stone-fruit/peaches-nectarines/spray-table/1-dormant>

**Blueberries** – Phomopsis, Fusicoccum, Scale

Materials and Rates: <https://www.umass.edu/agriculture-food-environment/fruit/ne-small-fruit-management-guide/highbush-blueberries/table-35-highbush-blueberry-pest-management-table>



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### **Brambles** – Anthracnose, Spur and Cane Blight

Materials and Rates: <https://www.umass.edu/agriculture-food-environment/fruit/ne-small-fruit-management-guide/brambles/table-45-summer-bearing-bramble-pest-management-table>

### **Grapes** – Anthracnose, Black Rot, Phomopsis, Cankers, Mites, Scale

Materials and Rates: <https://www.umass.edu/agriculture-food-environment/fruit/ne-small-fruit-management-guide/grapes/table-57-grape-pest-management-table>

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### **Mummy Berry**

Forsythia blooms are just around the corner. This means that we need to make sure to get down a 2-4" layer of mulch on our blueberries if you haven't done so already. Forsythia bloom times coincide with the maturity of the overwintering spores that are currently on the ground under your bushes.

We've had a few days already with conditions required for infection (50-62°F). If this warmer weather continues, conditions will be favorable for infection once spores are mature and ready to be released, which makes this the perfect time to apply that mulch.

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### **Blueberry Pruning**

Blueberry Bushes can still be pruned, up until they begin to grow this spring. Below is a quick reference for pruning.

- Total canes per plant: aim for 18
- Maintain 3 canes per 1 year of growth
- No canes over 6 years in age
- Each year, remove the 3 oldest and select 3 new ones to replace them
- Remove any diseased, broken, low or crossing branches.
- No heading cuts!

Note: If you are not getting new shoots generating from the base of your plant, you likely have either a pH issue or need to apply nitrogen.

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