

## **2021 Western New York \_ Tree Fruit Season Highlights**

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### **General Weather Conditions**

In WNY, we had a fairly mild winter in 2020-2021, with significant snow cover during many of the colder periods. Temperatures rose in March, but the early spring was followed by a cool wet bloom period.

Bloom was protracted. Weather was seemingly cool, with snow in some areas. A few isolated sites received some significant frost damage to flowers, but that was a slim exception. We predominantly saw cool dry weather in the spring and early summer.

By mid summer we saw periods of extreme heat. Rain events were fairly frequent, with a lot of rain coming down in each event. Some growers had cherries splitting from excessive rainfall as the fruit was near ripe.

The remainder of the late summer and fall has continued to be fairly rainy and hot.

### **Pest Management Overview**

#### **Apple Scab Primary Infection Periods:**

4/11, 4/15, 5/1, 6/3

In most orchards, scab was well controlled in Western NY in 2021. Some scab control failures were noted on triploid varieties (e.g. Crispin), probably due to missing key infection events or rain wash off.

#### **Fire Blight Blossom Blight Infection Periods:**

We knew coming into 2021 that there would be higher inoculum leftover from the bad 2020 fire blight year.

During most of bloom there were no significant fire blight infection events. However, in late varieties and at late sites, the end of bloom (beginning May 15<sup>th</sup>) saw an extreme fire blight infection event.

Many orchards experienced significant shoot blight, even those that did not have noticeable blossom blight. It is possible that the extreme inoculum leftover from the 2020 season was able to lead to infections during the ideal conditions during late summer, even without blossom blight infections.

The warm fall and lush growth even into October has led to continued shoot blight infections later into the fall than usual, and some growers continued to cut out shoot blight strikes into September.

### **Miscellaneous Diseases**

Powdery mildew was quite prevalent in many orchards. However, rarely to problematic levels.

Conditions were perfect for late summer rots, and I have seen some rots in low-spray orchards across the region.

### **Arthropod Pests**

We continued our region wide scouting network. Overall, captures were relatively low in most of our traps this season. Surprisingly, despite low internal lep trap catch numbers at all of the 8 sites where I had traps this summer, there has been an increase in the prevalence of “worms” in the apples in processing facilities – predominantly codling moth. I have not yet tabulated the distribution of farms with wormy apples, and so cannot yet make any guesses as to why larval pest incidence seems to be up while moth trap catch was down.

*Lymantria dispar* was abundant and damaging on blueberries; trees were defoliated, if not protected with insecticides.

Spotted wing drosophila in cherries and berries continues to be present and driving those growers spray schedules. It was our observation that trap catch numbers did not explode this year similarly to what we have seen in the past few years. Time will tell, but it may be that growers are better timing their spray schedules, and keeping more tight of control on this pest, as we get more used to its presence in NY.

Plum curculio seems to be more prevalent than in past years, in particular in organic and low-spray blocks.

Apple maggot continues to be problematic only in isolated locations in WNY, and is on the whole of low concern.