



Greetings from Nourse Farms

Cautiously optimistic? I have been fortunate to visit with many customers in person and over the phone; everyone is concerned with economic prospects. More than 90% had a year better than or equal to '07, and if they did worse it was mostly due to poor weather conditions. When economic conditions get tougher our home garden customers plant more and stay closer to home, this is good news for growers who utilize pick your own, farm stands and farmers' markets to sell their berries.

I had an opportunity to do a presentation for farm direct marketers and couldn't think of any reasons why people wouldn't come out to the farm. Fuel prices in '08 cut down on farm visits, but fuel prices are much lower in '09. Please let me know if you can think of a reason why people wouldn't want to come out to the farm. Farm and farmers market visits provide the best value and the healthiest family recreational activity available. The challenge is to communicate these benefits and do it often.

Last fall I printed an article on fall herbicide options, there were some incorrect statements made. Some of the quotes by Dr. Doug Doohan were also incorrect. For this I apologize and promise to work harder in the future, so that it never happens again. I will cover spring herbicide options in this newsletter. I have posted the corrected article online and would be happy to send a hard copy if needed. Your trust is my number one goal, I am sorry if I have eroded that trust.

Plant supplies are dwindling fast. If you haven't placed an order, please reserve some plants today. I appreciate everyone who has already placed an order and thank you for doing it. For everyone I was able to visit with at the meetings and trade shows thanks for coming out. Please consider attending summer meetings, all are very worthwhile; the NASGA summer tour in the Chicago area will cover Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan farms.

All of us at Nourse Farms wish everyone a very profitable 2009.

Nate Nourse (to contact via email: nnourse@noursefarms.com)

PRUNING PRIMOCANE BLACKBERRIES

ROSE LYNCH

Dr. Bernadine Strik of Oregon State University has done considerable research on pruning Prime Jim and Prime Jan in order to increase berry yields.

She recommends tipping primocanes in summer. When canes reach three to four feet tall, take off about six inches of growth. This will encourage branching and should create two to four branches per cane. If you "soft-tip" canes by only taking off an inch or so, the tip of the cane is "less mature" and may produce fewer branches. Proper tipping of primocanes to encourage branches will increase yield about 3-fold. You'll need to walk through your planting several times to catch canes at the correct height or time.

Caution should be used not to tip canes too late. If you see that the tip of the cane is already producing flower buds (closed flowers), which can happen quite early in warmer regions, then don't tip the cane. Once flowers are formed, tipping reduces yield considerably.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**Monday August 24th, WI
Berry Growers Summer Field
Day** at Highland Valley Farm
in Bayfield, WI. Bus available
on 8/23/09 leaving Madison.
Check wiberries.org for details.

**Rhode Island Fruit Growers
Meeting, May 21st** at Barden
Family Orchard, N. Scituate,
RI. **July 15th Summer
Meeting at Tougas Farm** in
Northboro, MA.

**OPGMA Summer Tour &
Field Day Wed. June 24, 2009**
Bachman's Sunny Hill Fruit
Farm, Carroll, OH
& Schacht Family Farm,
Canal Winchester, OH

**August 11th & 12th 2009
North American Strawberry
Growers Summer Tour** in
Chicago, IL
Contact Kevin Schooley
613-258-4587
www.nasga.org

***Any Questions about
Nourse Farms?***

**Call 8am-5pm Mon – Friday
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SPRING HERBICIDE OPTIONS FOR STRAWBERRIES AND RASPBERRIES

NATE NOURSE

The customer questions will soon be about herbicide options growers have for spring application. They usually begin with "I didn't get a fall application down, what can I do?" I recommend growers consider several options; I'll begin with Strawberries.

Dacthal and Devrinol are good choices for pre-emergent grass control, and they are the safest. Sinbar and 2-4D are tricky and application must be made prior to new growth, I cannot recommend them. People have applied Chateau in spring, but it must be applied before any new growth. Injury can occur with late March and November applications. I do recommend backpack applications, where spot spraying of weeds works well. I have been recommending Select or Poast

to clean up grasses before bloom, application needs to be made as the grasses get 2" tall, don't forget the oil and a cooler day to apply. Select Max does not require oil. As many growers see escapes 2-3 weeks after mulch removal consider Stinger, it is usually good enough to get thru to renovation at the 1/3 pint rate. Stinger only controls weeds in the Legume (Aster), Knotweed (weak) and Solonaceae families. Gramoxone can be directed to get small escapes, a great follow up with a backpack sprayer anytime. Gramoxone Inteon is a safer formulation to use, according to Sygenta.

Raspberries can take Casoron as long as the soil temperature stays below 40 degrees and it is applied with rain or snow. It could be too late now for many regions.

Remember broadcast rates are more than banding rates, cut the rate down if you are banding Casoron. There is a liquid formulation of Casoron available, but they aren't making any more.

I like Princep/Simazine and Surflan applied before bud break. Timing is important! Waiting until bud swell and applying with rain soon after will yield best results and longest residual control. If you miss the opportunity to put Princep and Surflan, Devrinol is better than nothing at all. Karmex and Solicam can be applied for pre-emergent control of grassy weeds, but Solicam must be directed and it is hard on the plants. Poast and Fusilade are registered in most states for post emergent grass control. For specific materials, rates and application times refer to your state's recommendations.

CONTROLLING ROOT ROT WITH COMPOST

TIM NOURSE

Phytophthora fragaria var. rubi is the pathogen that causes raspberry root rot. The formation of coated spores allows the disease to survive ten to fifteen years in infected soils. Raspberry varieties are never completely resistant. Some newer varieties show an elevated tolerance to the pathogen, but are not totally safe. Because of this, control of root-rot on heavy and waterlogged soil is almost impossible without technical prevention. Water saturation prevents necessary root growth.

Experience has taught us that raised beds help prevent water logging. The height, width and shape of the beds affect the degree of preventative action. It is the height of the bed that is most important. The use of compost on these beds can be an additional tool.

1. Compost improves soil structure with its increase of organic material. In return, nutrient availability increases along with aeration around the roots, which fosters new growth there. Additionally compost promotes development of antagonists like Trichoderma and Gliocladium, which beneficially block sites of potential infections.
2. In one study using compost, observations were made after three years.
 - a) The raspberry roots were predominantly in the upper soil-enriched layer.
 - b) Phytophthora attacked roots growing into the deeper soil,
 - c) The compost weighted the natural balance between plant and pathogen because the compost favored continuous development of young roots.

The make-up of the compost is important in order to achieve best results. The compost that had most influence contained a mixture of green material and chopped branches. Composts produced with sludge from sewage plants were unsuitable due to the increased salinity. Composts produced from manure and mushroom production should be applied in lower amounts as they contain increased levels of nutrients, which could be detrimental.

NEW PLANTINGS: The compost should be applied several months before planting (fall is ideal). Banding about 30 pounds per linear yard. Moderate incorporation, not plowing, to a depth of 6 to 8 inches, then forming raised beds.

ESTABLISHED PLANTINGS: After the picking season, spread twenty to thirty pounds per linear yard, in a band about 2.5 feet wide. Applications are usually made every other year. Spring applications have produced some negative results, causing a delayed start of vegetation. Positive outcomes are normally visible the following growing season.

In conclusion, to maximize control of Phytophthora root rot disease, and to achieve the highest yields, a combination of preventative measures should be used. Compost, raised bed cultivation, healthy planting stock and cane growth management can all promote excellent results.

Contribution Appreciation: I appreciate the input and efforts of Dr. Reto Neuwuiler, Agroscope Changins – Weadenswil Research Station, Weadenswil, Switzerland.

STRAWBERRY FUNGICIDE UPDATE

NATE NOURSE

In our 2005 spring newsletter, we reviewed the new Strawberry fungicides and made suggestions for designing a fungicide program. With continued considerable interest from growers, we are updating the recommendations for the 2009 season.

Oxidate, a registered fungicide from BioSafe, for Botrytis gray mold, leaf and cane diseases on raspberries and strawberries. A Reduced Risk product, *Oxidate* is new to growers, it is a peroxygen chemistry formulation to use with the other Botrytis controls to prevent resistance from developing. We like the idea of disinfecting the field with this material. On raspberries it dries up spec overnight. It could be helpful for drying up powdery mildew and Botrytis infections on ripe fruit. Use *Oxidate* for curative and preventative applications, or tank mix with other residual fungicides to help provide immediate knockdown control. It has a zero hour REI and harvest interval, except in California. *Oxidate* is also listed as an OMRI (organic pesticide)!

PLEASE NOTE: Read the label for annual application limits and resistance management and check for labeling in your state.

Other Points to Consider

Resistance Management - Avoid making sequential applications of the same class fungicide.

Whenever possible, use Captan with the various fungicides for broad-spectrum control and resistance management.

Pre-Bloom Applications

Pre-bloom sprays should be planned if the weather has been especially wet or extensive frost protection has been necessary.

Pre-bloom Recommendations:

Topsin-M plus *Captan* or *Captivate* and *Oxidate*

Bloom Application Starting at 10% through full bloom.

Bloom sprays are the critical time to control botrytis and during warm wet periods growers must think about the potential for anthracnose infection. Because this is such a critical time many growers follow a 7-10 day fungicide program unless it is excessively dry. If the weather is very wet, this spray interval can be as short as 4 to 5 days. Three to four applications can accomplish 90% of the job for the season.

Bloom Recommendations:

Switch plus *Captan* and *Oxidate*

or *Elevate* plus *Captan* and *Oxidate*

or *Captivate* alone and *Oxidate*

or *Pristine* plus *Captan* and *Oxidate*

or *Scala* plus *Captan* and *Oxidate*

or *Topsin M* plus *Captan*

or *Ridomil Gold* plus *Captan*, especially if leather rot occurred last year!

After Bloom Green fruit through harvest:

After flowering, the threat of botrytis infection decreases. Green fruit are not as susceptible to infection. If spray coverage was poor or lacking (too long an interval) in the bloom infection period, warm, wet conditions at harvest will cause botrytis rot in fruit. Warm, wet conditions increase the threat of anthracnose during harvest. Anthracnose can cause significant fruit loss and can be hard to control once it is identified. A preventative approach may be best in plantings where anthracnose is a concern or was present in prior harvests.

After Bloom recommendations:

Quadris plus *Captan* and *Oxidate*

or *Cabrio* plus *Captan* and *Oxidate*

or *Pristine* plus *Captan* and *Oxidate*

or *Ridomil gold* plus *Captain* at least 1 time for leather rot prevention.

If necessary to continue coverage beyond two sprays, alternate the applications of the above chemicals with an application of:

**Switch*, or *Captan*, or *Thiram*, or *Elevate*.

*Note *Switch* is not labeled for anthracnose but research results show it effective. *Switch* is, of course, very effective here for botrytis control in this season. Last season *Elevate* helped control Botrytis in our Raspberries, probably because we hadn't used it in a while. Remember to consider using something you haven't applied for a year or two, you might be surprised with the results.

Please refer to your state's particular recommendations and always read all labels. Different states vary for timing, rates and allowances for any spraying program.

VARIETY UPDATE

OCTAVIA *U.S. Patent Pending* - Dr. Vickie Knight of EMR East Malling, U.K, released this late season florican variety. Winter hardiness has not been determined, but survival at -30 C (-20F) has been reported in some locations. The berries are large and firm with uniform shape. Fruit size is similar to Tulameen, with pleasant flavor and a bright red color. Octavia is a vigorous plant and shows resistance to Cane Botrytis and Cane Spot.

JOAN IRENE *U.S. Patent Pending* - This late season primocane was released by Dr. Derek Jennings of Medway Fruits in Kent, U.K. Joan Irene is a Joan J hybrid. Joan Irene fruited later than Josephine in one growing location, and it is reported to fruit about 30 days later than Joan J. The plant is vigorous and spine-free. Joan Irene is just out of Plant Quarantine, so we have not experienced its fruiting characteristics. Early reports indicate high productivity.

POLKA *U.S. Patent Pending* - red raspberry for trial. New from Poland, it is a primocane with high fruit quality for fresh market, freezing and processing. The berries do not darken after picking. It follows a similar season to Joan J.

JOSEPHINE – *U.S. Plant Patent #12173P2*
Josephine extends the harvest season after Heritage. It has large, very firm berries with a very good flavor. Canes are vigorous and should be trellised. Adapted for New Jersey and the South, and for areas with an extended growing season, including the West Coast. Recommended for zones 5-12.

STRAWBERRIES

RECORD *U.S. Patent Pending* - Dr. Walter Faedi, at the Istituto Sperimentale per la Fruitticoltura, Forli, Italy, released this very late strawberry. Record is an Idea hybrid, with improved red color, berry quality, and overall performance. In our fruiting trials, the first fruit was picked between July 1st and 3rd. Yield in the first two pickings was very high and we picked through the 17th of July. RECORD is a very vigorous plant with no apparent foliage issues. We have observed it growing in non-fumigated soils and it compared well to plants growing in fumigated soils. RECORD will be a replacement variety for Idea as it is later and superior.

EM 995 *U.S. Patent Pending* - This new mid-season strawberry comes from Dr. David Simpson's program in East Malling, U.K. We have fruited EM 995 for several seasons and recommend that it for trial. EM 995 is a very durable plant and the fruit will stand up under wet, difficult conditions. Berries are large with bright red color, high productivity and above average flavor. The plant is highly vigorous and not susceptible to foliage diseases.

KRS-10 *U.S. Patent Pending* - only trial quantities. This is a late fruiting variety from Nova Scotia now being tested. Early results indicate KRS 10 will out-perform Ovation's productivity.

*** ALL OF THESE VARIETIES ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR SPRING 2009! ***



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