



Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board

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January 16, 2012

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Self-Directed Risk Management – Have You Applied?

Approximately 3,000 fruit & vegetable producers are eligible to receive payments under the new SDRM program. As of January 6, 2012, only about 1,500 had actually sent in their deposit/withdrawal notices to Agricorp.

If you are one of the remaining 1,500 who hasn't sent in their notice, please do so prior to the February 1, 2012 deadline. You either use it or lose it. Remember, there are no strings attached to this round of funding. For next year, growers must have a Premises I.D. number from OnTrace, participate in AgriStability and make a matching deposit into your SDRM virtual account with Agricorp. For more information, please call 1-888-247-4999.

Other important dates to remember are:

January 2012	Agricorp issues AGR1 for calendar 2011 deposits
February 1, 2012	DEADLINE TO SUBMIT DEPOSIT AND WITHDRAWAL REQUESTS FOR 2011 SDRM PROGRAM
March 2012	Agricorp begins processing 2011 spring withdrawal cheques
April 30, 2012	Secure coverage for AgriStability
June 15, 2012	File a 2011 T1163 to CRA (individuals, partners)
June 30, 2012	File a Statement A to Agricorp (corporations)
September 2012	Agricorp to mail the majority of 2012 Deposit Packages
February 1, 2013*	Deadline to submit deposit and withdrawal requests for 2012 program

*or 90 days from the date of your deposit notice – whichever is later

Annual General Meeting Schedule

Please see Annual Grower Meeting schedule below. Grower Committee elections will occur at each District Annual Meeting. All growers will be asked to register so please ensure you know your grower number (one grower number = one vote).

March 26 - District 3 & 4 (Essex, Kent Lambton) – Colasanti's Tropical Gardens, Ruthven

3:00 p.m. Ontario Fruit Testing Association
4:30 p.m. Workshop-Integrated Pest Management On-Line
5:00 p.m. Dinner
6:00 p.m. Tender Fruit Annual Meeting

March 27 - District 5 (Haldimand-Norfolk) – Little River Inn (Best Western), Simcoe

11:00 a.m. Tender Fruit Annual Meeting
12:00 p.m. Lunch

March 28 - District 1 & 2 –Niagara – Hernder Estate Winery, St. Catharines

Annual General Meeting
2:15 p.m. Grower Registration
2:30 p.m. Presentations:
1. Workshop – Integrated Pest Management On-Line
2. Workshop – PPV Management Program
 ✓ Best Management Practices
 ✓ International Grower Panel
3. Labour Issues Coordinating Committee - Employee Relations Best Management Practices – Ken Linington
4:30 p.m. Business Section
5:30 p.m. Award of Merit Presentation - Len Troup
5:45 p.m. Dinner

Note - The newly elected District Grower Committees will meet on April 3, 2012 for the purpose of electing the 2012 Board of Directors. This meeting will be held at the Board offices in St. Catharines. The newly elected Board of Directors will meet immediately following the Grower Committee meeting.

Agenda Highlights - Niagara Annual Meeting (MARCH 28, 2012)

1. IPM Pest Management On-Line Workshop

A workshop on the new IPM On-Line Program will be held during the Districts 1&2 and 3&4 annual meetings (see attached flyer for details). Wendy McFadden-Smith, OMAFRA IPM Specialist, is the lead on this project and will be making the presentation. This is a new tool which is designed to assist growers in their IPM planning, pest identification and includes Publication 360 on line. The project was funded through the Farm Innovation Program.

2. PPV Best Management Practices and International Grower Panel

OMAFRA representatives will present their "PPV Best Management Practices" manual and are currently working on possible presentations from growers from Europe (and others to be determined) who have lived with PPV for many years. These growers would be able to provide an overview of how they have learned to manage PPV in their orchards and provide insight of what our growers can expect now that the Eradication Program has been terminated and the Management Strategy introduced.

3. Employee Relations Best Management – Ken Linington, LICC

Growers continue to face challenges which may result in legal challenges and/or the risk of losing access to the Seasonal Workers Program. Ken Linington, Secretary of the Labour Issues Coordinating Committee, will provide growers with information of how to Best Manage their labour force to ensure that growers are operating within their terms and conditions of employment.

4. **Award of Merit – Len Troup**

As noted above, this year's Award of Merit winner will be presented to Len Troup. Len has represented growers on the Tender Fruit Board for 28 years the last 15 as their Chair. Len has announced that he will not be seeking reelection to the Board. It goes without saying that he deserves to receive this honour.

During his term as a director and as Chair, Len has served on numerous Boards, Committees and Associations including a two-year term as Chair of the Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Growers' Association.

Plans are well underway for a special Award of Merit dinner following the annual meeting, including special presentations from notable dignitaries. Please mark this date on your calendar and plan to attend the AGM as well as the Award of Merit presentation.

Tree Census

We are in the process of updating the Tree Census which was last conducted in 2009. Copy of your 2009 census was mailed in November along with an update form. Having access to the most current tree inventory data is crucial in helping the industry make informed decisions on future plantings and removals and developing the most effective marketing and promotional programs.

If you have already sent in your census update, thank you. If you have not, please do so by January 30th, 2012. **Please ensure that your name is on your form before mailing.** If you have any questions on completing your survey, contact Ken Slingerland, who is the lead on the project. He can be reached on his cell at 905-651-0057 or by email janiceslingerland@msn.com.

Pear Pruning Demo Day - Sponsored by: NPF&VGA

Friday February 24, 2012 - Feature Speaker:

Raoul Crasborn - After pursuing a career in optometry in the Netherlands, Raoul decided to look for greener pastures and immigrated to New Zealand. This change also involved looking into a new direction, so for the last 32 years he has been involved in the New Zealand fruit-growing industry. Within the Crasborn Group, whose market share is approximately 10% of the New Zealand industry, Raoul's involvements are the management of tree nurseries, new planting developments and new variety research.

Time 10:00 am - Meet at John Fedorkow's farm – 1064 Line 8 (Chrysler Road), NOTL

Pears - to observe a high density pear block planted in spring 2011. Discussion on pruning and training strategies for trees planted 3 feet apart in the row.

Time 11:00 am - Meet at John Thwaites' farm – Town Line Road, north of Carlton St., NOTL

Pears - to observe a high density pear block planted in spring 2011. Topics include pruning and training strategies for trees planted 2, 4, and 6 feet apart; the economics of high density pear production.

Time 2:00 pm - Meet at Tony Sgambelluri's farm – 4531 Maple Grove Rd, Beamsville

Apples - pruning and training strategies for high density trees planted in 2009 planted 4 x 12 feet apart, Mutsu on m9 rootstock.

PPV Management Program

As you are aware, the PPV Eradication Program ended on March 31, 2011. This was replaced with a \$17 million, 5-year PPV Management Program. The program will be delivered in 2 phases;

Phase 1- (2011-2015)

- Regulatory program developed and implemented to mitigate the spread of the virus including monitoring and sampling
- Research initiatives to;
 - facilitate early detection
 - investigate genetic markers for seasonal resistance
 - identify and evaluate new and perhaps existing Ontario varieties that have PPV resistance
 - study of the effects of PPV on young and middle aged trees
 - investigation of new insecticides that immobilize aphid mouth parts

Phase 2- (2016 and beyond)

- Ongoing mitigation of the spread through regulatory controls

Grower education is an important part of the PPV Management Program. A PPV Best Management Practices Manual is being developed by OMAFRA. A draft of the manual will be presented at the Annual General Meeting.

"In 2012 the ban on propagating PPV susceptible material will continue within the Niagara quarantine area. CFIA inspectors will be enforcing the propagation ban by inspection of orchard production areas and residential properties".

CFIA has been strongly advised to continue the propagation ban on a long-term basis as this is the only way that growers can be assured of having access to virus-free replacement trees.

OFVGA Annual General Meeting

The OFVGA Annual General Meeting was held on January 10 and 11, 2012. Representatives from all fruit and vegetable commodity groups attended and heard presentations and dealt with important resolutions from Crop Protection, Safety Nets, Research, Property and Labour. The Tender Fruit Board extends its gratitude to the OFVGA for the funds they received under the Pilot Research & Marketing Program and presented a motion requesting that this important program be continued.

Brian Gilroy (apples), who has been the OFVGA chair for the past two years, has stepped down and Mac James (potatoes) was elected Chair. Ray Duc (grapes) was elected Vice-Chair. We extend our appreciation to Brian Gilroy for his leadership during his term as Chair. Brian was appointed chair of the Property Section.

The OFVGA Board of Directors is made up of one grower from each edible horticulture sector (2 from Greenhouse Vegetables). The 2012 Board of Directors is:

- Mac James (potatoes) - Chair
- Ray Duc (grapes) – Vice Chair
- Fred Meyers (tender fruit)
- Brian Gilroy (apples) who is also serving as chair of the property section,
- Norm Charbonneau (small fruit/berries)
- Jason Verkaik (fresh vegetable – muck)
- Jason Ryder (asparagus)
- Jan VanderHout and Don Taylor (greenhouse vegetables)
- Ken VanTorre (ginseng)
- Mary Shabatura (fresh vegetable).

Ex-officio directors and section chairs:

- Labour Section - Ken Forth
- Safety Nets - Mark Wales
- Crop Protection - Charles Stevens
- Research - Harold Schooley
- Canadian Horticultural Council - Murray Porteous.

FREE On-Line Harvest Water Use Workshop

OMAFRA is offering a free on-line workshop on harvest water usage. During this workshop, participants will learn how to evaluate risks and discuss how to construct and monitor a water sanitizing program.

To register, call **1-877-424-1300** or register online at <http://omafra.webex.com>. Registration closes the day prior to the workshop. A confirmation email will be sent following registration with the online presentation and teleconference details.

Coming Events

- Adrian Huisman's Retirement Celebration and NPF&VGA Award of Merit Presentation (registration form enclosed)
- Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention February 22nd-23rd (www.ofvc.ca to register)

Yours truly,



Adrian Huisman
Manager



Sarah Marshall
Marketing Director

Enclosures

Adrian's making more time for golf... by retiring!



**We invite you to join us to share in
this special occasion as
Adrian Huisman
receives the
Niagara Peninsula Fruit &
Vegetable Growers' Association
Award of Merit
& to celebrate his retirement.**

Date: Thursday, March 8, 2012

Place: Niagara-on-the-Lake
Community Centre,
14 Anderson Lane, NOTL
(map attached)

Time: Reception at 6:00 p.m. (cash bar)
Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$50.00 per person
OR \$400 per table of 8
(includes contribution towards gift)

**There is limited seating!
Please RSVP as soon as possible to
avoid disappointment!**

Name _____

Phone _____

I/we would like to attend the retirement party for Adrian.

persons _____ @ \$50 each = \$ _____

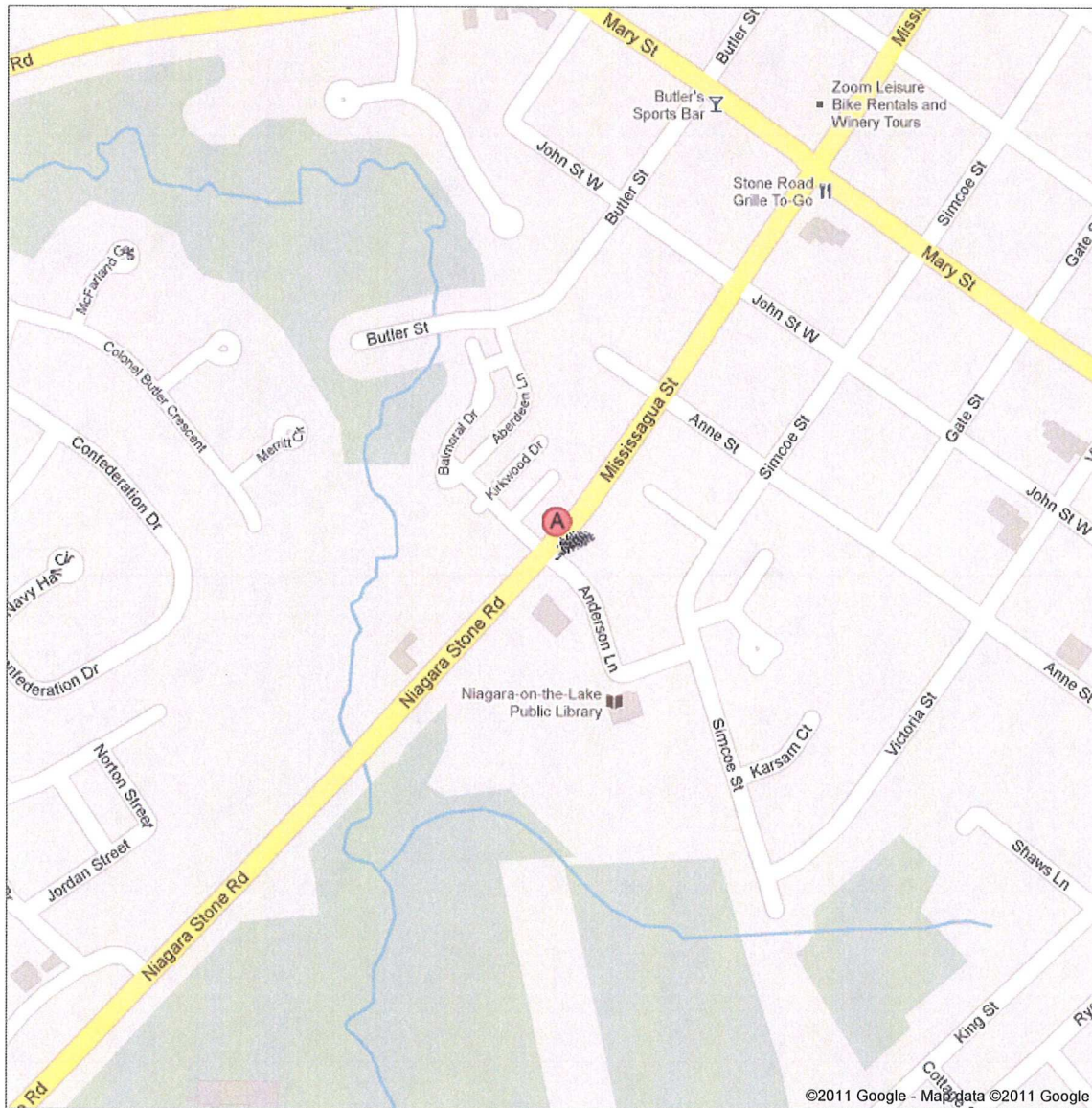
tables _____ @ \$400 each = \$ _____

Please make cheques payable to Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board, PO Box 100, Vineland Station, ON L0R 2E0.



Address **14 Anderson Ln**
Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0

DIRECTIONS
QEW Niagara.
Exit 38B - Regional Road 89/Glendale Ave. N.
towards Niagara-on-the-Lake.
Turn right on Glendale Ave.
Turn left onto York Road.
Take 1st right onto Airport Road.
Turn right onto Niagara Stone Road.
Turn right onto Anderson Lane and
destination will be on the right.





Address **14 Anderson Ln**
Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0





2012 Ontario Tender Fruit Workshops

The Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board is pleased to offer a free workshop to our grower members at the District 1&2 (Niagara) and Districts 3&4 (Ruthven) Annual General Meetings (AGM).

Program to include:

- Training on the **NEW** interactive IPM360 software which includes:
 - how to scout for and identify pests;
 - soil diagnostics; and
 - weed biology, identification and herbicide injury

Workshop Dates and Locations

Monday March 26th – 4:30 p.m. (as part of AGM) Dinner at 5 p.m.
Colosanti's Tropical Gardens - 1550 Road 3 E, Ruthven

Wednesday March 28th – 2:30p.m. (as part of AGM) Dinner at 5:45 p.m.
Hernder Estates Winery - 1607 8th Avenue South, St. Catharines

Pre-Registration for the AGMs is required as per separate notice

The Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board was able to access funding through the Farm Innovation Program (FIP) for this initiative. This project was funded in part through *Growing Forward*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. The Agricultural Adaptation Council assists in the delivery of *Growing Forward* programs in Ontario.



The Tender Fruit Grape Vine

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 2

JAN/FEB 2012

OFVC Celebrating 10 years at a New Location

February 22-23, 2012

Scotiabank Convention Centre, Niagara Falls

The Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention is celebrating 10 years! To mark the occasion, the convention is moving to a new home, The Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls, Ontario. This new, state-of-the-art facility is the perfect setting to deliver a great line-up of horticultural experts and topical sessions as well as an expanded tradeshow with double the space! If you are going to attend a convention in 2012, this is one destination you don't want to miss!

Day 1 sessions include:

Apple Cider Workshop/Tasting | Cover Crops for Annual Crops | Winery | Tender Fruit | Apiculture | Farmers' Markets | Berries | Vegetables | Grapes | Innovation | Direct Farm Sales

Day 2 sessions include:

Soil Test Workshop | Grapes | Apples | Tender Fruit | Biocontrol Workshop | Farmers' Markets | Hops | Vegetables | Farm Safety | Alternate Crops | Dealing with Water | Tree Nuts | Direct Farm Sales

Don't delay! Online registration is now available. It's easy, quick and secure.

For more information and registration details, visit the website at: <http://www.ofvc.ca>



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- Peach Leaf Curl Survey
- Update on Brown Marmorated Stink Bug in Ontario
- Airblast 101 Workshop Series
- Laser Bird-Scarer Project
- On-farm Food Safety

COMING EVENTS

THE Tender Fruit Grape Vine is brought to you by the following staff of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs:

Wendy McFadden-Smith, Editor
Tender Fruit & Grape IPM Specialist
905-562-3833

Kristen Callow
Weed Management Program Lead (Hort)
519-674-1335

Dr. Jennifer DeEll
Fresh Market Quality Program Lead
519-426-1408

Hugh Fraser, Engineer
Horticultural Crop Structures & Equipment
905-562-1618

Rebecca Shortt, Engineer
Irrigation/Water Management
519-426-4920

ALL QUERIES, COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS CAN BE DIRECTED TO THE ABOVE.

For a complete list of Agriculture Development Branch staff visit the OMAFRA web site at: www.ontario.ca/crops

Jan. 16-18, **Ohio Produce Growers & Marketers Congress**, Sandusky, OH. For more information visit www.ohiofruit.org or contact opgma@ofa.org, 614-487-1117

Jan. 26-29, **Guelph Organic Conference**, Guelph, ON. Visit www.guelphorganicconf.ca or contact organix@georgian.net or (705) 444-0923

Feb 10-16, **N.A. Farm Direct Marketing Conference**, Williamsburg, VA Visit www.nafdma.com or contact Charlie Touchette 413-529-0386 for more info.

February 22, 23, **Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Convention, Niagara Falls** Visit <http://www.ofvc.ca> or contact Glenna Carnie 905-688-0990 for more info.

Client Satisfaction Survey

Thank you for subscribing to the Tender Fruit Grape Vine newsletter. Help us to improve our service to you by providing feedback which will be used to direct our focus for the upcoming year. This should take one to three minutes of your time.

Click here to start :
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tenderfruitgrapevine2012>

Subscribe on-line to view the full coloured newsletter (in pdf format) or to receive notice by email when a new issue of the Tender Fruit Grape Vine is posted. All you need to do is submit your email address at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/subscribe/index.html>

Weather Information

Location	Maximum °C		Minimum °C		Precipitation (mm)	
	Nov	Dec	Nov	Dec	Nov	Dec
Vineland (85 yr ave)	18.8 9 th	14.5 4 th	-1.8 18 th	-8.8 29 th	123.8 (67.4)	30.6 (64.9)
Harrow	18.4 8 th	12.0 15 th	-2.0 22 nd	-6.5 10 th	188.6	82.5
Simcoe	na	na	na	na	na	na

Wednesday, February 22

Chair: Kathryn Carter, OMAFRA

- 9:30 a.m. **Maturity and storage of new pear varieties**
Dr. Jennifer DeEll, OMAFRA
- 10:00 a.m. **The changing face of the California stone fruit industry**
Kevin Day University of California Cooperative Extension
- 10:30 a.m. **How to maintain fruit quality**
Dr. Peter Toivonen, AAFC, Summerland, BC
- 11:00 a.m. **Agri-chemical updates**
Scott Hodgins, BASF, Dave Kloppenburg, DuPont, Jen Weston, Bayer CropScience, Paul Foran, Dow AgroSciences, Michael Kaufman, SunCor, Janet Porcbak, UAP

Chair: Kathryn Carter, OMAFRA

- 2:00 p.m. **Your trees on crack: Causes of bark spitting**
Dr. Hannab Mathers, Ohio State University
- 2:30 p.m. **Improving spray deposition -- Getting sprays on target**
Dr. Andrew Landers, Cornell University
- 3:00 p.m. **Performance characteristics of insecticides for tender fruit IPM**
Dr. John Wise, Michigan State University
- 3:30 p.m. **Pear production at KiwiCrunch**
Raoul Crasborn, KiwiCrunch, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand



Thursday, February 23

Chair: Deanna Nemeth, OMAFRA

- 9:30 a.m. **Marketing activities and opportunities in tender fruit**
Sarah Marshall, Ontario Tender Fruit Producers Marketing Board
Jim Bittner, Singer Farms, Appleton, NY
- 10:00 a.m. **Increasing orchard and labour efficiency: Integrating pruning, tree height, and vigor**
Kevin Day, University of California Cooperative Extension
- 10:30 a.m. **Panel discussion - New tender fruit varieties**
- Kevin Day, University of California Cooperative Extension
- Rob Haynes, Mori Nursery
- Dr. Jay Subramanian, University of Guelph
- Kevin Bittner, Singer Farms, Appleton, NY

Peach Leaf Curl Survey

Wendy McFadden-Smith, Tender Fruit & Grape IPM Specialist, OMAFRA

We are on a quest to try to figure out why peach leaf curl has been more severe in recent years. Is it the fungicides used? When they're applied? Differing susceptibility of new varieties? Global warming?

A survey has been designed to try to tease out this information. It's easy to use. Just go to this link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9K9JDLE>

You'll need your spray records from 2009, 2010 and 2011 for your peach and nectarine blocks.

The more responses we receive, the more useful this data will be. Records of good control of peach leaf curl will be just as important as losses so please

It's completely anonymous and will take only 5-10 minutes of your time.

Thank you for your help.



2012 Airblast 101 Workshop Series

An interactive classroom workshop that includes hands-on demonstrations and dialogue with an experienced airblast technician that will provide you with tips on airblast sprayer calibration, maintenance and how to adjust your sprayer to match the crops you spray.

- Bring your sprayer pressure gauge(s) and have their accuracy tested
- Certified Crop Advisor credits offered to attendees
- Full colour 120 page resource workbook provided to each attendee
- Lunch provided following workshop

Space is limited. **To register** call Nancy at 416-622-9771.

\$20 workshop fee paid at door

- **February 27, 2012 – Brighton**
8:00 a.m. – noon, lunch to follow
Codrington Community Center
2992 Highway 30
- **February 28, 2012 – Simcoe**
8:00 a.m. – noon, lunch to follow
Best Western Little River Inn
203 Queensway West
- **February 29, 2012 – Vineland**
8:00 a.m. – noon, lunch to follow
OMAFRA Vineland Resource Centre
4890 Victoria Avenue North
- **March 1, 2012 – Harrow**
8:00 a.m. – noon, lunch to follow
Greenhouse and Processing Crops Research Centre
2585 County Road 20

Update on Brown Marmorated Stink Bug in Ontario

Hannah Fraser, Entomology Program Lead (Hort)

The brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) is an invasive alien species native to China, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan. It was introduced to North America in the mid 1990s, and was first detected in Allentown, Pennsylvania in 2001. While BMSB is capable of natural spread, the pest is also an excellent hitchhiker and can be moved over large distances in cargo and vehicles. At present it has been found in at least 35 states, though many of these are simply detections rather than confirmed as established in the field.

BMSB has a very broad host range that includes tree fruit, berries, grapes, vegetables, agronomic crops, ornamental trees and ornamental shrubs. Damage results when nymphs and adults feed on either vegetative or fruiting plant parts. The pest is highly mobile and can readily switch hosts, moving between crops throughout the growing season. In 2010 and 2011, BMSB was seen in extremely high numbers in the mid-Atlantic region of the US, where growers reported significant economic loss in multiple crops (particularly tree fruit).

Adults overwinter in sheltered areas that may include homes and other heated buildings. As they can aggregate in very large numbers, the BMSB has become a considerable nuisance pest for home owners where established. While the bugs do not bite humans, they will release a foul smell when handled or otherwise disturbed. They do not lay eggs or reproduce inside structures. Aggregation in artificial structures is not common among stink bugs, and is a behaviour that may provide an early warning of where BMSB has become established.

Earlier this year, we reported on a homeowner find of BMSB in an urban centre in Ontario. In the fall of 2011, there were four additional homeowner interceptions, including two in early December. We have also learned of two confirmed finds in late 2010. All of the finds – a total of seven adult specimens - have occurred in Hamilton, ON. While we have yet to find BMSB in the field, the presence of several specimens in a small geographic area and over multiple years implies that a population of this pest may have already become established in Ontario. At the very least, these interceptions provide important information on where to target surveys in 2012.

How can you help?

BMSB was identified by numerous commodity groups as a pest of significance during the 2011 Canadian Minor Use Pesticide Priority Setting Conference. OMAFRA and other provincial agricultural ministries, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Pest Management Centre and United States counterparts (U.S. IR-4 minor use program) are working together to find pest management solutions for BMSB, in anticipation that this pest could become an agricultural nuisance following its establishment.

If BMSB has become established in Ontario, early detection is important to the long term success of management programs. There is a monitoring network for this pest; however, we have a better chance of finding pockets of small populations if more people are looking. Tracking the distribution and spread is essential. If you think you have found BMSB, contact the Agriculture Information Contact Centre at 1-877-424-1300 or email ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca. Place the insect in a leak proof container and add rubbing alcohol, or freeze to kill it.

For more information and for updates on BMSB, visit our website at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/insects/bmsb-resources.html>.



Laser Bird-Scarer Project

Hugh W. Fraser, P.Eng., Agricultural Engineer, OMAFRA

This fall I teamed with John Fedorkow, grape grower near Queenston, on field testing the *P-3 Anti-Avian Laser Scarer* from Carpe Diem Technologies, British Columbia www.carpediemtechnologies.com. It costs about \$5000. Funding was supplied by OMAFRA's Environmental Sustainability Directed Research Program.

The best way to describe this equipment is 'a laser pointer on steroids'. There are both green and red lasers available, and we tried both, but because of equipment problems, we settled on the green one. It is difficult to take pictures of how the laser lights work because they are difficult to see during the day, and although easy to see in the dark, they are difficult to photograph at night. The first attached picture shows John and son Mike on a ladder and cherry picker adjusting the lasers on the tripod about 4 m above ground after dark in September. The second is an illuminated close up of the 'green' face of the laser as it flutters back and forth, even though you may be seeing this in black and white in this report. Supplied software gives you several options for how the lasers will dance over the vineyard covering about a 90 degree arc, fanning left and right, and shooting at least 200 m. The unit shoots a fixed beam that moves very rapidly left to right, then with a couple of small

fluttering mirrors amplifies the beam and makes it dance. The application was in 5 acres of Cab Sauvignon and 4 acres of Cab Franc that, in John's words, '*never have grapes left on the first 5 vines at the ends of the rows near the road and the birds just keep moving further in*'. John does not use bird bangers in this area because there are so many neighbours nearby.

The jury is still out whether this equipment works, however, we are cautiously optimistic. We believe the concept has merit and from John's observations of how birds reacted in the area, he is convinced birds avoided the area where the lasers were pointing. This is despite the fact the lasers are extremely difficult to see during the daytime.

It is the equipment itself and the timeliness of getting it from the supplier that frustrated John and I. We installed the equipment early enough in the season but because the lasers were unreliable, we had to get others sent from the supplier in BC, so when it finally was working, it was much later in the season than we wanted after birds were already eating there. Sometimes the equipment worked, but often didn't so that the equipment was not always working throughout the bird predation season. We had to cannibalize three units to get one to work. We experienced battery charging problems with its solar collector. The controls worked sporadically, and the software was far too complicated, appearing to really be for setting lasers to music, not scaring birds. However, we believe that with better materials, better workmanship, and simpler software, this equipment shows promise and might have a spin off use for preventing crop damage at night by deer, raccoons, turkeys and other hungry night-time predators. We have spoken on numerous occasions with the supplier of this equipment, but he claims to be committed to improving it and plans to attend the convention in February.

It is difficult to set up a trial to tell for sure if bird scaring equipment works. We netted test vines on both cultivars at the south end of the vineyard where John always has bird pressure and compared yields to unnetted vines. We replicated this 3 times. The areas were 'protected' by only the lasers, one pointing in the Cab Franc area, the other in the Cab Sauvignon area. We can assume bird losses under nets are 0% and they appeared to be just that, both visually and by yield weights. Then, according to John, we can also assume bird losses without any nets or bird control on the south end of the vineyard would essentially be 100%. Our observations in the vineyard confirmed this as there was virtually not one single grape remaining on the Cab Sauvignon vines at the remote edge of the vineyard where the laser could not reach. However, in areas where the laser could reach, we recorded losses due to birds to average 8% in the Cab Franc and 51% in the Cab Sauvignon. The laser in the Cab Franc area definitely operated more consistently and over a wider area than the one in the Cab Sauvignon and our recorded bird losses seem to indicate this to be true. The Cab Sauvignon was also harvested 16 days later (November 5th) than the Cab Franc (October 20th).

John and I would like to continue testing this equipment again next year, but only if the supplier can give us better, more reliable equipment with simpler operation.



Maintaining Farm Buildings to Prevent Pest Entry

Wayne Du, Pork Quality Assurance Program Lead - Food Safety Programs, OMAFRA

After harvest season it is time for producers to think about farm building maintenance before the winter arrives. Proper farm building maintenance is a key to a successful pest control program, which plays an important role for food safety. Pests that inhabit farm buildings can cause contamination of food products. Here are two simple steps for getting the job done.

Conduct a building and pest assessment by checking for

- cracks or openings around the foundations, walls, door frames and under doors
- missing or broken screens for vents, eaves and windows
- broken roof, wall and siding
- signs of pests, including droppings, nesting and feeding opportunities, burrows, gnaw marks, sounds and odours inside and around buildings
- any other potential routes of entry by pests

Make repairs to prevent entry by

- sealing cracks or openings around the foundations, walls, door frames and under doors
- repairing broken windows, walls, siding and roof
- installing screens for vents, eaves and windows

Making repairs as you go is the easiest way to keep up to date on building maintenance. As the harvest season comes to an end, schedule in some time to do your repairs.

Farm Pets and Food Safety

Even though we have great affection for our farm pets, when it comes to food safety we have to realize they can be an issue. Both farm cats and dogs are carriers of pathogens and parasites and can pass those on when in contact with food products. For example, many farm cats eat rodents which can contaminate their feces with pathogens and parasites and their cleaning habits keep the cycle of pathogens moving through their bodies. If you produce ready-to-eat food products, farm cats must be prevented from walking on such particularly when food products are in storage. Farm dogs can also present food safety issues as they can pick up pathogens when walking through the barn or from eating things like calf manure. Dogs that eliminate their waste in field production areas present a food safety risk as it can then contaminate produce it lands on or be stepped on by workers and tracked about the area further spreading the pathogens. So if you are concerned about marketing safe fresh farm produce, keep farm pets out of the areas where you grow, process, store and sell your produce.

Sanitizing Farm and Production Facility Equipment

Colleen Haskins, On-Farm Food Safety Program Lead, OMAFRA

As part of your on-farm food safety program, you need to have a cleaning and sanitizing program (supported by detailed records) for equipment used in the production of food products. There are many available options to you for sanitizing your equipment; however you should always refer to the CFIA's list of approved materials for which sanitizing products are suitable for the intended use. To access this list, follow these steps:

- Go to <http://www.inspection.gc.ca>
- Choose "food"
- Choose "packaging materials and non-food chemical products"
- Choose "the reference listing"
- Under 'categories' select "sanitizers" from the drop-down list
- Under 'sub-categories' choose "general"
- Click "submit"

(you can use this process for any of the items located in the list – construction and packaging materials, etc.).

Online Advantage Food Safety Workshop for Producers – Register Today!

Reduce your risk of food contamination and expand your customer base by putting in place a food safety program. OMAFRA is here to help you keep up to date on the latest food safety practices! Join us for these no charge, online workshops from the comfort of your home or business. All you need is an internet and phone connection.

Pre and Post Harvest Water Use – Tuesday, February 14, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (noon)

Did you know that water can carry germs from dirty produce to clean produce? A pre and post harvest water use program is an important step in reducing risks. During this workshop, evaluate your risks and discuss how to construct and monitor a water sanitizing program.

Register today! Call **1-877-424-1300** or register online at www.ontario.ca/foodsafety

Registration closes the day prior to each workshop. A confirmation email will be sent following registration with the online presentation and teleconference details.

Additional Opportunities:

- *Mix and Match Workshops* – Select from a range of food safety topics to create a workshop day tailored to your producer organizations' specific needs.
- *One on One Sessions* – Review and discuss specific food safety plans and issues directly with a food safety advisor in Guelph.

For more information on Mix and Match Workshops or One on One Sessions contact:

Toll Free: 1-877-424-1300

E-mail: advantage@ontario.ca

www.ontario.ca/foodsafety



Did you know...

**15.5% of all Ontarians have a disability?
That's roughly 1 in 7 Ontarians.**

As part of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service came into effect in 2008. Private and non-profit organizations will be required to comply with the standard by January 1, 2012.

Find out more at: ontario.ca/accessON



Agricultural Information Contact Centre: 1-877-424-1300

E-mail: ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca

Northern Ontario Regional Office: 1-800-461-6132

www.ontario.ca/omafra