



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA ≈ COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
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# POMOLOGY NOTES

## E-MAIL EXTRA: MAY, 2007

*Franz Niederholzer, UCCE Farm Advisor, Sutter/Yuba Counties*

### SUMMARY:

#### ○ PEST CONDITIONS:

- PEACH TWIG BORER biofix was between March 30 and April 6 at different locations around Sutter and Yuba Counties. As of May 8, we were at 335-375 degree days (DD) past biofix. If control for PTB is needed in your orchard, pesticide sprays should be applied between 300-500 DD past biofix, depending on the pesticide material you use.
- SUMMER DISEASE IN PRUNE: no rust symptoms have been seen to date. Scouting for rust should begin on May 1. No reports of green fruit rot.
- SUMMER DISEASE IN ALMOND (rust, scab, anthracnose, and/or alternaria leaf blight): No reports of significant problems, so far.
- SPIDER MITES: Look for spider mites earlier than usual this year. To date, I have heard of no mite problems in our area. Spider mite populations can grow very, very fast in hot weather, so weekly scouting is essential to timely control, especially in blocks with a history of mite problems. Sulfur sprays for rust control can harm beneficial insects that help naturally control spider mites.
- NAVEL ORANGE WORM: Biofix in the Durham area was April 15. If that date matches Sutter/Yuba NOW biofix (and it should be pretty close) spring sprays for NOW (where needed) should have been applied on April 27-28 at 100 DD after biofix when egg hatch began. The next timing for NOW control sprays is at hull split.

- GYPSUM IN JUNE: Applying gypsum in June is the most effective timing to improve water penetration into soils. If you broadcast the gypsum before flooding or running full-coverage sprinkler systems, don't disc or plow "in" the gypsum. Let the irrigation water dissolve the gypsum and carry it into the soil. Discing provides as much infiltration improvement as adding gypsum without discing.

- FERTILIZER: Cropload is the single most important factor that drives tree nitrogen (N) and potassium (K) needs. Fertilizer prices are up this year, so cropload estimation is a good way to help determine orchard N and K needs.

- IRRIGATION: Check orchard moisture levels and irrigate when needed. Dry, stressed trees are more vulnerable to mites and tree growth will be reduced. ***If prune trees get too dry in May and early June, summer irrigation will crack the fruit.***

- **HARVEST PREDICTION:** Heat unit accumulation in the first 30 days after full bloom (when 50% of the flowers are open) can be a fairly accurate predictor of prune harvest timing. For 2007, harvest is predicted to fall between Aug.16-28 for trees that were in full from March 12-21. The total heat units in the 30 days after full bloom is similar to total heat units for the same time period in 2004, when harvest was early. Almond harvest may well be early this year, as late winter, early spring weather was warm.
- **PAINT YOUNG TREES:** Protect the bark of young trees with inexpensive, interior grade white latex paint. A few pennies worth of paint may prevent damage that will harm the tree for the entire life of the orchard.
- **CUT OUT DEAD WOOD:** Removal of all dead wood (in prunes or almonds) is a good foundation for a plant disease control program.
- **LEAF FOOTED PLANT BUG UPDATE:** I've received several requests for information on leaf footed plant bug, a major problem for many almond growers in 2006. In the San Joaquin Valley, leaf footed plant bug (LFPB) counts are off this spring compared to last spring. I have not heard about LFPB problems this year in the south Sacramento Valley. Soon, shells will be too hard for the bug to penetrate the shell and damage the nut. UC researchers are working on winter scouting techniques to help predict LFPB populations the following season.
- **FREE PESTICIDE CONTAINER RECYCLING:** Triple rinsed pesticide containers will be recycled for free on Monday, May 28, 2007, from 8 AM to 2PM at John Taylor Fertilizer on George Washington Road in Yuba City. **Call Jan Kendal at the Sutter County Ag Commissioner's office (822-7503) for more information.**

**LUNCH WITH FRANZ:** Meet with Franz at Jimmy's Restaurant in Yuba City at noon on the second Thursday of each month and at Betty's Authentic Mexican Restaurant in Live Oak on the fourth Thursday of every month. One grower continuing education credit hour will be available at each meeting of this no-host lunch.

**PLEASE CALL FRANZ on his cell phone (530-218-2359) if you have questions concerning the information on this page.**