

Bud stages, Delayed-dormant applications

March 18, 2005

Visits to orchard sites in Box Elder, Davis, and Utah Counties this week indicate that apples, peaches, nectarines, tart/sweet cherries are either starting to break bud or very swollen and ready to shed some bud scales. Apricots, however, are another story--I've heard reports of early bloom in Utah County. Delayed-dormant applications should not be made once bloom has initiated.

Apples and Pears: Some sites are a bit ahead of others, but most apples are at or near green tip, which means that the bud is starting to open, revealing the silvery green tips of young leaves. Pears are at early cluster-bud at the sites visited in Davis and Utah Counties.

Peaches: Most peach flower buds are at first-pink (swollen bud with pinkish color at top), and very few (1% of buds) are at pink-bud (bud has opened slightly revealing pink petals within). In some orchards in Utah Co. (which seems to be ahead of Davis and Box Elder Counties), 1/8-inch long leaf tips are visible emerging from leaf buds.

Cherries: Buds are swollen and greenish at the tips, but none of the sweets or tarts that I observed had yet reached true green-tip (leaves poking from tips of buds).

Delayed-dormant applications can probably still be made sometime in the next 10-14 days, depending on weather. The cold weather is expected to remain for at least a week, it seems. Growers may want to reconsider whether sprays should be applied anytime in the near future, though, with the forecasts for significant rain this weekend and much of next week. Also, be aware that pruning cuts on stone fruits right before significant rain events can sometimes lead to bacterial or fungal infections (e.g., cytospora) at the site of the wound.

Precautionary Statement: All pesticides have benefits and risks, however following the label will maximize the benefits and reduce risks. Pay attention to the directions for use and follow precautionary statements. Pesticide labels are considered legal documents containing instructions and limitations. Inconsistent use of the product or disregarding the label is a violation of both federal and state laws. The pesticide applicator is legally responsible for proper use. Any mention of a pesticide brand in this document is not an endorsement by USU, and brand lists are not all-inclusive.