



Olive News



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HANDS-ON OLIVE FLY WORKSHOP

Who should attend: Olive Growers, especially if you have less than 500 trees.

When: May 17, 2006, 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Where: John Erickson's olive orchard, south of Road 24 and west of Road M. Park at edge of orchard.

Topics covered:

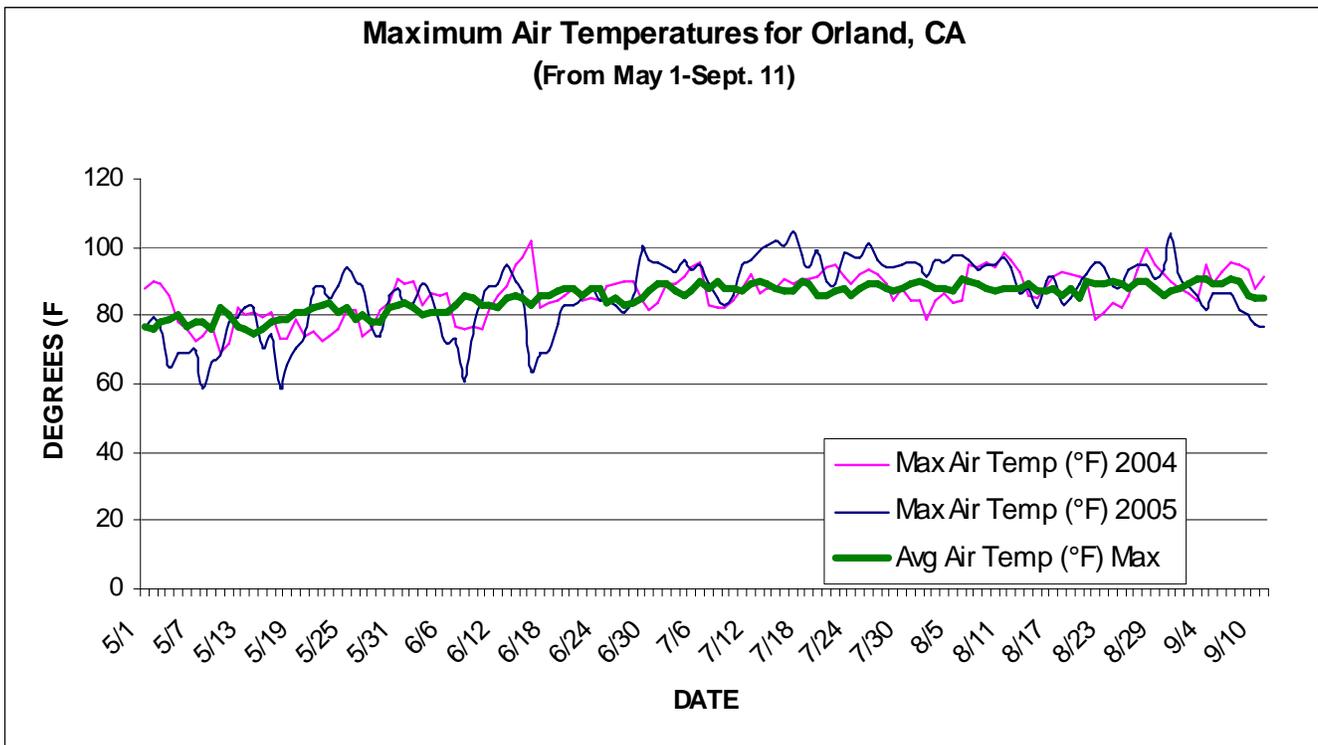
- How to make an Olive trap (bring your own 1 liter bottle).
- How to mix, load and apply GF-120 (Spinosad) with a hand-can, back pack sprayer or a 4-wheeler. The pesticide and sprayers will be available for demonstration.
- How to identify the olive fruit fly.
- How to assemble a sticky trap. Sticky traps will be available at no charge to take home.

Who to contact if you have questions:

Jean Miller (934-6501), Ernie Simpson (865-9829) or John Erickson (865-3814).

Olive Fly Update

We dodged a bullet when it comes to olive fly damage last year. Olive Fly damage was lower than we would have predicted based on rapidly developing populations the previous two years. It is believed that this was related to the hot temperatures we experienced. The graph compares maximum temperatures for Orland for 2004 and 2005 to average maximum temperatures. From this, we can see that maximum temperatures in 2004 bounced around above and below average while maximum temperatures in 2005 shot up at the end of June and consistently were above average to mid August. High temperatures are known to reduce olive fly activity and, if hot enough long enough, cause considerable mortality. Ongoing research is aimed at better defining these relationships to better predict weather effects on olive fly populations and perhaps allow reduced



spraying during hot conditions. I think it unwise to think that olive fly pressure will necessarily be less this year. The data above would appear to suggest that near normal temperatures or cooler than normal temperatures could result in a flare up of olive fly populations to 2004 levels or greater. **Now is not the time to relax olive fly programs.** It is important to stay with consistent control programs and adjust as research and conditions indicate.

If you have not already begun monitoring for olive fly, start now. Olive flies are being caught now.

This year I will be monitoring OLF in two locations in Glenn County and two locations in Tehama County. We will post this information to our website at <http://ceglenn.ucdavis.edu/>. This is not a substitute for monitoring in your own orchard, but will give a general idea of what OLF populations are doing.

In May, Olive Fly Researchers in California will be meeting and sharing these results. From this will come an updated UC Recommendations for Controlling Olive Fly. This will be posted on our website and I will summarize the results in my next newsletter.

Olive Bloom Observations

Generally speaking, olive yields in the Sacramento Valley were lighter last year than the year before. This is in contrast to the San Joaquin Valley, which produced a large crop last year. Abundant new growth set the stage for heavy bloom and cropping this year. At this time, it does not look like this will happen especially with the Manzanillo variety. Generally, the Manzanillo bloom is sparse to non-existent. Many of the flower buds are not developing. In many cases, the small undeveloped buds can be seen at the leaf axils. They often appear brown and dry and can be flicked off. The severity of this problem is variable. There appears to be a geographical gradient from north to south with the problem being more severe in the north and getting somewhat less as you go south. The problem is most severe on Manzanillo. Some damage is being reported on Sevillanos in Tehama County. Most Sevillanos and Missions that I have seen around Orland appear to have a normal bloom. Some Manzanillo orchards in southern Glenn County and further south have been observed which are developing a reasonable bloom.

What is responsible for this unexpected situation? The frost we experienced in February is suspected. From February 15th to February 21st, we experienced freezing minimum temperatures with lows around 25 degrees F. It was probably colder than this in some parts of Tehama County. Again on March 10, we had freezing minimum temperatures. Normally low temperatures like these would not be expected to cause much damage and nobody I know thought it necessary to frost protect. I have seen freeze damage in the past in December or January which caused defoliation, but did not kill the flower buds. At bloom time, defoliated shoots had blooming flowers which, of course, did not persist to harvest. Evidence to support the hypothesis that this is frost damage includes an orchard in southern Tehama County that has a reasonable bloom only in 4 rows that were flood irrigated during the freezing conditions. Well water in excess of what was necessary to run microsprinklers in an adjacent almond block was run down these rows. The rest of the orchard which was not protected has limited bloom. In some orchards, a better bloom has been observed in higher areas of the orchard than in the lower areas. This is consistent with the colder heavier air settling in lower areas and has been seen in other years on other crops experiencing frost damage. Another factor that may have influenced the outcome was the unseasonably warm temperatures that we experienced for at least a week prior to the frosts. At the time of the frost, crop development on other crops such as almonds was 7 to 10 days ahead of normal. It may be that this warm weather increased the physiological activity in the buds and increased their frost susceptibility.



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