

## **Wisconsin Horticulture Update Friday, July 20, 2007**

Conference Code: 8213#....this will be the conference code for the season

### **Key Topics:**

Moles <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/G3200.pdf>  
Blossom end rot <http://www.plantpath.wisc.edu/pddc/factsheets/BlossomEndRot.doc>  
Colorado potato beetle <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A3678.pdf>  
Oak wilt <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/G3590.pdf>  
Grapes <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A2129.pdf>  
Raspberry <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A1610.pdf>  
Apples <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A3565.PDF>  
Grapes <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A1656.PDF>  
Cabbage worm <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/2201.html>  
Japanese beetle <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort/gardenfacts/X1062.pdf>  
Garden Insect Pests <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A2088.pdf>  
Cornell's Fruit Crop Diagnostic Program  
<http://www.hort.cornell.edu/department/faculty/pritts/BerryDoc/berrydoc.htm>

### **County Roll Call**

Brown, Burnett, Dane, Eau Claire, La Crosse, Outagamie, Pierce, Portage, Sawyer, Sheboygan, St. Croix, Washburn, and Wood.

### **Phenology**

#### South East

Arrowwood viburnum fruit ripe

### **Growing Degree Report by District**

### **DATPC Growing Degree Day Information to Date**

### **Weather Report for 2007**

### **County Reports**

Eau Claire County--You'll be talking a little about the droughty conditions that are going on across the state, and it's also true here in Eau Claire County. What we're suffering from is what we call a moderate drought, is what I've heard. The rain was spotty this week, but a lot of our area missed any rain, and unfortunately the forecast is for more

heat, but no rain, and so we're expressing the stress of drought will be increasing. As far as what is going on out in our landscapes, the vast majority of our lawns are dormant, but some of those people who really love their lawns are still watering, and they're giving me questions on how to fertilize their lawn this time of year. Also, I'm still getting a lot of calls on moles <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/G3200.pdf> . Moles are a big problem up here in the northwest. As far as our trees go, we have concerns about oak wilt <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/G3590.pdf> , we're seeing leaf scorch, particularly on the maples, and the newly planted trees. And for vegetables, we're seeing blossom end rot <http://www.plantpath.wisc.edu/pddc/factsheets/BlossomEndRot.doc> on our tomatoes, again, also affected by the droughty weather. We're seeing Japanese beetles are active, getting calls of swarms of blister beetles, and Colorado potato beetle <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A3678.pdf> problems persisting. We're just seeing our first incidences of powdery mildew, in this case on grapes <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A2129.pdf> and honeysuckle, and in general in our community vegetable gardens, those gardens that are being watered on a regular basis, they're actually looking quite good, I see, with the warm temperatures and the good spring start, but on the other hand those gardens that aren't being irrigated, they're definitely struggling.

La Crosse County--Well, Tom, it's basically everything you just said. We didn't get any rain this last week at all, went to the south, as everyone's probably heard, but hardly a drop fell in La Crosse County. So it's really dry, and the lawns are drying up worse than ever. In addition to what you said, we have pretty much all those same problems. Seeing a lot of leaf hoppers, and questions on leaf galls, people still don't believe that it's a cosmetic problem and want to do something about it. It's supposed to be 90 to 95 all next week and no rain.

Portage County--We have a lot of irrigation with the commercial production, so even though we have a severe drought, a lot of things are irrigated—people's lawns, all the field crops are all irrigated, so again like you're saying, with the warm weather you're seeing a lot of nice things, because they grow well in the sun and they haven't been damaged by any storms, but we are seeing a lot of tree problems have been coming in, where the trees are starting to look pretty sick, because most people think that mature trees don't need to be watered, so they're starting to have problems with their trees, and so that seems to be the biggest problem that we're having.

Brown County--We started to seeing problems with blossom end rot, powdery mildew on grapes, and leaf hoppers, and the Japanese beetles <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort/gardenfacts/X1062.pdf> still number one pest up here.

Dane County--As everyone else is reporting, Japanese beetles, the drought stress on everything. We got the Dane County Fair going on this week.

## **Specialist Reports:**

### **Bob Tomesh, UW Horticulture Specialist**

Continuing with at least a fairly large number of questions, most drought stress related. The

raspberries <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A1610.pdf> are about finished, at least here in the southern part of the state, and people should look to summer pruning. A couple of suggestions would be to do would complete the summer pruning by removing the old floricanes, thin out the primocanes, and then follow the pruning with a very good watering schedule. This will enhance the canes productivity for next year. Red plums are ripening. Sampled a few this last week, and some of the other purple varieties ought to be coming into ripening soon <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A3565.PDF> . Something that you'll probably start catching on the apple symptom questions as people begin to harvest some of the earlier varieties. I was visiting a small orchard this past week, and I'm suspecting that we have a fairly large amount of seed damage due to insect pressure this past summer, which can result in fruit drop. I noticed that when you start shaking the trees, the fruit just starts falling out of the tree, and it's kind of a self-thinning process. The fruit are not ripe. I am suspect that if we have a very heavy wind or a very heavy rainfall, that we're going to probably start receiving homeowners reports that many of their apples are falling out of the tree. Grapes; powdery and downy mildew, and usually you can observe the powdery mildew, the whitish color, up on the top of the leaf, and that usually comes in when we have some of the dryer temperatures <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A1656.PDF> . The downy mildew you'll see the black colonies on the underside of the leaf, protruding out through the stomata. And for some reason this year, I'm seeing more of the downy mildew.

In the vegetables, of course cabbage worms <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/2201.html>. As people are now beginning to harvest both their cauliflower and broccoli, they get to the bottom of the kettle after they steaming their vegetables, they see the little green critters there in the water. Again, our control mechanisms would be some of the BT products, and also some of the other materials like Sevin. Of course we encourage monitoring the days from application until they can begin to harvest those vegetables with any pesticide they select to use. One of the things with the cabbage worm that is important to be on top of continued applications for the best management. This will reduce the cabbage worms when they're smaller in size. Blossom end rot <http://www.plantpath.wisc.edu/pddc/factsheets/BlossomEndRot.doc> , not only on tomatoes, but we're also seeing in on peppers and summer squash this year. Poor fruit set on tomatoes, again due to the drought stress. I had calls yesterday wondering why they have beautiful tomato plants, they're four-feet tall, they may have been watering and fertilizing, but just no fruit set. Now is the time to start considering any of the fall crop plantings of vegetables—cauliflower, radishes, lettuce, etc., but monitor the weather before planting. The soil temperature may be too hot to be starting seeds directly in the garden. If they are going to plant seeds, consider the covering of the row with either newspaper or a piece of plywood or something, water daily until the small seedlings start to emerge in that row, then pull it off the protection. Because the soil temperatures are getting very hot, it'll desiccate those germinating seeds. I would also recommend watching and waiting for cooler temperatures before starting new seed planting. Cantaloupe, melon ripening, and some people want to know when they're ripe. One of things to watch for is the tendril at the node closest to where the fruit is attached. That tendril will begin to turn brown, and dry up, and this is usually an indication that that fruit is ripe. Many times the outer portion of the fruit looks like it's ripe at least a week or two ahead of time; once you remove it from the plant it stops its entire ripening process. In the turf area, lawns are dormant, and fertilizing is not going help. People think that if they add fertilizer they'll get that lawn growing. We need to consider a couple things. One, we need to have those lawns actually growing, getting up there to a height of about three inches, and having some regular rains taking care of that, and then apply the fertilizer. If they apply it now and we receive heavy rains, a lot of the fertilizer will wash off. Then, we're going to have more problems in our environment. So, encourage people to hold off on the lawn fertilization. Flowers, continue deadheading. This is a time to look at side dressing with something like 10-

10-10 at about a pound per hundred square feet. If you're watering those perennial flowerbeds on a regular basis, the combination of fertilizer and water is going to encourage more of the perennial structure growth. For those who are looking at dividing those later, they'll have a much healthier plant to divide. Fertilizing and watering brings the plants into better shape for both fall and winter hardiness and winter survival. For those interested with the dividing perennials, they should be watering generously for a day or two prior to the process of dividing. They'll be less apt to break perennial stems and roots, have fewer types of injuries.

Trees—Drought stress; leaves are definitely browning out. I'm seeing many of the trees that were planted in the last couple of years, if they have not been on a watering schedule, all of a sudden the entire tree will just brown out. Then it is too late to do anything. We're suggesting watering applications of ten to twelve gallons per inch of trunk diameter, on a weekly basis. This will help carry the trees through this period of drought stress. Once they start watering, they need to continue to watering through this drought period. Stress symptoms include marginal burning on the leaves, leaf cupping, and leaf curl during the heat of the day, and older leaf brown and dropping off the tree.

I think the issue of the drought, with the people in their landscapes, we definitely need to encourage for people to start watering, and in some cases it may even be too late from some of the cases that I've seen, but drought stress is a real issue. Encourage them to hold off on any fertilizing of the lawns until we have some re-greening of the lawn. They often think that if they add fertilizer and put some water on it that it'll green up and of course we're suggesting to hold off on fertilizing until our Labor Day weekend...if we begin to receive regular rains.

And also as far as making our priorities in the landscape for watering, right? The lawn is a low priority?

Definitely low priority, water the plants that they want to maintain, whether it's a tree or a shrub, or certain perennials, and so in the scheme of things we've got a lot of money invested in the trees and shrubs, and definitely we need to keep those going. The perennial flowerbed would be another area, garden, and then the lawn would definitely be last.

Does anybody have any other questions?

Bob, this is Diana over in Pierce County. What can you tell me about chicory? We're just seeing so much of it along the road sides and pastures, and things like that that we haven't seen in the past. Is that an invasive problem at all?

It's something that's been migrating northward. Back in the 1970's when I worked for the Soil Conservation Service and made it to several farms, I really did not see chicory in Trempealeau and Eau Claire Counties until probably the mid 70's, and then it was only along the roads in dry areas. It's a plant that does not compete real well with healthy turf grass, so that's why you often find it in the roadside or in the ditch. This year with the pastures being as dry as they are, there's not a lot of competition, and that plant just seems to establish a fairly decent tap root or can survive on less water, so you'll see it

This is Kathy in Outagamie. I have what looks like cabbage leaf curl virus. The cabbage leaves are puckered and what should I suggest.

I think that's when you rogue out the infected plant. Just simply rogue out those plants that show the virus, because otherwise insects are going to come in to feed on them and spread it to others.

I've had requests for web links from people asking about focusing water application, and of course some of the new watering techniques. They have timers now that you can attach to your hose, and if you're gone for a week on vacation, it'll kick in those waterers on a certain timed schedule. They're paying for water in the urban areas now, it's fairly costly, and even in the rural areas, and one thinks that water's free because it comes from the well, but you're still paying an electric bill.

## General Questions

### Announcements

#### **July 24, 2007, Apple Field Day, Sturgeon Bay, WI**

At the Peninsula Research Station in the north of Sturgeon Bay. For more information contact the [Wisconsin Apple Growers Association](#).

#### **July 26, 2007, Second Annual Twilight Tour, [Rotary Gardens](#), Janesville, WI**

Join Rotary staff and volunteers from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. to explore this community garden and have your questions answered. Free tours at 5:00, 5:30, 6:00, 6:30 and 7:00 p.m. For more information call (608) 754-3885.

**August 2, Clark County**--A "Produce Farm Tour & Soil Quality Field Day" will be held on Thursday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the LaVerne Zeiset Farm located at N14676 Resewood Ave, Withee. This field day is designed to help produce growers understand key soil characteristics such as water infiltration, compaction, aggregate stability, and biological activity. There will be a detailed discussion addressing the importance of living organisms in soils and how organic matter and tillage systems affect soil characteristics important to good crop yields and environmental quality. Please pre-register by Monday, July 30th by calling the Clark County UW-Extension office 715-743-5121.

#### **Aug 13, 2007, Fruit, Vegetable and Flower Twilight Tour, [Hancock Ag Research Station](#), Hancock, WI**

Hosted in the Albert Horticultural Garden from 4:30 to 8:00 p.m. Tour the station and research plots, and see more than 600 varieties of perennials, herbs, prairie plants, shade plants, grapes and heirloom varieties. For more information contact the [Hancock Ag Research Station](#), N3909 County Hwy V, Hancock, WI 54943-7547 at (715) 249-5961 or fax (715) 249-5850.

**Aug 18, 2007, West Madison Horticulture Field Day, [West Madison Ag Research Station](#), Verona, WI.** Tours, vegetable sampling and demonstrations on a variety of topics from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. For more information contact Asst. Superintendent [Judy Reith-Rozelle](#), 8502 Mineral Point Rd., Verona, WI 53593-9689 at (608) 262-2257 or fax (608) 829-3074.

**Aug 28, 2007, Twilight Garden Tour, [Spoooner Ag Research Station](#), Spooner, WI.** Stroll through the garden to see the various trials and plantings, listen to UW-Extension Hort Specialists and Master Gardeners from 5:00 p.m. to dusk. For more information contact the Spooner Agricultural Research Station, W6646 Highway 70, Spooner, WI 54801 at (715) 635-3735 or Fax (715) 635-6741.

**Aug 29, 2007, Twilight Garden Tour, [Marshfield Ag Research Station](#), Marshfield, WI.** Begins at 5:30 p.m. For more information contact the [Marshfield Agricultural Research Station](#), 8396 Yellowstone Dr., Marshfield, WI 54449-8401 at (715) 387-2523 or fax (715) 387-1723.

**Mini-fact sheets** <http://www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/>

These mini-fact sheets are now available on the MG website as well - go to "Hort Info," "Resources," "Extension Bulletins, Factsheets and Newsletters" to find them. See information on: Asparagus, Bleeding Heart, Colorado Potato Beetle, Crabgrass vs. Quackgrass.



[set #1 2006- B&W](#)

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**See web site** <http://www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/> for other county events

Check the **Events Calender** of this web site <http://www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/> for more event happenings.

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For suggestions or responses, please refer them to:  
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