Greetings from Gary

Dear Ohio Fruit Growers:

Mother nature definitely has a way of keeping us honest! I thought we needed to get ready for summer soon, until a spring freeze on May 13th reminded me that we were still in the middle of an Ohio spring! Temperatures in northwestern Ohio dipped as low as 29F. Frost damage was quite spotty in northern Ohio. Southern Ohio seems to have escaped this time.

I visited quite a few grape growers on May 14 and 15 in southwest Ohio with my good buddy Dave Scurlock. No frost injuries were observed there. That was good news. But, the bad news was that herbicide drift damage to grapevines was very evident. Dicamba and glyphosate damage was quite common. Quite a few grapevines were stunted pretty badly. I certainly hope these vines will grow out of this.

Many blueberry varieties are in petal fall and some in green fruit stage. Blackberries were in full bloom at Piketon Ohio. Both black and red raspberry flowers are in full bloom or in petal fall stage in central Ohio.

Plasticulture strawberry growers in southern Ohio are harvesting right now.

Berries look quite good so far.

If you have questions or comments, please let me know.

sincerely,

Dr. Gary Gao
Extension Specialist and Associate Professor

Ohio Fruit News

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The Ohio State University

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“Which blueberry cultivars do you recommend?”

I have received many questions about blueberry production. One common question is cultivar selection. Since blueberries are quite challenging to grow in Ohio, my suggested cultivars (instead of recommended) are Duke, Draper, Bluecrop, Bluejay, Blueray, and Elliot.

There are many other blueberry cultivars available. It is hard to know how they will perform in Ohio without replicated trials. These trials can take 10 to 15 years and a few dollars. We have to settle for smaller scale observation plots. Some of blueberry cultivars under observation are Aurora, Bluegold, Blue Haven, Huron, Nelson, Patriot and Pink Lemonade.

Growers are also encouraged to plant a few new cultivars on your own to see how they perform and their customers like them.

“How many cultivars should I plant?”

I would plant 4-10 to cover the entire ripening season. Mid-season cultivars, such as Blueray, Bluecrop, and Draper should make up about 75% of a blueberry planting. Early and late cultivars should make up the rest. Multiple cultivars will also facilitate cross pollination, which in turn boosts yields.

Two Upcoming Blueberry Program:
1. Northern Ohio Blueberry School at The Blueberry Patch—June 13, 2013
2. OPGMA Summer Field Day—June 26, 2013
   More info: http://www.opgma.org/?q=tour

I would like to thank Ohio Department of Agriculture and US Department of Agriculture for their financial support of our blueberry research and grower outreach programs though a specialty crop block grant.
Blackberries are certainly gaining popularity in Ohio. There are several common production systems. They are open field, rotatable cross arm trellis, and high tunnel.

**Open field production System:**

Open field production System is the most common production system for blackberries in Ohio since the costs for establishing a planting are not terribly expensive. Fruit quality is pretty good. However, one main challenge is the lack of winter hardiness in many leading blackberry cultivars. ‘Chester’ is a winter hardy cultivar and is widely planted in Ohio. Its flavor is a little sub par. ‘Triple Crown’ produces much better tasting berries. However, its winter hardiness is questionable. These two blackberry cultivars are typically grown using open field system with varying degrees of success.

Ouachita and Natchez are two new cultivars from the University of Arkansas. They are very productive and have excellent taste. However, they are not consistently winter hardy in Ohio. Hence, these two cultivars are better suited for other production systems where they are protected during the winter months.

**Rotatable Cross Arm (RCA) Trellis:**

Rotatable Cross Arm Trellis is a relatively new production system for blackberries. The system was developed by Dr. Fumi Takeda, a Research Horticulturist with USDA. This system was commercialized by Trellis Growing Systems. The RCA system allows growers in colder climate to grow many more cultivars that they could not have grown. Projected yields and revenues are quite high with this system. Several growers in Ohio have adopted this system. It is still early to know the full potential of this system since our growers are still quite new to this system. We planted a short row of blackberry plants using RCA trellis in 2012.
Blackberry Production Systems By Dr. Gary Gao...continued

RCA system is in the foreground while a high tunnel is in the background.

High Tunnel Production of Blackberries:

High tunnel production is another potential way to grow blackberries. We planted Natchez and Ouachita in a high tunnel in 2012. Since Natchez and Ouachita are both floricane blooming cultivars, 2013 will be the first year of fruit production. We definitely noticed early blooming of blackberry plants in the high tunnel versus those plants in open field. Early flowering should translate into early ripening. It will be exciting to see what the yield will be this year!

As you can tell, we have limited experience with high tunnel blackberry production. Growers might want to wait a little until we have more data available or they only try this on a small scale.

Many thanks to ODA and USDA for their support of this project through a specialty crop block grant!
Frost Damage to Grapes
by Gary Gao and Dave Scurlock

Air temperatures dipped to 30.5F at 6:30 am on May 13th at OARDC in Wooster, Ohio. This temperature reading was recorded at the weather station there. At one of the research vineyards, air temperatures went down to 29F. A few of the newly expanded leaves were damaged. Some of the flowers were damaged too. It is too early to tell if the freezing event will have serious impact on grape yield this year.

Photo by Dave Scurlock, OSU Dept. of Horticulture and Crop Science.

If you are a grape grower, you definitely should subscribe to Ohio Grape Electronic News (OGEN). Send an email to Dave Scurlock at Scurlock.2@osu.edu Dave is the viticulture outreach specialist with Department of Horticulture and Crop Science at The Ohio State University. Both Dave and I would like to acknowledge the financial support of Ohio Grape Industries Program for our research and research programs. Here is an excerpt on Apple Thinning from the Southwest Michigan Fruit


Bill, Mark and Diane with MSU do an excellent job in keeping fruit growers informed with their timely and precise updates. Please make adjustments based on your own situation.

Apple Thinning
Bill Shane, Mark Longstroth and Diane Brown Extension Educators, Michigan State University


“Apples are generally past petal fall. Apple fruit are 6 to 8 mm in diameter. Light to significant damage in the low sites or in the low areas in orchards has been reported across the region but the overall crop potential looks good. Recent hot and cloudy weather have stressed developing fruit so that natural fruit thinning is expected to be heavy. This drop should be apparent by the end of the week. Many growers will still need to apply thinners soon. See Apple thinning pointers for 2013. The next thinning window will be towards the end of the week when temperatures begin to warm again.”

### OSU Fruit Specialists

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brad Bergefurd</td>
<td>Phone: 740-289-2071, ext. 136 Email: <a href="mailto:bergefurd.1@osu.edu">bergefurd.1@osu.edu</a> Website: <a href="http://southcenters.osu.edu/hort">http://southcenters.osu.edu/hort</a></td>
<td>Small fruit crops and wholesale produce auction development and operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Imed Dami, Associate Professor &amp; Viticulture State Specialist</td>
<td>Phone: 330-263-3881 Email: <a href="mailto:dami.1@osu.edu">dami.1@osu.edu</a> Website: oardc.osu.edu/grapeweb/</td>
<td>Viticulture research and statewide Extension &amp; outreach programs. Recommendation on variety selection. Imed is the primary research contact of the viticulture program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Doug Doohan, Professor</td>
<td>Phone: 330-202-3593 Email: <a href="mailto:doohan.1@osu.edu">doohan.1@osu.edu</a> Website: <a href="http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedworkshop/">http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedworkshop/</a></td>
<td>Weed control in fruit crops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Mike Ellis, Professor</td>
<td>Phone: 330-263-3849 Email: <a href="mailto:ellis.7@osu.edu">ellis.7@osu.edu</a> Website: <a href="http://plantpath.osu.edu/">http://plantpath.osu.edu/</a></td>
<td>Tree fruit and small fruit disease control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Gary Gao, Small Fruit Specialist &amp; Associate Professor</td>
<td>Phone: 740-289-2071. ext. 123 Email: <a href="mailto:gao.2@osu.edu">gao.2@osu.edu</a> Website: <a href="http://southcenters.osu.edu/hort">http://southcenters.osu.edu/hort</a></td>
<td>Management of blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, currants, gooseberries, grapes, and strawberies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Marrison, County Director, Associate Professor &amp; Extension Educator for Agriculture &amp; Natural Resources OSU Extension – Ashtabula and Trumbull Counties, 39 Wall Street, Jefferson, OH 44047</td>
<td>Phone: 440-576-9008 Email: <a href="mailto:marrison.2@osu.edu">marrison.2@osu.edu</a> Website: <a href="http://ashtabula.osu.edu/">http://ashtabula.osu.edu/</a></td>
<td>Grape production in northeast Ohio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Diane Miller, Associate Professor, Tree Fruit Specialist</td>
<td>Phone: 330-263-3824 Email: <a href="mailto:miller.87@osu.edu">miller.87@osu.edu</a></td>
<td>Tree fruit research and Extension.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## OSU Fruit Specialists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Title</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Expertise</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Scurlock</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation of site suitability for vineyard establishment and all aspects of grape production practices in northern Ohio. David is the primary Extension contact of the viticulture program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viticulture Outreach Specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118 Gourley Hall – OARDC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680 Madison Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooster, OH 44691</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 330-263-3825</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:scurlock.2@osu.edu">scurlock.2@osu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website: oardc.osu.edu/grapeweb/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Celeste Welty, Associate Professor &amp; Extension Entomologist</td>
<td>Phone: 614-292-2803</td>
<td>Tree fruit insect and mite control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension Entomology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rothenbuhler Labs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2501 Carmack Rd.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus, Ohio 43210</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 614-292-2803</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:welty.1@osu.edu">welty.1@osu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://bugs.osu.edu/welty/index.html">http://bugs.osu.edu/welty/index.html</a></td>
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### Northern Ohio Blueberry School

**June 13, 2013**

**5:30 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.**

Registration Fee: There is no cost to attend, however we recommend that you pre-register by 6/12/2013.

To register contact, Charissa McGlothin 740.289.2071 Ext. 132 or mcglothin.4@osu.edu

Program Flyer: [http://go.osu.edu/blueberryschool](http://go.osu.edu/blueberryschool)

Program Location: [http://www.theblueberrypatch.org/](http://www.theblueberrypatch.org/)
Tree Fruit Disease Pathology Videos

by George W. Sundin, Professor and Extension Specialist
Department of Plant, Soil, and Microbial Sciences Michigan State University

Extension videos on tree fruit disease pathology topics on Youtube under the channel: treefruitpathology:
http://www.youtube.com/user/treefruitpathology

Topics covered include apple scab, fire blight, cherry diseases, and fungicides. There are 18 videos on the site right now, and we just posted 5 more this past week on scab fungicides.

Subscribe to Ohio Fruit News:
Please email Charissa McGlothlin at mcglothlin.4@osu.edu

Ohio Fruit News is archived at http://go.osu.edu/ICMNews

Ohio Fruit News
Dr. Gary Gao, Editor
Small Fruit Specialist & Associate Professor
OSU South Centers

1864 Shyville Road, Piketon, OH 45661
http://southcenters.osu.edu/hort
740-289-2071, ext. 123
gao.2@osu.edu

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Keith L. Smith, Ph.D., Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Director, Ohio State University Extension
TDD No. 800-589-8292 (Ohio only) or 614-292-1868

Central Ohio Poison Control Number
(800) 222-1222
TTY# 614-228-2272