



NOURSE news

SPRING 2014

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8am to 5pm (EST)



Greetings from Nourse Farms!

Whether or not the Groundhog is right about the end of winter, you can be sure we will be ready to ship your plants on time. Our fall dug plants are the best we've had for 2 years! By the time you receive this newsletter, the new wing of our gutter-connected greenhouse will be operational and growing plants. This state of the art facility will help us continue our mission of providing the best berry plants.

This year's trade show season has been the busiest one we have ever seen. Growers have been attending meetings in record numbers, not only to get the latest information, but also sharing their successes with others. Everyone has indicated that demand is strong for their fruit and with few exceptions that the supply was greater than demand. Because of this, most producers have seen little resistance to price increases of their fruit.

I had the pleasure of accepting NARBA's 2014 Distinguished Service Award presented to both my father and I during the annual meeting in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Being presented this award by our peers is truly a great honor that is difficult to put into words. I can say that it has strengthened my resolve and commitment to supporting the berry industry in any way possible. In the same vein, my father, mother and I appreciate all of our customer support which has allowed us to be honored. We look forward to another year and serving you to the best of our ability.

Nate Nourse



Nate (left), Mary and Tim Nourse

Dealing with Winter Injury in Strawberries

This winter we have experienced much lower winter temperatures than we have experienced in some time. How cold temperatures were at your location, the amount of snow cover you had at the time and the amount of straw mulch applied, are all factors that can influence the amount of damage caused. This article is a review to assess your damage and steps to take to bring your crop through with the best results.

First, in very early spring, in sampling your production, take plants from across the bed, outside edges to the center. Cut open the strawberry crown from top to bottom (vertically), rather than crosswise (horizontally), to determine the extent of damage. With no winter injury the crown should have creamy-white color. Mild injury would result in a brown flecking inside the cut crown. The deeper the brown coloration in the crown, the more damage is indicated. Plants will grow out of this condition and can produce a normal crop. Extensive damage would result the crown hav-

ing a dark brown color and corky texture. This condition causes the most concern.

Extensive damage needs to be managed carefully in order to harvest the best crop. Because the conduction tissues have been affected, the efficiency of the plant has been reduced. To maximize the harvest, it is important to minimize the stress to the plant. Growers have experienced that maintaining good moisture levels through the harvest period allows the damaged tissue to absorb required moisture. Because the damaged tissues also reduce the ability of the plant to pull nutrients from the soil, additional nutrients can be applied by light ground application of nitrogen or by foliar applications with your fungicide applications.

This discussion gives you the tools to evaluate winter crown injury damage and some ideas of how to manage you're planting with extensive injury by closely monitoring moisture levels and possible nutrient applications to bring the crop through the harvest period. If you have any questions feel free to contact me. **WRITTEN BY TIM NOURSE**

Special Nutrient Requirements for Sonata and Darselect

This is a reminder regarding the additional requirements that Sonata and Darselect have for Magnesium (Mg). We discussed these requirements for Sonata in the Fall Newsletter. For Sonata to perform at its highest genetic capability, the foliage needs to have a very dark green color. Good levels of the elements nitrogen (N) and Magnesium (Mg) are required.

As we have discussed in the past, Darselect also responds well to plentiful levels of Mg. Ample levels of Mg give Darselect a more shiny appearance and keep the calyx a bright green color.



SONATA



DARSELECT

The most effective way to address levels of Mg is to apply it to the soil prior to planting, following the recommendation from your soil test. But if you find your Mg is low during the growing season, the Mg can be dispersed through drip irrigation or as a foliar application in your early fungicide sprays using a 1% solution of magnesium sulfate (Epsom salts). That would be 1½ ounces per gallon in the spray mix and a total of 5-8lbs per acre, per season. It is important not to overdo the Mg as it would reduce the uptake of calcium (Ca), causing softer fruit.

Contact us if you have any questions. **WRITTEN BY TIM NOURSE**

Strawberry Fungicide Program Suggestions

We receive numerous calls in regard to fungicide use which suggests it is time for an update. The last update was spring of 2009. This will describe changes and trends based on our experience.

- 1. ALWAYS CHECK THE LABEL** regarding annual application limits, resistance management and labeling for your state. A good web site for that information is www.CDMS.net.
- 2. RESISTANCE MANAGEMENT IS CRITICAL FOR MAINTAINING CHEMICAL EFFECTIVENESS.** Avoid making sequential applications of the same class fungicides. This information is available on the web site <http://frac.info> and look for the 2013 FRAC code list.
- 3. USE CAPTAN WITH VARIOUS FUNGICIDES**, whenever possible, for broad-spectrum control and resistance management.
PLEASE NOTE: Mixing Captan with any oil based material will cause leaf phytotoxicity. This would include other fungicides or insecticides.
- 4. OXIDATE HAS PROVEN TO BE AN EFFECTIVE BROAD-SPECTRUM FUNGICIDE** control and is labeled for organic producers.

BLOOM APPLICATIONS:

Bloom applications are the critical time to effectively control botrytis. Because of the importance, a spray schedule of 7 to 10 days is recommended. During excessive wet periods, the schedule might be reduced to a 4 or 5 day schedule. Usually 4 or 5 applications can accomplish the job for the season.

BLOOM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Switch plus Captan and OxiDate
- Elevate plus Captan and OxiDate
- Captivate alone plus OxiDate
- Pristine plus Captan and OxiDate
- Scala plus Captan and OxiDate
- Inspire Super plus Captan

LEATHER ROT CONTROL For leather rot control during extended wet periods and especially if it occurred last year, add Ridomil Gold as one of the fungicides or apply through the drip irrigation system.

AFTER BLOOM APPLICATIONS – GREEN FRUIT THROUGH HARVEST:

After flowering, the threat of botrytis infection decreases. Green fruits are not as susceptible to infection. If spray coverage was poor or lacking (including too long an interval) during bloom, infection could result. Also, Anthracnose can be a problem during warm, wet conditions. As it is difficult to control once present, a preventive approach may be best, especially if it was present during prior harvests.

AFTER BLOOM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Switch plus Captan and Oxidate
- Quadris plus Captan and Oxidate
- Cabrio plus Captan and Oxidate
- Pristine plus Captan and Oxidate

If necessary to continue coverage beyond two sprays, alternate the application of the above chemicals with an application of Switch, Elevate, Thiram or Captan.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Refer to the label and your state's particular recommendations, as states have varying regulations regarding timing, rates and allowances for any spray program.

Organic or ORMI listed fungicides:

Copper products, Oxidate, Armicarb, Serenade/Sonata

Contact us if you have any questions. **WRITTEN BY TIM NOURSE**



Strawberry Plasticulture Update

Growing strawberries on plastic began because of increased efficiencies that would lower production costs. Over time, growers learned other benefits and underlying efficiencies that are gained, which have made growing and marketing local June strawberries very profitable.

The system produces bigger berries with the potential of a longer shelf life. This creates the wow factor for consumers who buy them as a healthy treat that delivers excitement, because the large June berries are unlike most in the marketplace.

Growing strawberries on plastic in northern climates has some added issues. The shorter growing season prohibits the use of plug plants if they are not planted by mid-August. Even with row covers, it is a challenge to develop 3 branch crowns per plant, having a goal of 4 branch crowns. Over the last 10 years, northern areas have experienced larger than normal fluctuations in temperature. Under row covers, strawberries can begin to bloom too early, extending frost protection season and increasing the potential for crop loss. The third drawback is an early season that can end shortly after matted row production begins, in some cases harvest begins before consumers are ready.

The use of straw mulch for winter protection in plasticulture production has been one of our biggest breakthroughs.

To resolve these issues, Nourse Farms advocates the use of dormant plants planted through plastic. The planting date is more flexible and on-time delivery is much easier. The dormant plants can be shipped on the customer's schedule and incrementally. Branch crown development is more predictable and in most cases attained without row covers. Dormant plants are also more easily established with 1-2 applications of overhead irrigation. The choice of plant varieties is much greater, offering an extended season and fulfilling customer's variety preference.

The use of straw mulch for winter protection in plasticulture production has been one of our biggest breakthroughs. Straw can be removed from row middles on a percentage of rows and varieties that the grower selects for early production. This gives the grower the opportunity to expand a variety's season by 1-2 weeks on these rows, while remaining rows come in at the normal ripening time. Where the main and late season production remains, the

straw seal is just broken to allow plants to grow through and allow their berries to be on the straw. This also helps the softer skinned and late varieties to be produced in the plasticulture system more successfully. One of the greatest benefits of straw mulch is protection from extreme hot and or wet weather. The soil remains cooler as do the plants and berries, which prevents an early end of the season. The berries survive extended wet periods and tend to have longer shelf life. For organic and low input growers, herbicides are reduced or eliminated.

At Nourse Farms, our berries are the buyer's first choice. For over five years, we have shipped berries more than four hundred miles away, maintaining a shelf life of three to four days. We continue to grow our berry business at a healthy rate. During our worst weather years we still realized yields not less than two thirds of our best years' production. The use of drip irrigation has put us in compliance for food safety regulations and decreased our overall water consumption. We are growing more berries on less land while using fewer inputs including labor.

For more information, we have a plasticulture guide online as well as a video of the planting, growing and production process. We will respond to calls and e-mails to help you through the process. Let us know how we can help you. **WRITTEN BY NATE NOURSE**



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Uproot weeds very close to the edges of plastic mulch, ridge soil along raised beds

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Rolling Cultivators are great for uprooting weeds and cutting through plant residue

- Excellent weed control between crop rows
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Tours, Seminars & Field Days

MARCH

March 4, 2014, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Southeast Pennsylvania Vegetable and Small Fruit Growers Meeting, Collegeville, PA
For more information: 610-746-1970

March 10-12
4th Annual International Blueberry Organization Conference, Guadalajara, Mexico
For more information: Internationalblueberry.org

APRIL

April 7-9
Global Berry Congress, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Fresh opportunities for profit in fresh berries. Looking at the biggest issues in the berry business today. Up-to-date information from expert speakers to help you succeed.
For more information: Berrycongress.com

JUNE

Ohio Produce Growers & Marketers Association Summer Tour & Field Day
Details to come soon at www.opgma.org

JULY

July 10, 2013 10:00 AM - 2:30 PM
The Massachusetts Fruit Growers Association (MFGA) Annual Summer Meeting, Stow, Massachusetts
For more information: Newenglandvfc.org

July 18-19
The 4th Annual Oregon Berry Festival, Portland, Oregon
For more information: Oregonberryfestival.com

AUGUST

August 20 – 21
North American Strawberry Growers Association 2014 Summer Tour, British Columbia, Canada
Touring excellent farm, markets, and other agri-businesses
For more information: nasga.org



VARIETY UPDATE

- Himbo-Top**® U.S. Plant Patent #19,512 (*RAFZACU Variety*)
- One of our top 3 selling raspberry varieties
 - Very vigorous and very productive
 - Produces excellent summer and fall crops
 - Tolerant to Phytophthora root rot disease

NEW FOR 2014!

- Cowichan** (*Newburgh x Qualicum*)
- A highly productive, vigorous, mid-season raspberry variety
 - Great flavor
 - Resistant to Raspberry Bushy Dwarf Virus (RBDV)
 - A good mid-season alternative

- Rubicon** U.S. Plant Patent Pending
- Resistant to the Black Root Rot disease complex and Black Vine Weevil
 - Well-adapted for organic production

STRAWBERRY VARIETIES for GROWER TRIALS

These are new strawberry varieties showing great characteristics. We still have some of these available. Try them in your location sooner rather than later!



- Laurel**
- A productive, mid-season variety strawberry
 - Resistant to red stele disease and leaf diseases
 - Very well suited for pick-your-own and local sales

- Herriott** U.S. Plant Patent Pending
- Large-sized, mid-season strawberry with attractive color
 - Shows good resistance to leaf diseases.

- Amandine** U.S. Plant Patent Pending
- High-performing, day-neutral strawberry variety
 - High yield potential and flavor rated very high!

Visit our website!

We have developed an excellent collection of educational videos and articles for our customers. We will continue adding to the collection. Check them out at www.noursefarms.com.

Tell us your ideas for more!
Please e-mail your suggestions to info@noursefarms.com

PLANNING A 2014 CONTROL PROGRAM FOR SPOTTED WING DROSOPHILA (SWD)

In the last two newsletters, we have brought focus to the control of Spotted Wing Drosophila and all the winter meetings had updated information for the control of this new insect. You can review our Fall Newsletter for information regarding SWD in 2013 and what has been learned. As you are organizing your control program, there are many resources online and available from your state university. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

SWD BASICS

1

Monitor with traps to know when present.

2

Timing of insecticide sprays begins with first color.

3

Cultural controls include removal of cull fruit from field and harvesting all ripe fruit EVERY TIME!

4

Use and rotate labeled insecticides on a 5-7 day schedule.



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We are here to answer your questions
Feel free to contact us via e-mail:

Tim Nourse: tnourse@noursefarms.com
Nate Nourse: nnourse@noursefarms.com
Vickie Barlow: vbarlow@noursefarms.com



SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER

(413) 665-2658 • noursefarms.com

SHIPPING INFORMATION AND RECEIVING TIPS

- Our system automatically e-mails you reminders and details on your FedEx shipments. Please make sure we have a current e-mail address on file for you.
- LTL shipments must be requested before noon on the departure day.
- If at all possible, please notify us by Wednesday the week before your scheduled ship date to change an order or FedEx ship date. We pack orders the week prior to shipment during our busy season.
- Some customers store plants in their own cooler before planting. While this can work, we recommend leaving your plants with us until conditions are right for you to plant within a few days of receipt. We have state-of-the-art cooler facilities that maintain constant temperature and humidity levels. Also, plants will warm-up during shipment and start to lose vigor.
- If you must cool plants, open the boxes to allow warm air to escape, reseal and keep them as close to 28°F as possible. Do not allow them to fall below 26°F as that will kill your plants.
- Do not add water or soak plants if you can't plant right away. Open boxes upon receipt to check temperature and freshness and reseal. If mold forms on asparagus roots they should be spread out on a pallet and kept dry to stop more mold from growing.
- Leaving your ship date "open" allows you to watch the weather and let us know when you would like us to ship. There is no default shipping date on "open" orders, therefore you need to let us know when you are ready.
- If plants arrive in poor condition, please contact us immediately!

ATTENTION!

Thank you for your interest in our product line. We are **SOLD-OUT** of, or are limiting the following varieties:

STRAWBERRIES: Evie 2, Seascape, Malwina, Rubicon, San Andreas, Cabot, Mara des Bois, Portola, AC Wendy, Albion, Flavorfest, Monterey

RASPBERRIES: TulaMagic®, Joan J, Lauren

ASPARAGUS: Pacific Purple

BLUEBERRIES: Reka, Nelson

CURRENTS: Rovada

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