

Growers Should Control Peach Borer, Nematodes

(Continued from Page A1)

to more than 125 commercial growers during the Southeast Pennsylvania Twilight Fruit Growers Meeting at Wolf's Orchard on Tuesday evening.

Growers should be aware of the two types of borer that destroy peach trees — the peach tree borer and the lesser peach tree borer.

According to Dr. Larry Hull, professor of entomology at Penn State, restrictions that prevent growers from spraying for the borer because of fruit set don't apply in a year with no crop to be harvested, so timely applications

can be made.

The peach tree borer has one generation per year, which emerges the second week of June. The borer can attack the trunk of the tree anywhere from 12 inches above the ground to about 12 inches below. The borer can kill the trees, said Hull, especially young stock. And with a year "like this, with no peach crop, you can get in there and spray the trees at the proper time," he said.

The lesser peach tree borer, because of its feeding, has the potential to spread cytospora canker and other diseases. Two borer generations emerge per year, one about the second or third week of June and another mid- to late August.

Growers can utilize the window of opportunity from Aug. 1-15 to spray for the pest.

Hull said, "The key to controlling borers is a thorough, dilute application. Air blast sprayers just don't cut it. You cannot drive enough material into the trunk of the tree (using air blast sprayers.)"

Growers should use a high-pressure handgun, wetting the trunk of the tree up to the first limbs. To be even more effective, Hull said one farmer used a hoe to dig a holding trench for the chemical at the base of the tree. Growers should go out the first week of August and make the applications.

"I think this is the best time to clean up your orchards, because you can get in there and do that application and really save these peach trees and get the orchard back into good health for the coming year," said Hull.

Another potential problem for growers to face is the nematode.



Ken Hickey, Penn State Fruit Research Lab, Biglerville, spoke about the potential for problems from diseases such as apple scab and fire blight at a meeting Tuesday evening at Wolf's Orchard.

The problem, said Dr. John Halbrecht, assistant professor of plant pathology at Penn State, can be slow to develop. Also, growers often believe that if a problem is out of sight, it's out of mind, according to the pathologist. This could lead to trouble.

He told the growers that "you need to think about the possibility that you might have nematode problems sooner or later in your orchards or in your small fruit production.

"By the time that you see evidence of a nematode problem, then you have a serious problem on your hands, and it's very difficult to turn that situation around."

For those planting a new orchard or replanting an existing one, they should first purchase a soil assay kit for \$8 from any extension office and have the ground tested for a potential problem.

"It's much easier to use preventative measures, to send soil samples to the lab ahead of time, before replanting an orchard or before putting in a small fruit planting," said Halbrecht. "Determine whether there's any potential at the very outset to develop problems."

The two big pests are the dagger nematode (which can carry the tomato ringspot virus that causes peach stem-pit disease) and the root lesion nematode, which can affect young trees and dwarf stock readily, according to Halbrecht.

The dagger nematode's feeding activities spread the ringspot virus. The virus exists in broadleaf weeds, such as dandelions.

Halbrecht stressed the importance of controlling both the

broadleaf weeds and the nematode itself all at once.

The root lesion nematode can be devastating to growers who have young stock or with the small root systems inherent in dwarf stock. More and more orchardists are using dwarf stock and should be aware of potential problems because of the nematodes.

A combination of cultural practices and the use of pesticides in the correct manner can offer control of the pest.

One of the ways that Penn State research has found to reduce the incidence of nematode infestation is using a cover crop. Penn State looked into the effectiveness of two crops, sudangrass and rapeseed, because of the beneficial effects of organic material in the soil toward preventing nematodes.

As the cover crop decomposes, chemicals toxic to nematodes are released.

"The cover crop I'm most excited about right now is the use of rapeseed as an interim rotation," he said. "The use of rapeseed as a green manure has a tremendous benefit for reducing nematode population. A two-year rotation with rapeseed can be as effective as a soil fumigant."

Different rapeseed varieties vary in their effectiveness, according to the researcher.

Ken Hickey, Penn State Fruit Research Lab, Biglerville, spoke about the potential for problems from diseases such as apple scab and fire blight because of rain during the growing season, particularly from mid-June until harvest.

"The incidence and severity of these diseases is closely correlated with the amount of rainfall that happens during the summer," said Hickey. "We need to concentrate on the control of these diseases from this point forward."

Fire blight and other bacteria is controlled by limiting the amount of leafhopper present. The time to spray to control the fire blight bacteria is when the blossoms are open.



The peach tree borer has one generation per year, which emerges the second week of June. Shown here, the borer can attack the trunk of the tree anywhere from 12 inches above the ground to about 12 inches below. The borer can kill the trees, said Hull.



Growers should be aware of the two types of borer that destroy peach trees — the peach tree borer and the lesser peach tree borer. According to Dr. Larry Hull, professor of entomology at Penn State, restrictions that prevent growers from spraying for the borer because of fruit set don't apply in a year with no crop to be harvested, so timely applications can be made. Here, Hull digs for the borer.



Another potential problem for growers to face is the nematode. The problem, said Dr. John Halbrecht, assistant professor of plant pathology at Penn State, can be slow to develop.

Dairymen Inc., Mid-America To Merge

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Leaders of Dairymen Inc. (DI), of Louisville, Kentucky, and Mid-America Dairymen Inc. (Mid-Am), of Springfield, Missouri, announced this week the signing of the non-binding letter of understanding initiating actions that could result in the merger of the two dairy cooperatives.

The proposed merger would bring together 3,300 dairy farmer members of Dairymen Inc., and 13,000 members of Mid-America Dairymen Inc., which together marketed more than 12.5 billion pounds of milk in 1993.

"This merger makes a lot of sense for both our organizations," said DI Board President Buckley M. Jones. "Mid-Am is a strong competitor in the Midwest markets, and DI is a major marketer in the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic regions of the United States. Combining our organizations will increase our operational and marketing efficiency, and that will benefit members of both organizations."

Mid-Am Board President Carl Baumann said merger of the two organizations would result in few changes for member dairy farmers.

"Both organizations are financially sound and there are many similarities in the way both organizations operate," he said, not-

ing that the mission of both cooperatives is to provide each member market security by providing a market for all the milk the member desires to produce and marketing that milk in the form and market channels providing maximum returns consistent with long-term stability.

Preliminary merger discussions by a committee of board members from both organizations resulted in a non-binding letter of understanding. The target date for the merger (if approved by boards and members of both organizations) is August 31, 1994.

Membership governance structure will be studied by a committee of five members from each cooperative. The proposed plan of consolidation will be submitted to both boards of directors, and if approved, will be taken to each respective membership for approval.

In 1993, Dairymen Inc., and its subsidiaries, had revenues of \$784 million from total assets valued at \$174 million. Member equity was \$52.2 million and the number of employees is approximately 2,900. Mid-America Dairymen Inc., had revenues of \$1.8 billion in 1993, and total assets valued at \$385.5 million. Member equity stood at \$133.8 million and the cooperative has nearly 3,000 employees.