



## Editor's Corner

Hi and welcome to the new "paperless" fruitwise.

Apart from the change in format to electronic, I have now taken on the editor's role. I would like to thank Sue Marte for all the hard work she put in trying to keep Fruitwise alive as a printed newsletter. It was a hard call trying to get sponsors during these tough times, especially with all the company mergers over the last few years.

Thank you to the companies who have sponsored Fruitwise. Without your contribution our newsletter would not have survived for so long.

Suggestions and stories are always welcome- just give me a call.

So sit back, relax and enjoy some time out with fruitwise!

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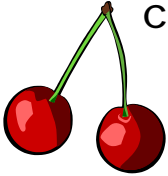
The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (8th June 2004). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of NSW Agriculture or the users independent advisor. Inclusion of an advertisement or sponsor's symbol in this publication does not necessarily imply endorsement of the product or sponsor by NSW Agriculture.

### **ALWAYS READ THE LABEL**

Users of agricultural chemical products must always read the label and any Permit, before using the product, and strictly comply with the directions on the label and the conditions of any permit. Users are not absolved from compliance with the directions on the label or the conditions of the Permit by reason of any statement made or omitted to be made in this publication

# Fruit Drops

## CONFERENCE DATES



**Cherry conference coming to Young.** The next Cherry Growers of Australia conference will be held on July 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> in Young (Southern Cross Hall). The theme for this year's event is "Old and New".

Contact Cherry Growers of Australia via e-mail at

[nsw\\_cga@bigpond.com](mailto:nsw_cga@bigpond.com)

Or phone Keith Doldissen for a registration pack on 0427824959

**Summerfruit Australia conference.** Will be held in Melbourne on the 4-6<sup>th</sup> of August. Theme for this year is "Sweet Summerfruit Fun & Health". Download the registration form at

[http://www.summerfruitaustralia.com.au/uploads/registration\\_form.pdf](http://www.summerfruitaustralia.com.au/uploads/registration_form.pdf)

Or Visit the Summerfruit website at

<http://www.summerfruitaustralia.com.au/>



**Apple and Pear Conference.** Will be held in Adelaide on the 22<sup>nd</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> of August. Theme for this year is "Triggers" -creating continual improvement. Contact Barbara Wheatcroft on 08 8349 4556.

### Diary dates:

A retirement dinner will be held for **Graham Thwaite** on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August. After many years of distinguished service as Special Entomologist with NSW Agriculture, Graham has decided to hang up the hand lens. More details will be provided in the winter edition!

## Horticultural Field Day in Orange next February.

The Australian National Field Days (ANFD) are organising a dedicated Horticulture Field Day to be held on Wednesday 9 February 2005. The event will be conducted at the Sunny Crest Orchard of Ken Perry in Wallace Lane, off Pinnacle Rd, with commercial exhibits, product demonstrations and talks to provide orchardists with a look at the latest technologies.

In recent years the timing of the ANFD (mid October) has conflicted with a busy period for orchardists resulting in a decline in horticultural visitors. Whilst the 2005 Horticultural Field Day will take place on a private orchard the ANFD will be undertaking significant work in the orchard at the main Field Day site at Borenore with a view to holding subsequent events each second year.

The ANFD has commenced designing the layout for commercial exhibits and has had some excellent preliminary discussions with potential exhibitors. It is intended to have both indoor and outdoor sites, catering for visitors and significant parking facilities at the Sunny Crest site.

The ANFD will be undertaking extensive promotional activities for the Horticultural Field Day so visitors will be expected from the main fruit and vegetable growing areas of NSW.

Exhibitors are asked to contact the ANFD Office to ensure they receive the Prospectus when published later in the year.

Contact details are:

Fiona Hall or David Lamrock  
Australian National Field Days  
PO Box 2150  
Orange NSW 2800  
Ph: 02 6362 1588; Fax: 02 6362 5421  
e-mail: [info@anfd.com.au](mailto:info@anfd.com.au)



### WFT in inland stone fruit

Graham Thwaite, Special Entomologist  
Orange Agricultural Institute

NSW Agriculture's initiative to survey the distribution of western flower thrips (WFT) in the State's stone fruit growing districts has finished. The major finding was the discovery of WFT in stone fruit orchards at Forbes, an important inland production district.

The surveillance program, carried out in conjunction with growers, followed the serious outbreak of WFT in the central coast region of New South Wales in the 2002/03 season.

Information on the pest status of WFT, the damage caused to stone fruit (especially nectarines) as well as the challenges to its management through the ability of WFT to develop resistance to pesticides appeared in

the 2003/04 edition of the Orchard Plant Protection Guide.

### **Surveillance program**

At the beginning of the 2003/04 growing season, stone fruit growers were offered yellow sticky traps at no cost through any of the seven NSW Agriculture District Horticulturists servicing stone fruit districts. The traps were supplied with Agnote DPI/471 which described how to set up the traps, collect and replace them and send them in for checking.

All traps returned through the District Horticulturist were sent to NSW Agriculture's Agricultural Scientific Collections Unit (ASCU) at Orange. There, trained staff checked each trap for thrips. Any WFT found were recorded separately and other pest thrips species, such as plague thrips and onion thrips were pooled. Counting stopped when the number of these reached 50.

Results were then forwarded to the grower through the District Horticulturist who had submitted the traps on the grower's behalf. In some cases there was a substantial time lag between a grower delivering traps to the District Horticulturist and the results being returned. However, participants were warned from the outset not to treat the survey as a "spray warning service".

Later, the traps were also checked for beneficials, especially those likely to be valuable in the biological control of WFT. Species found included lacewings, ladybirds, predatory thrips and tiny parasitic wasps. Spiders, known to be

valuable general predators, were also recorded.

We were not able to inform individual growers of the predator counts as part of the program. Any grower who would like to have that information can get it by phoning the Entomology Laboratory at the Orange Agricultural Institute on 6391 3840 (leave details, including mailing address, in a message) or by e-mail ([marion.eslick@agric.nsw.gov.au](mailto:marion.eslick@agric.nsw.gov.au)).

### **Where are WFT?**

In the summer 2003 (52<sup>nd</sup>) edition of FruitWise, confirmation of WFT in stone fruit orchards around Sydney was reported. The pest was already well known from other horticultural crops in the Sydney basin since 1996. By the end of the program, the pest had been identified on traps submitted from most of the surveyed orchards in the southern and south western Sydney region (includes Thirlmere, Wedderburn and Darkes Forest).

In December 2003, WFT was found in traps placed in a Forbes district orchard in November. This was the first confirmed record of WFT from inland districts. WFT was subsequently detected in the three other orchards that had been surveyed. The finding could have serious implications for other agricultural industries.

No WFT were found in traps from the north coast, nor from the only orchard from the central coast to submit traps to ASCU. Some traps were also assessed at the Horticultural Research and Advisory Station, Gosford but no WFT were detected in those either.

## **Some numbers**

A summary of the findings for 2003/04 is set out in Table 1. WFT was picked up in traps from September to February in the region south of Sydney. The pest can therefore be present throughout the year and has been known to occur in this area for several years.

Most of the 341 traps that were checked had thrips other than WFT on them. In most cases the number exceeded 50. This indicates that species such as plague thrips and onion thrips are also around for most of the growing season. Plague thrips is only known as a problem during the blossom to shuck fall stage, especially on nectarines. Onion thrips is not regarded as a pest of stone fruit.

## **Beneficials**

The healthy population of beneficials in the State's stone fruit orchards is a good sign. At least one predator or parasite was found in two-thirds of the traps. Some of these "good bugs" will be valuable in helping to manage WFT while others will have an important part to play as the industry develops its integrated pest and disease management program.

## **What now?**

The NSW stone fruit industry now has a better picture as to the distribution of WFT. Growers in the Sydney basin need to maintain vigilance and be ready to respond if monitoring in orchards detects the pest. Our limited experience suggests this will not happen every year, such as the difference on the central coast between 2002/03 and 2003/04.

Heed the warnings about overuse of insecticides. Not only will the use of some insecticides be ineffective against WFT because of its known resistance, but those pesticides could also suppress or remove beneficials, which might otherwise assist with control.

If you want advice on monitoring WFT, contact your District Horticulturist prior to the start of the season. Information will also be included in the 2004/05 edition of the Orchard Plant Protection Guide.

The surveillance program is unlikely to be repeated or extended in 2004/05. However growers are welcome to use the service provided by ASCU at their own cost.

## **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to the 35 growers who took up the offer to be part of the WFT surveillance program and the District Horticulturists who assisted. My sincere thanks go to Sandra Hardy and Marilyn Steiner (Horticultural Research and Advisory Station, Gosford) who provided valuable help to allow the program to be launched. Without the cooperation of Peter Gillespie, Matthew Kerr and staff of ASCU (thrips identifications), Marion Eslick and Anne Hatley (trap distribution and beneficials assessments) the program couldn't have happened.

Total cost of the project (traps and identifications) exceeded \$8,300. This valuable contribution to the stone fruit industry was made possible through a special grant from NSW Agriculture.

**Table 1: Western flower thrips (WFT) surveillance program, 2003/04**

District	Number of		Number of traps with		
	Orchards	Traps	WFT	Other thrips	Beneficials
North coast	11	75	0	75	52
Central coast <sup>1</sup>	2	32	0	27	19
S-W Sydney	7	88	17	87	36
Bilpin	1	17	0	17	25
Tumut	5	38	0	38	6
Young	3	14	0	13	13
Forbes	4	13	7 <sup>2</sup>	13	59
Orange	2	64	0	64	13
TOTAL	35	341	24	334	223

<sup>1</sup>Includes 18 traps checked at HRAS, Gosford.

<sup>2</sup>Found from all four orchards

### AVPMA Chemical Reviews

The AVPMA (formerly the National Registration Authority), regularly reviews the registration conditions for Ag and vet chemicals. The AVPMA does this to ensure that chemicals that are on the market do not pose undue danger to the community.

The review papers are available from the AVPMA for comment from the public when a chemical is being reviewed.

**Carbaryl.** The draft review report has been released. The chemical was reviewed because of the health concerns for domestic uses. Carbaryl is widely used for insect control and crop thinning (pome fruits). Changes have been recommended for both plant and animal uses.

Changes recommended include:

- Cancellation of several vet products for pets and livestock
- Reduced concentration of active for domestic uses to less than 160g per Kg/L
- Indoor, domestic uses prohibited
- Cancellation of home garden use on food producing plants

On the basis of residue concerns, the following **agricultural** uses have been deleted from the label:

- Berry fruits (except raspberries)
- Citrus
- Stone fruit
- Pome fruit (except for thinning)
- Tropical fruit
- Sunflower and linseed
- Vegetables (except potatoes, sugar beets, beetroot and turnip/swede)

This is likely to impact on the control of pests such as pear and cherry slug

and several pome fruit pests (especially in non-commercial situations). Carbaryl will only be allowed for use on pome fruits as a fruit thinner. The full review document can be viewed online at [http://www.apvma.gov.au/chemrev/carbaryl\\_draft\\_final.pdf](http://www.apvma.gov.au/chemrev/carbaryl_draft_final.pdf)

**Dimethoate.** The AVPMA will look at issues associated with toxicology, OH&S, trade and residues. The review will also look at product labels to ensure they carry adequate instructions and warning statements.

Dimethoate is an organophosphate insecticide. It is widely used in agriculture and home gardens. The biggest concern is that if the product is de-registered, treatment options for Queensland Fruit Fly disinfestation will be severely limited.

The review scope document can be found on the Internet. [http://www.apvma.gov.au/chemrev/dimethoate\\_scope.pdf](http://www.apvma.gov.au/chemrev/dimethoate_scope.pdf) Submissions can be made up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2004

**Endosulfan.** The final review report has been released. The withholding period for use on pome fruits has been extended to 28 days (from 14days). Endosulfan can no longer be used on bananas, berries and related fruits such as grapes and currants. Some vegetable and pasture crops have also been affected.

## **Biosecurity Planning – being prepared for the worst**

Delia Dray  
NSW Agriculture, Orange

The Scout's motto of "Be Prepared" was very much in my mind when I recently attended an apple and pear biosecurity planning workshop organised by Plant Health Australia.

"Biosecurity" in plain-speak means the threat exotic pests or diseases pose to our indigenous and domesticated animal and plant species and how we can protect production by exclusion, eradication or control methods.

Over the years the natural barrier of our island continent has proved to be the best form of defence against a wide range of these threats, and strict quarantine precautions have also helped. However, we are coming under increasing pressure to open our markets for trade. The principle of allowing market access into Australia based on zero risk phytosanitary precautions is moving to a low risk status, meaning significant changes in how government agencies approach import requests from countries with undesirable pests. The recent release of the revised draft import risk analysis for apples to be imported from New Zealand is a very close-to-home example of this in action.

We've had first hand experience recently with handling an exotic disease introduction like fire blight. This taught us a lot about how well the contingency planning had been, the implementation of the plan in terms of diagnostic abilities, surveying and getting accurate data, and the follow up work demonstrating that Australia is fire blight free. Eradicating exotic pest introductions is an expensive exercise, with the total cost for fire

blight being estimated at \$5 million. Other recent pest incursions are even more expensive, for example the papaya fruit fly eradication program cost \$34 million, and the fire ant eradication program now has a budget of \$130 million.

You've probably heard of a relatively new organisation called Plant Health Australia, which has been set up to liaise between plant industries and governments to make sure that favourable outcomes are achieved in relation to pest and disease management, containment and or eradication of incursions. Both the horticultural industries and state and federal governments fund PHA.

PHA is now working with individual industries like apples and pears to develop industry biosecurity plans that assess which are the key pest threats, rank them in a priority list and develop a contingency plan that outlines roles and responsibilities, communication and consultation strategies. For each commodity, this plan will form the basis for decisions to be made about which pests are the most serious in impact on production, how it should be eradicated, when should eradication be not pursued and a containment strategy implemented, and who will fund it all.

The first part of this process has now commenced with the recent workshop where pest experts developed a list of the most

important insects and diseases affecting apples and pears. Exotically named pests such as cedar apple rust, black stem blight, pear psylla and Manchurian fruit moth join the ranks of more familiar pests such as fire blight and leaf roller caterpillars. These pests are being assessed for how big a threat they pose and if they are detected, how easily and at what cost can they be eradicated.

The next step is then for the apple and pear industry to categorise them on the basis of cost sharing arrangements under an agreed formula. This will require some hard thinking by both industry and government to determine how far we will go to stop establishment of any of the highest priority pests. For example, the formula being proposed is that for the highest category pests, the cost sharing principle will be government (both state and federal): industry of 80%:20%. For lower priorities it may be 50:50 or even 20:80. Only in exotic pest incursions like the fire ant situation that has environmental or human safety/amenity aspects would government fund the total cost of eradication.

The stone fruit industry has also just completed a similar exercise and has categorised sharka, plum weevil and false codling moth as having the highest priority. Other crops such as cherries will be involved in this planning process, with a roll-out for a range of fruit and vegetables due to commence over the next two years.