



Olive News



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IN THIS ISSUE

Olive Fruit Fly Meeting

Olive Fly Update

Timing Sprays for Control
of Peacock Spot and Olive
Knot Disease

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OLIVE FRUIT FLY MEETING

Monday, November 17, 2003

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Orland Memorial Hall

327 Fourth Street - Orland

Sponsored by Glenn and Tehama Agricultural Commissioner's Office and University of California Cooperative Extension.

- 9:00 a.m. **Registration/Introduction**
Doug Compton, Assistant Agricultural Commissioner, Tehama County
- 9:20 **Update on Olive Fly Pest Management Districts**
Jean Miller (Glenn County), Tehama County Representative
- 9:40 **Current Research on the Olive Fruit Fly**
Dr. Frank Zalom, University of CA, Davis
- 10:40 **Update on Spinosad (GF-120)**
Rick Geddes, Dow Representative
- 11:00 **Update on Attract and Kill Traps**
Bob Fritts, Certis Representative
- 11:20 **California Olive Committee Monitoring in Butte, Glenn and Tehama Counties**
Tim Ksander, Ag Advisors
- 11:40 **Handler Comments**
Cody McCoy (Bell Carter), Matt Koball (Musco)

Olive Fly Update

Olive fly populations have escalated dramatically in the Sacramento Valley this year. As you probably have heard, Bell Carter Olives quit receiving olives from the Oroville area because of high levels of infestation in fruit coming from that area. Additionally, at this writing Bell Carter reports having received fruit infested with olive fly from numerous orchards in Tehama County and several in Glenn County. Musco Family Olives in Orland reports having received fruit from one orchard in Glenn County infested with olive fly.

While the situation in Oroville is not completely unexpected, trap catch data from that area provided by the California Olive Committee (COC) has been showing extremely high numbers all summer, the level of infestation in Glenn and Tehama Counties has caught many in the industry by surprise. As of Oct. 30th, COC traps have shown the following average number of flies per location in Butte, Glenn and Tehama Counties respectively, 4,336, 12 and 78. The numbers in Glenn and Tehama Counties do not seem extremely high compared to the numbers we have seen coming from the Southern San Joaquin. Yet according to Bell Carter and Musco, no infested fruit has been received from the Southern San Joaquin. Additionally, olive fly is not expected to do well in hot climates. Prior to this year, I thought that would help explain the relatively slow development of olive fly populations in the Sacramento Valley. However, this summer was one of the hottest summers in recent memory and yet the fly seems to be doing quite well.

This rise in olive fly pressure comes at a very bad time for the table olive industry. With current returns to growers being well below production costs, many growers are reluctant to spend more money on pest control. While I do not yet have the numbers to back this up, based on what I have gathered from the Ag. Commissioner, growers and pesticide dealers, it is my feeling that less spraying was done this year in Glenn and Tehama Counties than last year and this may have contributed to the rapid development of pest populations.

Olive fly pressure in the three county area seems to be related to the effort that has been expended to control it. Last year nearly all of the commercial growers in Glenn County sprayed for olive fly and the Glenn County Pest Control District was active, applying at least two sprays on roadside trees and placing traps in residential areas. In Tehama County at least 75% of the commercial growers applied at least one pesticide treatment for olive fly, but the pest control district's activities were restricted to supplying monitoring traps to those who requested them. In Butte County where no pest control district was formed, pest control measures were more erratic. In 2003 the Glenn County pest control district was again active, applying three sprays to roadside trees and applying attract and kill traps to ornamental olive trees in urban areas.

While this may be considered an overreaction by some, in my opinion we are currently at a critical point in the table olive industry. If olive fly populations continue to grow in Glenn and Tehama Counties as they have in Butte County, what will next year bring?

Olives left on the tree can serve as host for overwintering olive flies and allow them to build populations for the coming year. I strongly recommend that a post harvest spray be applied to minimize this possibility and, to whatever extent possible, remaining fruit be removed from the trees.

I strongly encourage you to attend the olive fly meeting described on the first page where the current situation, control measures and current research will be discussed.

Timing Sprays for Control of Peacock Spot and Olive Knot Disease

Copper fungicides are recommended for control of olive leaf spot (peacock spot) and olive knot disease. To be most effective for control of peacock spot, copper sprays must be applied before significant rains occur in the fall, while research has shown that the greatest amount of olive knot infection occurs in the spring coinciding with natural leaf drop and that spring sprays (March-April) are more efficacious for control of olive knot than fall sprays. Therefore, two sprays are recommended, fall for leaf spot and spring for peacock spot. If, under the current economic conditions, you feel that you can only afford one spray, then I recommend that you decide which disease is more problematic in your orchard and then time your spray accordingly. Of our common table varieties, Mission is by far the most susceptible to leaf spot followed by Manzanillo and then Sevillano, Ascolano and Barouni. If left uncontrolled in Mission trees, leaf spot can build up and increase disease pressure on nearby Manzanillos and Sevillanos. Manzanillo is by far the most susceptible to olive knot, followed by Sevillano then Mission, Ascolano and Barouni. Delay pruning varieties which are susceptible to freeze injury and olive knot (Manzanillo and Sevillano) until the spring after the threat of freezing temperatures and rain is diminished. Pruning opens tree canopies and makes them more susceptible to freeze injury. Pruning wounds are susceptible to olive knot infection for up to 14 days.



Figure 1. Peacock Spot



Figure 2. Olive Knot Disease

