

Adams Co. Fruit Growers tour Apple Valley Farm

BY M.H. GITT
Staff Correspondent

FAIRFIELD — Members of the Adams County Fruit Growers Association held their monthly meeting Wednesday evening after inspecting the orchards and equipment of Apple Valley Farms.

Among the features pointed out by host Phillip Roth were a solar system for heating water and a sloping electric fence designed to keep deer out of the fruit trees.

Of special interest was the solar system which has a collector consisting of 264 rubber pipes with a surface area of 544 square feet. Water is pumped from a 1320 gallon tank located in the basement of the house to the collector. The heated water returns to the storage tank inside which there are two heat exchangers made out of soft copper tubing.

One coiled tube, approximately 120 feet long, has water inside which is used for washing, bathing and other domestic uses and is heated by the water in the tank. Meanwhile, the water in the other coil is used to help warm the house.

"In the winter, on a sunny day, every hour of sunlight will provide one hour of home heating during the night," explained Roth.

Another addition Roth is considering is pumping the water from the tank to a processing plant for washing apples and other fruit. He admitted the most practical use of this system is for domestic heat and said he figures it will pay for itself in eight to ten years depending on how much fuel costs increase.

An increase should be seen in Roth's fruit production since the installation of a deer fence which he said will keep out 90 percent of the animals in the area. The combination of seven-high tensile wires, sloped at a 45 degree angle and electrically charged is the

most effective fencing system, he proclaimed.

After the tour, the members gathered for their meeting which included reports from experts on what fungi and insects the growers should be on the look out for, as well as a report on apple thinning.

Extension Plant Pathologist Jim Travis reported that so far there have been three infection periods conducive to the growth of fungi.

Basing his information on data collected at the research laboratory in Biglerville, he noted that the first time was April 11 and 12. There was a heavy infection, but light spore load during this period.

The next spell was on April 23, which had a light infection due to low temperature.

The third time was May 9, and data shows a heavy infection and spore load.

After inspecting some orchards he noted he had found some lesions, probably due to the first infection period. Spores on these lesions only need a light rain to spread to unaffected leaves or trees. He strongly suggested growers keep applying fungicides at regular intervals to help prevent further infection.

Travis also reported he had found some Peach Leaf Curl in a few orchards, cases of Cherry Leaf Spot and some Fireblight. He said the worst cases of Curl were caused by lack of the proper application of fungicide. The Fireblight was due to the extended bloom period this spring when the blossoms were most susceptible to the fungus.

Robert Tetrault, Extension Service Entomologist, reported "few insect problems for fruit growers in the southern part of the state at this time." He pointed out insects that will be appearing soon and reminded growers to be ready to spray.

For peach and nectarine trees, he said, to be on the lookout for Green Peach Aphids and Peach Tree Bores; on apple trees check for Rosy Apple Aphids, San Jose Scale, European Red Mites, and Tufted Apple Bud Moths. The latter two insects should start to appear after petal fall. Tetrault reported the White Apple Leaf Hopper is showing some degree of resistance to certain types of organo-phosphate insecticides, but other pesticides would be effective in controlling them.

In response to a question con-

cerning the Gypsy Moth, he noted that "I don't see a problem with the moth because current pesticides already in use will be adequate in controlling the Gypsy Moth and it wouldn't be necessary to use a certain pesticide just to get rid of the moths."

A presentation on chemically thinning apples was given by George Greene, an Assistant Professor of Pomology from Penn State, who works out of the research lab in Biglerville. He said there are two reasons for thinning apples. One is to get larger apples this year and the other is to try and get a uniform crop every year.

With the aid of a chart, he explained juvenile apples with a diameter less than three-eighths are too small for thinning. Fruit with a diameter between three-eighths and seven-sixteenths are the best for thinning, while juvenile apples with a diameter between seven-sixteenths and nine-sixteenths are fair size for thinning. Anything over that is too big.

Larger apples this year can be obtained by removing the side apples and leaving the middle, or "king blossom", as the main apple, he explained. Also by cutting

down on the number of apples, a more uniform crop can be made for next year.

In other business, Larry Yager, the area marketing agent from the extension service, reported the Cherry Administration board has decided to sell 40 percent of the tart cherries being held in the pool. The price to the growers will be \$.653 per pound for Grade A cherries and \$.52 per pound for Grade B. He also noted the freezes have made it difficult to determine the size of the apple crop, but by next month, there should be enough information to form a clearer picture.

Indications of a good peach crop in South Carolina have come in and a heavy merchandising campaign will start to try and move the fruit. Also information shows that the public is leaning toward fresh fruit instead of processed fruit and that a lot of processors are getting ready to meet this demand, he said.

In other business, County Extension Agent Thomas Piper reported the state horticulture tour is scheduled for June 24 and 25. The next Fruit Grower's meeting will be held June 17 at Rice & Rice Orchards.

US — Nigerian agricultural committee to meet

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Members of the U.S.-Nigerian joint agricultural consultative committee will meet in Lagos, Nigeria, beginning May 31 to discuss private agribusiness participation in agricultural development in Nigeria on a joint venture basis.

According to Quentin West, director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of International Cooperation and Development, the cooperation between USDA and the private agribusiness sector in this country is a new approach to assisting developing nations.

The two countries also have agreed to participate in agricultural research and the exchange of related information. West said the program in Nigeria could serve as a model for similar cooperative efforts in other countries.

West said the program illustrates how government-to-government relationships arranged by the United States can open doors for private business. The private sector can concentrate its resources on establishing and operating business. It can also help make U.S. companies more competitive with rival firms from other nations, some of which receive government subsidies for foreign development activities.

Former Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman is chairman of the U.S. delegation; Mallim Joda, former Secretary of the Nigerian Ministry of Agriculture, is chairman of the Nigerian delegation.

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