

Coryneum, Vertebrate Pests, Root Growth

October 3, 2003

Diseases

It is approaching time when growers should treat for **coryneum blight** of peach. Coryneum blight causes bud blasting, shoot die back and in some cases it causes fruit spotting of peaches.

Treatments should be made at 50% leaf fall which is approaching fast. This protects the leaf scars from infection. Using a high pressure sprayer at this time usually removes a high percentage of the leaves and results in protection of most of the leaf scars. Use Bravo Weather Stik, Ziram, Captan, Bordeaux or fixed coppers such as Kocide, Copper-Count -N or other fixed coppers.

In apricots with high levels of coryneum blight it might be necessary to treat in the fall but most apricot orchards can be adequately protected with the spring shuck split sprays.

Spray peach and apricot orchards at shuck split in the spring with Bravo Weather Stik, Ziram or Captan. Abound is also registered on stone fruits but extreme caution is advised to avoid using the same sprayer that is used for many apple varieties due to phytotoxicity.

Peach leaf curl should be treated at the delay dormant stage next spring. Fixed coppers are quite effective but Bravo Weather Stik, Ziram and Bordeaux are also very effective.

Fire Blight

Fall shoot infections are extremely dangerous and care should be taken to prune out any infections to avoid overwintering cankers. Fall infections often progress into large branches and may also cause root stock blight. Be vigilant and thorough in removing cankers. It is not necessary to sterilize pruners this time of year.

Vertebrate Pests

We are approaching the time of year when various vertebrate pests (gophers, voles, squirrels, rabbits, mice) increasingly rely on tree cambium to supplement their diets. In winter, mice will tunnel under snow, weeds, and mulch to get to fruit trees. In fact, the vegetation or snow surrounding trees is preferred because it provides cover during feeding. Maintaining approximately 3 feet of clear space around each tree will help keep certain vertebrates from girdling trees at the soil level. Trapping, baiting, and fumigation will also help reduce local rodent populations. Young trees are particularly susceptible to girdling because the trunk circumference is so small. Physical barriers, installed down to 6 inches, will help protect against most rabbit and mice species. Deep plowing can effectively kill many rodents, although care must be taken not to excessively disturb the root zone of the trees.

Horticultural Issues

Generally, there are two major periods of root growth each year. The first flush of growth happens in spring and the next occurs in fall after fruit are harvested. Maintain adequate but not excessive soil

moisture at this time. Roots will continue to grow now through the fall, but nutrient uptake essentially ceases after the leaves have dropped. An application of nitrogen in early-fall is often wise, depending on the quantities applied earlier in the season and/or the previous year. For trees suffering from significant problems (disease, insects, weather, age, herbicide poisoning), now might be a good time to remove them (and re-plant, if possible). Proper diagnosis of the problem will help determine the best actions to take.

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.