



“Working for the Grower”

**A SAFE AND HAPPY
CHRISTMAS**

**TO ALL OUR CLIENTS! WE VALUE YOUR
CUSTOM, THANK YOU!**



**Newsletter
December 2014**

Holiday Arrangements

Remember to let your scout know if you are going to be away over the summer, so that they know who to contact and who to send results to in your absence.

Many growers ask us to forward any over threshold results to their spray contractor or advisor while they are away.



**We hope you get to enjoy a break this
Christmas!**

Leafroller Sprays Without Monitoring

Under AvoGreen protocol growers are allowed **one LEAFROLLER** spray without a monitor after the end of flowering and before the end of January. **Timing** of leafroller sprays is **crucial** to getting a good kill rate, as smaller caterpillars are much easier to kill. However, as we have experienced, leafroller levels can change with the pressure of Tachnid fly's, predatory wasps and other predators.

In addition, there are other pests, such as mites, which may still be a problem after flowering. For these reasons, CropCheck Ltd recommends **3 weekly monitoring** all the way **through December**, so you can use monitoring reports to make better decisions on spray timing.

Greenhouse Thrip start to occur from early to mid January, as fruit start touching, so we will be changing to **2 weekly** monitoring from the beginning of January.

Leafroller Levels

As expected, there have been plenty of tiny leafroller in the soft, tight new leaves. However, numbers have fallen lately, most probably due to Tachnid fly, wasps, and birds.

Six-spotted mite



In some orchards, numbers are still very high. It is less of a concern now that flowering is nearly over, and particularly if tree health is good. In addition, Stethorus ladybirds are in abundance from now on and do a good job eating mites. Also as summer temperatures rise, Six-spotted mite naturally die off.

Reducing mite numbers at this stage should only be considered if numbers in the >10/leaf category are over 10% and there are few beneficials. See the AvoGreen Manual for industry advice.

Beneficials

Growers shouldn't underestimate the effects of beneficial mites and insects on their pest populations over Summer.

One orchard we monitored recently had high levels of leafroller last month, and this month there were less by far, without a spray (we even double-checked!). We can only assume the large numbers of wasps seen there had done the job.

Other Insects

Mirid's (Myrid) have been around over flowering, though not as plentiful as other years. Mirid's are a small green or brown insect, looking like a mini shield beetle, and are seen crawling around on the flowers and new shoot tips. The Mirid feed on mites and aphid then move to eating vegetation at flowering time. You may have seen flowering tips and shoots with some die-back where the Mirid have been feeding.

Zorion minutum or Flower long-horn beetle is another insect mostly seen at flowering. They look like an ant but are royal blue with yellow spots and from the little we know about them, they feed on the flower nectar.



Recipe

There are so many ripe avocados around with windfalls, winter set, and picker drops, that this recipe which I have included before, is really handy. It is quick to make and uses a reasonable quantity of avos.

GUILT-FREE CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

In a blender, combine the following few ingredients:

Flesh of 2 large avocados

1/2 cup cocoa

1/2 cup maple syrup (the original recipe used agave syrup)

Vanilla essence

Chill in small servings (I use decorative small glasses) topped with any tart fruit such as boysenberries, grapefruit, strawberries or raspberries.

Crème fraiche also goes nicely as a dollop on top.

This keeps reasonably well (for a couple of days) in the fridge if you have extra.

It's divine! Nobody would guess it was avocado!

Bee safe!

Remember to have the bees removed before applying any further sprays at this time. Also, please be mindful of your neighbours' kiwifruit flowering and beehives.

Citrus and Flower Crops

Kelly's Citrus thrip season is here and the Citrus white fly are hatching well. To avoid damage to the young fruitlets, now is a very important time to be monitoring.

Flowers will be now succumbing to the Two spotted mite invasion as the weather gets warmer, plus there will be some caterpillar particularly in the luekodendron. Monitoring helps to target spray with softer sprays.



Thanks!!

Cathy has managed reasonably well despite a broken arm, sustained while out monitoring. Happily her right arm is okay so she could type, all-be-it one handed. After 6 weeks in plaster, she is very happy to have it gone and is now into physio visits.

Marise has helped keep records up to date and entered data for Cathy, which has been quicker than Cathy's one-armed attempts. David has been busier than usual taxiing Cathy to schools to teach, hospital appointments, plus doing her chores.

Well done team!

We have taken on 2 more staff to assist mainly with kiwifruit trial work. These are Marise's Mum, Rose and sister Talia. Its great to see their enthusiasm for the often daunting task of counting all kiwi-fruit in more than a dozen vines in one day! Thanks ladies!

The 5,000th Avocado monitoring report went through our office this week. **Congratulations** to John Crabtree; a gift from Crop-Check will be coming your way shortly.



Monitoring Calendars

Thank you to all who have returned the Monitoring Calendar. We **urgently** need any unreturned calendars, or contact the office if you have lost them. These form the main basis for the AvoGreen Audit which is coming up very shortly after Christmas.

AvoGreen Refresher training Owner Operators

The protocols for AvoGreen have changed markedly since mandatory Avogreen was introduced in 2010. We recommend you have the latest AvoGreen Manual printed for reference. CropCheck Ltd can supply Manuals at \$8 + GST & postage.

AIC will contact you soon about renewal of your licence by doing a Refresher course. Most are due in 2015; if you do a course early, your new certificate will be from that date. Please see our website for details.

ENQUIRE NOW



Monitoring: *Avocado*
Tamarilo
Flowers
Citrus
Other Crops
AvoGreen Training
Soil Testing & Leaf Tests

Important points of the season:

- Once flowering is over, bees are out, and before the end of January, you may apply 1 leafroller spray without a monitoring
- Let your monitor know if you have sprayed pesticide or herbicide in your orchard close to their visit.
- Give your monitor plenty of notice about when you will be away on holiday and what you want arranged with visits and reports in your absence.

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