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Inside this issue:

Soon Come	1
Chill Hours Report	1
2015 Blueberry Workshop Notice	2
2015 Blueberry WS Agenda	3
Exobasidium and Spray Guides	4
Producer Meeting in Biloxi Feb 24	5-6
Kosher Certification	7
Bluesfest—A New Rabbiteye	8
The Endless Road	9

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Soon Come

Days like today (upper 60s and sunny) make you realize that the blueberry buds are going to start popping soon. It is an exciting, and somewhat stressful, time of the year. There is so much to do and seemingly so little time to do it in. However, getting the timing right is so important. In this issue I again mention Exobasidium. Work out of Georgia is showing some degree of control with delayed dormant Lime Sulfur or Sulforix sprays. Because of the potential for phytotoxicity it must be applied as a dormant spray.

Also in this issue is the notice and agenda for the upcoming blueberry education workshop to be held in Hattiesburg on February 12. This has become an annual event co-sponsored by MSU Extension, USDA-ARS, and the Gulf South Blueberry Growers Association. These organizations believe in the endeavor of continuing education for blueberry growers. Other topics here include an MSU Extension Producer Advisory Council meeting, information on Kosher Certification, and 'Bluesfest' a new rabbiteye release from the USDA-ARS.

Chill Hour Report

Eric T. Stafne, Fruit Extension Specialist, MSU-ES

The number of chill hours reported are as follow:

Verona = 1112 hr as of Jan 20
 Crystal Springs = 791 as of Jan 20
 Wayne Co. = 996 as of Jan 20
 George Co. = 629 as of Jan 20
 Jones Co. = 743 as of Jan 20

See all Chill hours here: <https://msfruitextension.wordpress.com/chill-hours/>



Mississippi Blueberry Education Workshop

Date: February 12, 2015 (Thursday) Time: 1 PM to 5 PM

Location: MSU Forrest Co. Extension Office 952 Sullivan Drive
Hattiesburg, MS 39401-2714

Mississippi State University Extension Service, in conjunction with the USDA-ARS and the Gulf South Blueberry Growers Association, will once again host an educational workshop focused on blueberry production in Mississippi. This year the topics will include Spotted Wing Drosophila, Disease issues, Blueberry breeding, Pollination and pollinators, Mechanized harvest technology and economics, and the Food Safety Modernization Act. Please come learn about these important topics.

Cost: \$10, at the door will be collected by the Gulf South Blueberry Growers Association to help in future workshops.



**For more information contact Dr. Eric Stafne, 601-403-8939 (office),
662-769-9708 (cell) or estafne@ext.msstate.edu**

Agenda for the 2015 Blueberry Education Workshop

Eric T. Stafne—Fruit Extension Specialist, MSU-ES

Speaker Line-Up and Schedule:

1-1:30 pm **Dr. Barakat Mahmoud** (MSU-ES):

Overview of the Revised FSMA Rule on Produce Safety Standards

1:30-2 pm **Dr. Tim Rinehart** (USDA-ARS, Poplarville):

An Update on Rabbiteye Blueberry Genomics

2-2:30 pm **Aaron Rodgers** (Mississippi Dept. of Agriculture and Commerce):

Mechanical Harvesters vs. Hand Labor: Examining the Economic Decision-making of Blueberry Harvests

2:30-3 pm **Dr. Eric Stafne** (MSU-ES):

Scale-neutral Harvest-aid System and Sensor Technologies to Improve Harvest Efficiency and Handling of Fresh-market Highbush Blueberries

3-3:15 pm Break

3:15-3:45 pm **Dr. Barbara Smith** (USDA-ARS, Poplarville):

Blueberry Disease Control Recommendations

3:45-4:15 pm **Dr. John Adamczyk** (USDA-ARS Poplarville):

Pollinators and You in our Blueberries: Are We Taking It For Granted?

4:15-4:45 pm **Dr. Blair Sampson** (USDA-ARS, Poplarville):

SWD in Mississippi Blueberries

4:45-5 pm Questions

Exobasidium Control and Spray Guides

Eric T. Stafne, MSU-ES

If you have had problems with Exobasidium in the past, now is the time to spray to control it for 2015. University of Georgia is recommending an application of Sulforix or Lime Sulfur. You can see the recommendation on pages 8 and 9 in the publication link below:

<http://www.smallfruits.org/SmallFruitsRegGuideGuides/2015/2015BlueberrySprayGuide.pdf>

If you are an organic blueberry producer, Sulforix is not labeled for that purpose. Lime Sulfur is the option. See more organic recommendations at the link below:

http://www.smallfruits.org/SmallFruitsRegGuideGuides/2015BlueberrySprayGuide_organic_final.pdf

The links above also give great recommendations for control of other pests. These originate from the Small Fruits Consortium, a group of Land-Grant Universities that have banded together in order to consolidate their dwindling resources in fruit production. Luckily, you don't need to be a member of the consortium to have access to their great information. Also, check out Dr. Barbara Smith's previous article on Exobasidium from this newsletter here: <http://msucares.com/newsletters/vaccinium/2014/july-sept.pdf>



Coastal area producers to meet Feb. 24 in Biloxi

BILOXI -- Coastal region agriculture producers and other interested clients are invited to help direct educational programming and research provided by Mississippi State University.

The Commodity Advisory Council meeting will begin at 9 a.m. on Feb. 24 at the Coastal Research and Extension Center in Biloxi.

Experts with the MSU Extension Service and Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station will share research results, answer questions and listen to producer needs for 2015.

Individual commodity sessions include commercial ornamental horticulture, fruits, livestock, row crops, seafood and aquaculture, forestry, home horticulture, vegetables, equine and beekeeping. Each commodity group will share its research and Extension priorities during a general session.

Deadline for preregistration is Feb. 17 by 5 p.m. The meeting will end at 3:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

The Coastal Research and Extension Center is located at 1815 Popp's Ferry Road in Biloxi.

For more information or to register, call the Coastal Research and Extension Center at 228-388-4710.

-30-

Writer: Susan Collins-Smith

Released: Jan. 26, 2015

Contact: Dr. Patricia Knight, 228-388-4710

See next page for the Agenda and more information

Producer Advisory Council Meeting in Biloxi

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Mississippi State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating

You are cordially invited to participate in the
Coastal Research and Extension Center

Commodity Advisory Council

February 24, 2015

Coastal Research and Extension Center
1815 Poppo's Ferry Road, Biloxi, MS 39532

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Lunch will be served

Please RSVP by February 17, 2015

Via email: LesterM@ext.msstate.edu or
phone: 228-546-1004

Individuals invited to this Advisory Council are selected as representatives of specific commodities and are asked by Mississippi State University to evaluate and provide future direction for research and educational programs for their commodity. Your input is extremely valuable to us in setting priorities for the coming year.

We hope that your schedule permits you to attend.

Agenda

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 9:00-9:20 a.m. | Registration |
| 9:20-9:30 a.m. | Welcome and Introductions |
| 9:30-11:00 a.m. | Breakout Commodity Session One
Commercial Ornamental Horticulture
Fruits
Livestock
Agronomic Crops (Cotton & Corn)
Seafood and Aquaculture
Forestry |
| 11:00-12:30 | Breakout Commodity Session Two
Home Horticulture
Vegetables
Horse & Small Ruminants
Agronomic Crops (Soybeans/ Peanuts)
Apiculture (Bees) |
| 12:30-1:15 p.m. | Lunch (provided on-site) |
| 1:15-1:45 p.m. | Comments from USDA, & Farm Bureau |
| 1:45 – 2:30 p.m. | Reports from Commodity Groups |
| 2:30 p.m. | Responses from MAFES & MSU-ES |
| 3:00 p.m. | Adjourn |

Mississippi State University, United States Department of Agriculture, Counties Cooperating

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What is Kosher Certification?

Eric T. Stafne—MSU-ES

Recently, I had a phone call asking me if I knew what Kosher Certification was all about. I had to admit that I did not. However, I was able to get more information from the International Food Technologists website. Below is some of that information:

What does “kosher” mean?

Kosher means that a food is “fit or proper” according to Jewish dietary laws. These laws specify the types of food and meat that may be eaten, and provide strict guidelines for preparing, processing and inspecting these foods.

Are kosher foods only for persons observing Jewish food laws?

No. In fact, approximately 80 percent of kosher consumers are people who are not observing Jewish dietary laws. And kosher foods are becoming more popular. Kosher food sales jumped 64 percent between 2003 and 2008, to a record \$12.5 billion, according to the marketing research firm, Mintel.

How do I know if a food is Kosher?

There are six major kosher certification symbols in the U.S. The word “pareve” or the letter “p” adjacent to a kosher certification symbol further specifies that the product contains no meat or dairy. The “D” means it does have dairy.

What are the benefits of kosher food?

Many consumers purchase kosher foods because they appreciate the strict food preparation and inspection guidelines and the clarity in food ingredients. For example, meat and dairy are never prepared or packaged together in kosher-certified foods. A pareve kosher food has no meat or dairy. Kosher products labeled for Passover may contain matzos (baked wheat flour) but no other hidden forms of wheat, oats, rye, spelt, and barley. They generally also do not contain any ingredients derived from corn, soy, rice, peanuts or legumes. These guidelines can be beneficial to consumers with food allergies or intolerances, or those adhering to a vegetarian or vegan diet.

Are kosher foods easy to find?

Approximately 40 percent of the packaged goods in the supermarket are certified kosher. Kosher-certified foods are readily available throughout the U.S. and world.

Are kosher foods better and/or safer for you?

Almost all foods can be found as kosher. The key difference is the auditing of kosher foods on a quite regular basis by the religious authorities that requires companies to have better control of their operations.

If you are interested in learning more go to the link here: <http://www.ift.org/Knowledge-Center/Learn-About-Food-Science/Food-Facts/Kosher-Food.aspx>

‘Bluesfest’ - A New Rabbiteye Blueberry

Dr. Stephen Stringer — USDA-ARS Poplarville

‘Bluesfest’ is a productive new rabbiteye blueberry developed and released by the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS). ‘Bluesfest’, like ‘Powderblue’, has exceptionally light blue fruit that results from a relatively thick natural waxy coating on berry skins. However, the relatively small berries of ‘Powderblue’ may at times sell for less than larger berries of other cultivars. Important attributes of ‘Bluesfest’ include its mid-to-late season ripening period, exceptionally light blue color, and berry size exceeding that of fruit of ‘Powderblue’, an industry standard.





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The Endless Road

Eric T. Stafne, Fruit Extension Specialist MSU-ES

This time of year is extremely busy for me. Conferences abound after January 1. There are so many that I have to decline going to some of them (I missed out on an all-expense paid trip to San Diego because it was at the same time as the Southeast Regional Fruit and Vegetable Conference in Savannah, GA). I spoke on blueberry production to the Southern Sustainable Agricultural Working Group in Mobile too. To be honest, I'm not sure how I found time to put together this newsletter, but it is a high priority for me to get information out to the blueberry growers of Mississippi. If there is anything you would like me to focus on for future issues please let me know, I am always looking for a good topic.

