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Hello Fruit Growers!

According to the weather statistics maintained at the Anchorage International Airport, this summer is breaking records for the Anchorage area. June was the second warmest month on record after 2019, and the growing season is the driest on record. The .15" of rain that fell last Thursday was the heaviest day of precipitation since it snowed in March! With drought conditions, supplying your plants with supplemental water is a necessity.

The phenology of the fruit trees and bushes is currently two weeks ahead of last summer. The Growing Degree Day totals and soil temperature data for July 3 and 10 at our orchard in East Anchorage was as follows:

7.3.22. 1230 GDD/42° 720 GDD/50° Soil 64.5° F/6" 62.5° F/12"
7.10.22 1400 GDD/42° 830 GDD/50° Soil 64.2° F/6" 62.8° F/12"

Cherries (Evans in Photo above), black currants and Saskatoons are starting to turn color. The strawberry harvest continues and red raspberries will soon be turning color.

If you grow Royalty purple raspberries, you should select the first-year canes that you want to fruit next year and head them at 3' to stimulate laterals. I recommend that you grow this variety in hills (meaning 3 or 4 canes in a group) with the hills 3' apart. Tie this year's fruiting canes and laterals to stakes or wires. This variety produces a lot of large fruit, and it doesn't take much wind to blow it over, or break fruiting laterals. Royalty is a wonderfully productive and tasty variety in a hot summer, so if the current climate trend continues, we can look forward to a good harvest of this raspberry.

In regards to other fruits, saskatoons are turning color and need to be protected from birds as Robins are particularly fond of them. And blueberries (Northblue in photo below) are forming nicely. If you haven't already done so, apply your second treatment of Fish Emulsion to the blueberries. I recommend 2-3 Tablespoons/gallon of water for every 24 square feet. The blueberries will be turning color soon, so be ready to protect them from birds as well, or in our case, from our chickens!



The early varieties of haskaps (honeyberries) are ripe (Cinderella), or soon to be ripe (Blue Sky, Svetlana). Scout your plants for insects. In particular, keep an eye out for what looks like blue aphid dew on the leaves or black mold on the branches. This could be scale insects since the crawlers would have emerged by now. If you have a scale infestation, spray all surfaces once a week with Azamax, for the next month. The active ingredient azadirachtin is derived from neem oil and is effective on the crawlers who will continue to hatch for the next few weeks.

You also should check for signs of yellow jacket feeding. This year, I have barely seen a yellow jacket, but if they are numerous in your area, you should consider traps to lessen the pressure on your fruit. They usually start with feeding on haskaps, and then move on to gooseberries, blueberries and then cherries as they become ripe. If you decide to purchase traps, I have tried and like these [yellow jacket traps](#).

Member Emily Becker has been volunteering at Airport Heights Elementary helping them establish an orchard. The third graders wanted to add cherry trees to their orchard. With a "Treevitalize Your School" grant from the Department of Natural Resources Community Forestry program, they purchased eight cherry trees from local nurseries. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons the trees did not survive. Emily is looking for replacements that they can plant in August. If you have any cherry trees to donate or sell, please click the link to [email Emily](#).

It always seems a bit strange to be planning for the next growing season while we are feverishly at work in the current season, but now is the time that we need to start securing rootstock for next spring. Each year APFGA imports around 2000 rootstock for our members to pick up at our annual grafting workshop in April. It really helps us to know how much to order if you can tell us what you will want next season. Please take a moment to click on the link and [email me](#) your Spring 2023 rootstock order.

Finally, we will hold a Board of Directors meeting Thursday, July 21 at 7:00 pm on Zoom. We need to finalize plans for apple/fruit tastings, apple pressings, orchard tours, and rootstock procurement. Members are welcome and invited to attend. At the appointed time, simply click the [link to join](#), or if needed, click the link for the full [Zoom Invitation](#). The following are links to the [Minutes](#) from May 12, and the proposed [agenda](#).

As always, please don't hesitate to [email me](#) should you have any questions about your fruit!

All the best,

Mark Wolbers
President, APFGA