



**“Working with the Grower to Create Healthy Orchards”**



**Bronze Grass Grub Beetle** *Costelytra zealandica*

**Newsletter  
August 2022**

## From the Office

Since David's stay in Waikato at the beginning of May, we have been running to catch up with our garden and orchard, plus four trips to Auckland for our youngest daughters wedding, Cathy's 92 year old uncles funeral and now to babysit two pre-school grandchildren. At least CropCheck has been quiet, though there is always work to do in the office to get ready for the next season. We are also working on reviewing systems for the Blueberry side of the business.

There have been a number of online workshops and seminars recently, both in the Avocado and Blueberry industries. There has been some good debate with some interesting speakers. The advantage of online meetings, is we can have speakers we would not normally be able to include in meetings.

Miaki and Cathy had the pleasure of hosting David Logan from Plant and Food and Alison Matthews from Western Australia. We took them to 3 orchards to look for Six spotted mite. As it was a bit earlier that desirable, we could only find low numbers of mites and no leafdrop.

Some of us also attended the talk in Katikati by Alison and saw many of you there.

The next couple of months we will be getting the next Avogreen paperwork ready for sign up and will be well into the new blueberry season. Miaki will be away in Japan for a while, so Caz will be looking after the Katikati growers until she returns.

Many orchards have stopped monitoring this year, to reduce costs. Covid plus very low or negative incomes from avocado orchards has hit many extremely hard right across the industry. There will be some explaining to do to the auditors later, but that is what you pay us to do. To help us, please make sure you have let us know in writing why you have stopped monitoring or cut down on frequency. We have heard from many of you, but there are still some who have been putting off the monitors by not answering texts or calls. This costs us wages, which we are not getting paid for. We will still contact you about every 3 months to see how you are.

We encourage you to think about a monitor before flowering starts to check the health of your orchard. Contact your monitor or the office to talk to us.



## Bug Update—Avocados

**Leafroller** - We are seeing an increase in Leafroller eggrafts, which indicates Leafroller are around. Because of the wet weather this year, there could be a greater flush this year, which will mean there will be more Leafroller around on the new shoots.

**Greenhouse Thrip** – we are seeing mostly juvenile Thrip on fruit. There have been some adults die off due to cold, but there has not been enough cold weather to have any real affect on Thrip numbers. These insects will hatch now and still cause damage to the fruit.

**NZ Flower Thrip** - Flower Thrip will be increasing as flowers start to open.

**Six Spotted Mite** - So far we have not seen much leafdrop, though there has been some minor patches in some orchards. This could be due to the reduced number of Thrip sprays that were applied over Autumn, which has meant the beneficials are still present in the blocks, keeping the mite number down.

**Scale** - There are definitely a few Scale being seen. With the reduced number of Thrip sprays this year, the Scale numbers will probably be higher.

**Fullers Rose weevil (FRW) damage and live** - We are seeing a little chewing on some trees. It's a bit early for Fullers Rose weevil or Bronze Beetle. Bronze Beetle will be around in a month or so and FRW will be here around December.

**Mealybug** - These are still only seen in very low numbers.

**Natural Predators**—As part of our trip to Auckland babysitting, Cathy has an appointment with Chris Thompson at Bioforce. We will be discussing how we can use predator's more to help with control of major pests. There are some exciting developments in this area in New Zealand and overseas.

## China Growers

This has been a hard few weeks to stay compliant for China; well done if you have kept compliance. If you have sprayed on time or remonitored before the due date, you will still be compliant. All growers who have missed the 28 day cut off, will no longer be compliant for China.



## Safety News



Our last newsletter said that wet ground was our main hazard. That still applies as the long as the wet weather persists.

We are now coming into picking time, with the dangers that brings. If you are picking, please let our staff know and they will stay out of the orchard while the hydralada's are working.

Please notify us of any sprays applied in all crops. Our re-entry period is 14 days after a spray. This is for 2 reasons;

1. To reduce our staff exposure to sprays.
2. We cannot get a clear picture of spray effectiveness until some time after application. Our experience shows that 14 days is a good gap after spraying.



Many will be applying Paramite at the moment. Please let us know if this chemical has been used and we will stay out for 28 days to allow it to work.

**Blueberries**—During the winter, we have been taking part in some of the webinars being held by BBNZ.

The first webinar in June had Peter Ensor doing a presentation on Blueberries going into Australia. Peter has been looking at Pest Incursions, what are they, where are they occurring and how can our procedures be improved to stop incursions. He looked at some of our monitoring reports, comparing what we are finding in the field to what is being found in Australia. There were some very interesting results, confirming that what we are finding in the field is correct.

The last presentation with Rob Silberbauer was particularly interesting for us. There was so much in his presentation that we are still digesting and we will be adding some of his suggestions to our scouting procedures for this next season.

We are also in the process of purchasing a digital microscope, which we will be using to check fruit at a higher magnification than we can in the field.

Cathy will be presenting at the Blueberry Conference in September at Mystery Creek. Please come and say hello to our team at the conference. We are there to answer your questions and help if we can.

*Regular news and updates, can be found on our website or our Facebook page.*

## Weather events



It's now the beginning of August and the weather seems to be changing patterns. I think we are well ready for a change after the enormous amount of rain we have been having. We went into winter with the water tables very low after some very dry years. That has been well and truly reversed.

## Avogreen® Registration

Avogreen Registrations for 2022-2023 Season will be open on the first and third week of October in the CropCheck office. This applies to all Avocado growers. We will be in touch with more details.

## Bronze Grass Grub Beetle *Costelytra zealandica*

There are two bronze coloured beetles we see. One is tiny and is a New Zealand native. The scientific name is *Eucolaspis Brunnea*. This insect does no damage to avocados.



The second bug is a grass grub. This is usually found from September to October, but has been seen later over the last couple of years. This insect causes some significant damage to plants it feeds on. It emerges from the soil in the evening and goes on a feeding and mating frenzy damaging any vegetation in it's path-

way. They are particularly bad in areas that have recently been farmland. We have definitely seen some significant damage on fruit from this Bronze Beetle; the damage appears like spots all over the fruit.

## Change of Identification

We had this photo on the front page of the last newsletter. This insect has been identified as a Green Lacewing juvenile. They carry debris on their backs.



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### Crop Monitoring



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## Blueberry Conference

15th September 2022

Mystery Creek

Contact Blueberry NZ for details

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