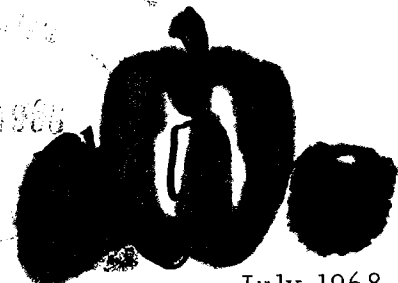


July 3 1968



FRUIT GROWERS' LETTER

July 1968

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MINNESOTA APPLE CROP FOR 1968

It is still too early to completely evaluate the prospects for the 1968 apple crop. However, all indications point to a potentially normal crop in Minnesota this year. Most areas are 8 to 10 days ahead of normal development.

Good bloom was reported on most varieties, although a few reports indicated that Haralson, in an alternate bearing situation, had very light bloom. The weather during bloom was not particularly favorable and some reports indicate less than adequate pollination.

Some injury resulted from spring frosts (particularly May 4 and 5), but most of this was in low areas with poor air drainage. The injury, however, should have little affect on the total apple crop.

With a little luck and favorable weather conditions a full crop is in prospect.

FIREBLIGHT IS SEVERE IN SOME ORCHARDS

The incidence of fireblight is very high in many Minnesota orchards this year. Fireblight is particularly bad in orchards with a high percentage of susceptible varieties such as Beacon and Jonathan.

What can be done to control this destructive bacterial disease? Unfortunately, the optimum control period has passed. At best, full control of fireblight appears to be impossible, even when using the best control measures.

Infection can occur in the blossom period and at any time that new growth occurs on the trees. The disease is spread by insects (including bees), wind, and rain. Infection occurs most readily under warm, moist conditions, and on trees that are growing vigorously.

The following control measures are recommended:

1. Cultural - Discourage lush growth on trees by reducing nitrogen fertilization; minimize maintenance pruning; keep tillage and mowing operations at a minimum during infection periods.
2. Sanitation - Prune out infected branches in late fall or early winter to reduce the source of inoculum for the following growing season.
3. Chemical - Although chemical control methods have never given full control, copper and antibiotic sprays give some control of fireblight on flowers and spurs.
4. Variety - Plant varieties that show a resistance to fireblight.

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This archival publication may not reflect current scientific knowledge or recommendations.
Current information available from University of Minnesota Extension: <http://www.extension.umn.edu>.

SUMMER MITE CONTROL

F. T. Lord, Canada Department of Agriculture, estimates that about 400 different kinds of insects have been found on apple trees. If a heavy, uncontrolled outbreak of the European red mite is allowed to exist, as many as 20 million mites might be found on each tree. On a tree bearing a heavy apple crop, this number could cause considerable damage.

Summer mite control is best accomplished by spraying before the mites have a chance to build up. Where mites have increased to large numbers eradication of these populations is extremely difficult. Two sprays, spaced 7 to 10 days apart, may be required to sufficiently reduce populations.

Several miticides are available, including Kelthane, Morestan, and Acaralate (chloropropylate). Calibrate your sprayer to deliver the correct amount of miticide per acre. Do not overspray or underspray.

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BROWN HEART OF JONATHAN APPLES

Brown heart, an internal disorder of Jonathan apples, has repeatedly been found to be favored by large fruit size and overmaturity at harvest.

The best control measure for brown heart is to avoid storing susceptible fruit. Jonathan apples 2 3/4 inches or less in diameter, picked in the early or midharvest season, are least susceptible to brown rot and are recommended for storage. All others should be marketed in the fall or early winter. (From Michigan State University Horticulture Report, Spring 1968)

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DICHLLOBENIL (CASORON) HERBICIDE

The herbicide dichlobenil (Casoron) is currently registered for use on both bearing and nonbearing fruit trees.

A research report from Michigan indicates that the optimum timing for applications of granular Casoron for quackgrass control appears to be in the late fall or in early spring prior to the start of rapid growth. A recent research study in Minnesota has shown that quackgrass control, using early spring applications, is poor. Additional studies with fall applications are now in progress.

H. C. Price and A. R. Putnam of Michigan State University report that recent laboratory studies show that Casoron may be lost from the shoots of quackgrass plants as vapor. They further state that "the volatility of Casoron both in plants and in soils undoubtedly influences its performance as a herbicide."

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CHEMICAL CONTROL OF ANNUAL WEEDS IN STRAWBERRY

Chloroxuron (Tenoran) has demonstrated effective early control of annual weeds, predominately foxtail and ragweed, at the Elk River Sandland Experiment Station. Applications of the herbicide were made approximately two weeks after transplanting; the weeds had emerged. Neither dacthal nor Sesone were effective when used in this manner.

Upjohn has recently obtained a label for diphenamid permitting applications up to 60 days prior to harvest.

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NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE MINNESOTA FRUIT GROWERS ASSOCIATION

1968 Summer Orchard Tour -- The La Crescent Apple Growers Association will host the 1968 Summer Orchard Tour. It is jointly sponsored by the Minnesota Fruit Growers Association and the Wisconsin Apple and Horticultural Council.

The tour will start at Old Hickory Orchard, La Crescent, Minnesota, at 9:30 a.m. Points of interest will include cold storage and packing facilities; a new planting of Beacon on East Malling IX rootstock, as well as bearing trees on several different dwarfing rootstocks.

The date is Friday, August 16. Mark your calendar now and make plans to attend. A mighty interesting program has been planned.

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Trade names are sometimes used in this publication to clearly describe products. The use of a trade name does not imply endorsement by the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service, nor does omission of other trade names imply nonapproval.

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