Apple Maturity

Apples and other tree fruit are predicted to ripen two weeks ahead of normal which means ReTain application dates should be earlier than normal as well. The predicted harvest date and dates for applying ReTain are listed below. We began apple harvest today with our earliest variety, Pristine, which normally is ready around Aug. 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Predicted McIntosh (nonspur) harvest dates for long term storage (first pick)</th>
<th>ReTain application date 3 weeks ahead of normal ripening</th>
<th>ReTain application date 1 week ahead of normal ripening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sanford</td>
<td>Aug. 30</td>
<td>Aug. 9</td>
<td>Aug. 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmouth</td>
<td>Sept. 8</td>
<td>Aug. 18</td>
<td>Sept. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner</td>
<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td>Aug. 20</td>
<td>Sept. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>Sept. 11</td>
<td>Aug. 21</td>
<td>Sept. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levant</td>
<td>Sept. 13</td>
<td>Aug. 23</td>
<td>Sept. 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These harvest date estimates using the Michigan formula are based on temperature during the first 30 days after full bloom. Fruit ripening can vary from orchard to orchard depending on crop load, so check individual orchards. A heavy crop load delays ripening. Expect orchards with a light crop load to ripen earlier.

To delay the entire harvest (1st and later picks) up to 7-10 days, apply ReTain three to four weeks prior to beginning of expected harvest date for untreated fruit. To prevent fruit drop and ripening of later picked apples (2nd, 3rd, 4th picks), apply ReTain one to two weeks prior to beginning of expected harvest date for untreated fruit. This later timing typically will not delay the start of harvest (1st pick), but will delay maturity for later picks. Gala and Honeycrisp are more sensitive to ReTain than McIntosh and can have a delay in ripening and fruit drop with two-thirds the full rate.
ReTain may be useful to delay ripening for pick-your-own apples where customers are not expecting an early harvest or where warmer than normal temperatures inhibit red coloring. However, it’s impossible to predict temperatures or fruit color during harvest at this early stage. To keep Macs on the tree into October, a split application of ReTain with NAA (Fruitone or Fruit Fix) will work more than either material alone. For the split application, apply a tank mix of ReTain at half rate with 10 ppm NAA at 3 weeks before normal first pick followed by another tank mix of the same one week before normal first pick. Page 168 of the New England Tree Fruit Pest Management Guide has the conversion charge for ppm NAA to ounces of Fruitone.

Preharvest intervals for spray materials are listed on pages 242 to 248 in the Pest Management Guide. ReTain has a seven-day preharvest interval for apple, pear, peach and plum. Fruitone has a two-day preharvest interval.

**Look for Leafrollers**

This year, many of us have McIntosh and Cortland trees that have set fruit in clusters or have fruit tightly spaced on branches. Leaf roller damage is more likely in years under these conditions and where insecticide spray volumes are too low for good coverage of tightly spaced fruit. Leaf rollers feed along the surface of the apple usually at the stem end or where leaves cover the fruit surface. For information on organic and conventional spray materials effective for leaf rollers, refer to page 154 and 155 of the Pest Management Guide.

**Split Pit of Peach**

Peaches are beginning to ripen in parts of the state, which brings on problems with split pit and brown rot. Brown rot seems to be less of a problem this year, but with the inconsistent soil moisture and light crop on some trees, split pit could be worse than normal. You know you have split pit when the stem end of the peach cracks open exposing the pit inside and causing the peach to widen in two directions. Split pit fruit are more likely to rot or be invaded by insects. Anything that increases size will increase the number of split pits. In this season, light crop load is the most likely culprit. In irrigated orchards, avoid inconsistencies in soil moisture or irrigating that leads to rapid fruit growth at this time of year. Some varieties are more prone to split pit than others with little hope for preventing it. On a more positive note, the warm weather this year is great for normal ripening of peaches, so expect flavor and general fruit quality to be good this year.

From Aug. 10 to 21, I (Renae) will be on vacation in North Dakota to visit family. If you need to contact me, call me on my cell phone at *(207) 713-7083*. Access to email is uncertain at this time.

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If you are a person with a disability and will need an accommodations to participate in this program, please call Highmoor Farm at 933-2100 to discuss your needs. Receiving requests for accommodations at least 7 days before the program provides a reasonable amount of time to meet the request, however all requests will be accepted.