

# NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 2023

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



Photo: Aphid on Blueberries

## From the Office

This is a very quiet time of year for everyone. Some of the Blueberry Tunnel Houses are now picking early crop, some are flowering and will start picking in the next month. The Avocado growers are in a hold state with many doing absolutely nothing or very little to their trees. The price being paid for fruit is very depressed, especially with the higher than normal volume of fruit being picked for Local Market in June/July. There is hope that prices will increase later in the season to a better payout. Unfortunately, due to all the extreme weather and winds we have experienced, the damage to fruit is going to be much higher than normal. This, along with insect damage from the much reduced monitoring and lack of spraying, will impact on crop pack outs.

On a brighter note, Cathy and David have a new grandchild arriving in early September. Cathy will be away at some stage in September to help with the new baby.

## BUG UPDATES

### • Leafroller

We have been seeing a few hatched Leafroller Eggrasts and the occasional caterpillar. As the new shoots appear in Spring, Leafroller numbers will increase.

### • NZ Flower Thrip

Flower Thrip will increase over the next couple of months while flowers are out on the Avocados and Blueberries.

### • Six-spotted Mite

Six spotted mite are increasing now and will cause leafdrop on avocados if ignored at high numbers (over 10-15%). These mites are not usually found on blueberries.

### • Mealybug

Mealybugs are around still. They are in the Scale family and are being seen frequently at the moment, though we are not recording them unless we find colonies of more than 6 on one sight.

### • Scale

There are more Scale around this year, probably due to not as much Thrip sprays being applied over Autumn.

### • Greenhouse Thrip

GHT are being seen in lower numbers on fruit at the moment. It is usually juveniles we are finding. They will damage your fruit

if left. If you are about to pick, talk to your packhouse. If picking is not until Christmas or New Year, one spray application now could be advisable, particularly if you have a big crop on your trees.

For Blueberry growers, it is advisable to go into the new season with no Thrip. If you are going to spray, that should be happening before flowering starts fully.

### • Fullers Rose Weevil (FRW) damage and live

These are in a dormant stage at the moment. We will see Bronze Beetle chewing soon, then FRW around November.

### • Natural Predators

We have been seeing more Cucumeris in the orchards that have not been sprayed. They will be feeding on Thrip and may also attack Mites, though Persimilus is a better Mite predator.

### • Blueberry Pests

We have started some of the pre-harvest Tunnel House monitoring and are due to carry out Winter monitoring over the next month.

Winter monitoring involves looking for Mealybug, Blueberry Cane borer and Scale, plus carrying out a Visual Soil Assessment, looking for Grass Grub and

other insects. We will be in touch to book a visit.

With the new season starting now and monitoring under way for the new crop, we are employing some new staff and will be starting to train them over the next 2 weeks. Any new staff will always be fully supervised by an experienced monitor.

So we are not working in the extreme Summer heat in the Waikato, we will be staying overnight in the area and working in the cooler parts of the days. This will enable us to provide you with a better service, with our staff being fresher and not working such long days.

Spraying—it is a Health & Safety issue. Please tell us if you have sprayed and what chemical. If it is Movento or Avid or similar, we will delay entry to the block. We have emailed you a Monitoring Request form, please use it and let us know which blocks to check or avoid if sprayed. Our guideline is we stay out of the blocks for 14 days following sprays. This is flexible depending on the chemical used. If you are using organic sprays, our re-entry time is much shorter.

We have had some requests for the contact details for Bioforce. They are the company that supply predators. Call Chris 09-294-8973 [www.bioforce.co.nz](http://www.bioforce.co.nz)

**Strawberry's**—we are now starting to monitor strawberries and other berries.



# NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2023

*Working with the Grower to Create Healthy Orchards™*

## WEATHER EVENTS

The weather is much nicer now and looking a lot more promising for a good Spring. We have been enjoying the mild frosts and very thankful that we are not in Rotorua where our daughter lives. They have had quite a number of heavy frosts with temperatures into the minus. Winds have been a big problem, but have settled for now. The wind damage to Avocado's is the biggest problem this year, causing a much lower pack-out than usual.

In the tunnel houses, the strong winds have caused some significant damage, needing some costly repairs. Lack of sunshine has caused problems in the strawberries. Many of you will have noticed they have had hard centres and have been tasteless this last season. This has been due to lack of sunlight.

## SAFETY NEWS

It's picking time on many orchards. Please let our staff know if you have hydalada's working in the orchard and we will try and avoid coming in while the pickers are working.

Flowering is happening in many Blueberry blocks now and will shortly be starting in the avocados. We are aware of bees in or coming into blocks. Please let our staff know if the hives have been moved just before they come in as often bees can be left behind, particularly if they are moved during daylight hours.

Are you using Paramite now? Please make sure you let our staff know as we will delay our re-entry for 4 weeks from the spray date. Though it is safe to enter earlier, the product is a long acting chemical and we cannot see the results for up to 4 weeks.

## CROP CHECK CLOUD

All packhouses, consultants, sprayers now have access to the updated version of our cloud and are able to see AvoGreen monitoring reports and documents.

For blueberry growers, Rob Silberbauer is receiving your reports via our Cloud whenever we come in and monitor. There is no one else who has access to your information. Rob has requested the reports be sent to him to help him with research into the insects and diseases being found.

## BLUESKYDATA

We have attached a flyer from our sister company, BlueSkyData Limited. We would love to talk to you about what we are able to offer; either call David or Jes in the office. Check out our new CropCheck website that Jes has just finished writing and will be uploading in the next week or so.



**Please note:** Even though we have good knowledge in insects, we cannot advise you to stop spraying and use only predators. We also cannot advise you what chemicals to spray. Please work with your industry advisers for best advice.



Need a monitoring specialist or know someone who does? Let's chat!

**CropCheck Limited**

Address : 424 Upper Ohauti Road, Ohauti RD 3, Tauranga 3173

Phone : 07 281 1034

Email : [officeadmin@cropcheck.co.nz](mailto:officeadmin@cropcheck.co.nz)

Website : [cropcheck.co.nz](http://cropcheck.co.nz)