

Fruitgrowers discuss pest control, peach vote

ORRTANNA — Pest control, a proposal to raise funds for peach research, and a review of operations in the Department of Entomology at Penn State were topics considered when the Adams County fruitgrowers met on May 8. James Bucher of Bendersville, President of the grower's organization, presided.

Hosted by Hall Brothers Fruit Farm, R1 Orrtanna, the meeting convened at 6:30 p.m. for an orchard tour. Serving as guides, Harry and Paul Hall described their diversified family farm operation which includes the production of potatoes, sweet corn and field crops, the finishing of beef cattle and the production of apples and peaches. A significant amount of the fruit and vegetables is sold at the farm.

Larry Hull, entomologist at the Penn State Fruit Research Laboratory, cited the Hall Brothers for their cooperation in his research programs into integrated pest management, tufted apple bud moth, and the testing of new pesticides. Reminding the growers not to apply insecticides during bloom, Hull encouraged daily inspections of orchard blocks to evaluate the completeness of

insect control to date.

"If you find an average of one or two curled leaf clusters, spray for rosy apples aphid in petal fall", said Hull. Overwintering red mite eggs began hatching April 29. Where oil sprays were not applied or synthetic pyrethroids not used last fall, a petalfall spray is recommended. Sprays at this time are also important for control of white apple leafhopper, spotted tentiform leafminer and red-banded leafhopper.

Hull reminded the growers to make daily inspection of newly planted trees for the presence of gypsy moth. These will blow in with air currents. By mid-June the larva will be capable of eating all the leaves on a small tree in one day.

Disease outlook

"A cool, wet spring has provided optimum conditions for peach leaf curl" said James Travis, Extension Plant Pathologist. This disease is already developing on trees which were not sprayed in the dormant season or where coverage was inadequate. "It is too late now" said Travis, reminding the growers that treatment must be applied in the period from leaf crop up until bud

break in the spring.

"Wet weather conditions have been favorable for disease" said Travis. He cited scab infection periods on or about April 14; April 22; April 28-29; May 3; and May 6-8. Cool temperatures have slowed sporé maturation with the primary infection period expected to continue another four weeks.

"Stone fruit trees under stress are more susceptible to invasion by cytospora canker" continued Travis. He reminded the growers of the special stress created by droughts in 1982 and 1983 and the low temperatures of the recent winter.

"Keep your trees growing well, prune your trees in April and apply fungicide immediately following pruning" he added.

"Regular use of chemical thinners will result in larger apples which are more acceptable in the market place" said Robert Crassweller, Extension Pomologist from Penn State. He urged the growers to make their decision on when to apply thinners on the basis of measured size and to follow up with some hand thinning if possible.

Current issues

"Two factors limit Penn State's

ability to conduct research helpful to the fruit industry" said Charles Pitts, Head of the Department of Entomology at Penn State. He listed these as a shortage of staff and lack of the supporting funds required to carry out research.

On a related note, growers John Lott and Philip Baugher urged the peach and nectarine growers present to participate in a referendum authorized by Secretary of Agriculture Penrose Hallowell to raise funds for production and marketing research. Growers having 500 or more peach and/or nectarine trees of all ages are voting whether to assess themselves \$3.00 per acre for all their peach and/or nectarine acreage, the money going to fund long range research.

Voting will continue until Friday. If passed by a majority of growers and representing a majority of production, the program will go into effect July 1 and will cover the 1984 crop.

The program, to be administered by an advisory board of nine growers, may raise about \$25,000 annually for research.

Apple Blossom Festival

County Agent Thomas E. Piper

complimented the growers for their excellent cooperation which contributed to a successful Apple Blossom Festival, May 5 and 6, in spite of marginal weather conditions.

Piper reviewed plans for the State Hort Society - sponsored Summer Tour which will be hosted by the Adams County growers on June 25 and 26. Assembling at South Mountain Fairgrounds, Route 234 west of Arendtsville at 8 a.m., the visitors will complete a 90 mile tour of the fruit belt during the day, concluding with dinner and a panel response to questions at 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday's program will feature an in-depth visit at the Penn State Fruit Research Laboratory, an orchard equipment demonstration, and a special ladies/children program to include a tour of the national battlefield at Gettysburg.

To register send \$28 per person (\$30 if participating in the Ladies program) to Patti Levis, State Horticultural Association of Pennsylvania, Loganville, Pa. 17342. Make checks payable to "Summer Tour - State Hort. Assn. of PA". A late registration fee of \$5 will be added to those who register at the fairgrounds.

NW strawberries hit hard

CORVALLIS, Ore. — Strawberry producers in the Northwest are facing a possible loss of 50 percent of their crop this summer due to last winter's severe weather, says W. Arden Sheets, Extension Chairman of Washington County, Oregon. In areas where snow cover was light or nonexistent, many of the mother plants were frozen. The survivors have not shown consistent growth this spring.

"Many fields have not responded to fertilizer treatment, which growers applied in March to combat winter stress. Daughter plants are looking better than the mother plants in the stressed fields," Sheets says.

Severity of plant damage varies from field to field, he adds. He has received reports detailing damage in Washington and Oregon, and from British Columbia, Canada. Damage to transplant stock has also been reported in Washington.

"The nurseries report varying degrees of discoloration in the plant crowns. In one instance, a processor representative showed me a sample of two varieties that showed browning in the crowns, and some separation from the cambium."

Growers realize that planting stock may not be of top quality this year, but that there was nothing they could have done to prevent the damage, Sheets adds.

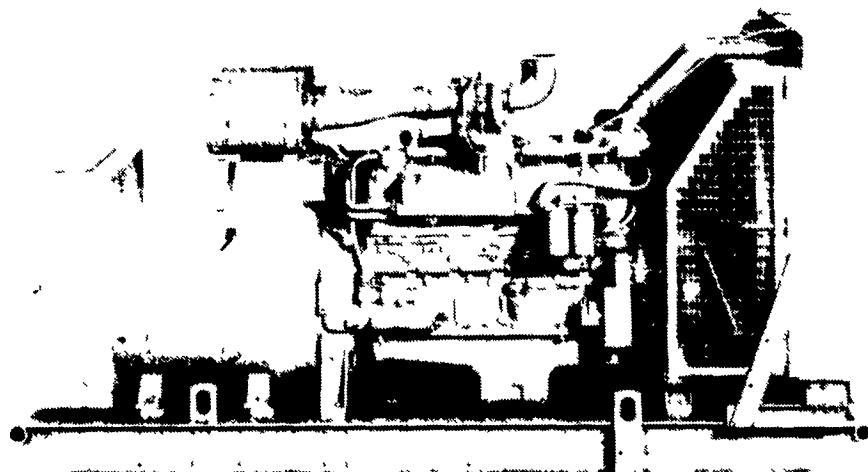


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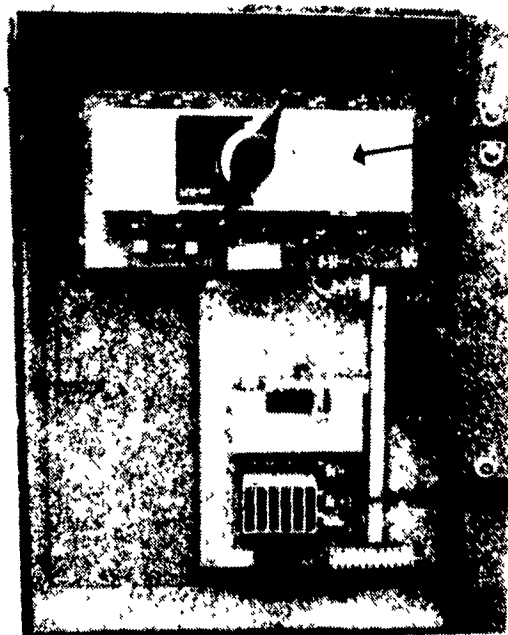
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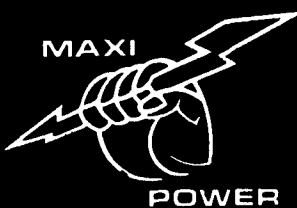


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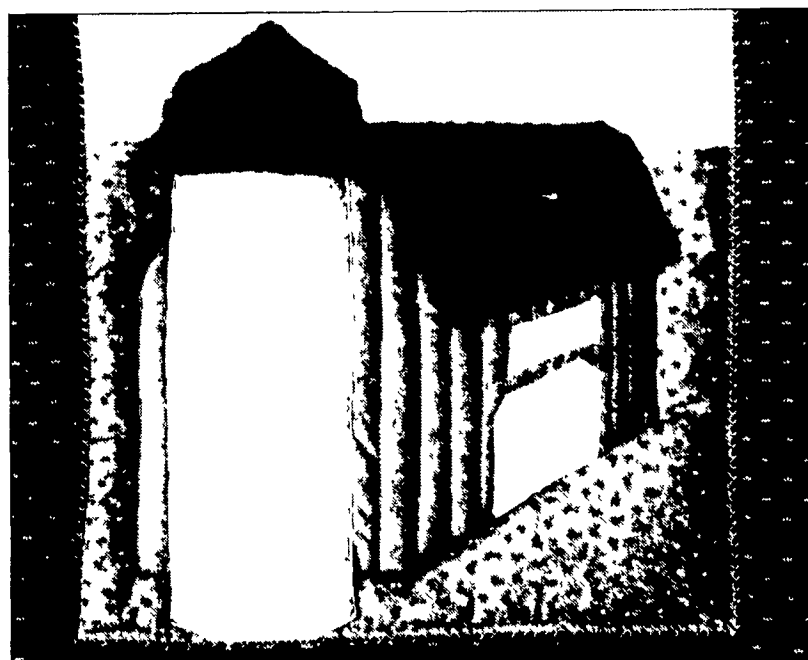
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