

Fruit IPM Report: 2023

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Weather: Similar weather to many Northeast states with three notable extreme weather events impacting production statewide; 1) February 3-4 deep freeze, 2) May 18 late frost, and above-average rainfall throughout July (approx. 14 in). Isolated hailstorms further reduced fruit quality.

Impact → The state saw a widespread reduction in production across commodities (30-50% loss in peaches), reduced quality, increased pest pressures, and management challenges. Many operations experienced flooding/standing water, even in moderately well-drained sites.

Diseases:

- **Fireblight** – Following NEWA weather models, early management went well with few infections reported. Multiple severe outbreaks were reported later in the season, outside of noted infection events. Farmers who utilized Apogee during regular summer management saw decent disease control. Still no resistance in CT.
- **Apple Scab** – Secondary scab infections proved challenging this year.
- **Root Rot** – Standing water and saturated soils in orchards led to an increase in root rot disease. *Pythium* and *Phytophthora* were confirmed as causal agents across the state, affecting apples, blueberries, and Christmas trees. Newly planted blocks and younger trees were the most impacted.
- **Sooty Blotch/Flyspeck, Black Rot, Brown Rot** – Widespread increases in summer fungal disease pressure exacerbated by inadequate spray coverage with frequent rains.
- **Black Root Rot** – The strawberry industry continues to suffer from this disease complex. Wet soils and sub-optimal culture are to blame. This is the number one disease for strawberries for the past 2-3 years.

Insects:

- **Rosy Apple Aphid** and **Plum Curculio** prove to be the two biggest early season challenges. The latter only reveals itself as such later in the season during fruit quality checks.
- **Brown Marmorated Stink Bug** – Numbers continue to decline. This has been the trend for the past few years. This year we had the lowest trap capture numbers since its arrival. Above-average rainfall in July and beyond could have influenced the incredibly low populations in orchards.
- **Spotted Wing Drosophila** – Still the biggest pest for small fruit growers. Incredibly high

populations this year were likely due to excessive precipitation, influencing vegetative growth and weed pressure. Trap captures remained in the 100s/trap for much of the season. We observed earlier than normal pest emergence with first captures in a vineyard with no fruit.

- **Spotted Lanternfly** – CAES continues to monitor this pest. Observations (5,000+) were made in all counties, although most still limited to Fairfield County.