

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023



“Working with the Grower to Create Healthy Orchards”

From the Office

The downturn in the Avocado market is affecting so many of us with many growers putting off monitoring due to the cost. Unfortunately, if you have a crop on your trees, now is the most important time of the year to monitor. Leafroller are rampant, Thrip are increasing and mites are around. So if you are trying to save money by not monitoring, now is not the time to do that. By not monitoring now, you are risking severe damage on your new crop, caused by Leafroller and Thrip.

All the registrations have been completed for AvoGreen. There is a big trend away from export this year with a large number of growers now only wanting to be registered for Local Market. Unfortunately, this will mean extra pressure on the Local Market and therefore lower prices being paid out to you, the grower.

On a happier note, it is coming up to Christmas and the holiday season. We are going to try and have the week off between Christmas and New Year this year. If you need an urgent monitor, we can arrange for someone to come, otherwise we will see you the week before Christmas or after New Year.



Photo: Bronze Beetle (*Eucolaspis brunnea*)

BUG UPDATES

• Leafroller

Leafroller numbers are increasing rapidly now in the flush in the blueberries and avocado's. Our advice is that you monitor now then you will know if you need to spray for more than Leafroller in the avocado's.

In the blueberries, it is important that you take action before export harvest as we are finding Leafroller on the berries we are checking under the microscope.

• Flower Thrip (NZ & Western)

We are finding very few Flower Thrip on avocados, but we are finding some on the blueberries. This is to be expected as flowering is now finished in avos and is nearing the finish in the berries.

• Six-spotted Mite

Mites are still present on avocados, though in lower numbers now as some of the stressors are removed from the trees, such as the fruit being harvested and flowering finishing.

• Mealybug

As Mealybug are in the scale family, there could be an increase now. If you are seeing ants on your plants, it could be because of Mealybug.

• Scale

We have not been seeing many Scale in either avos or berries, but they may increase as eggs hatch.

• Greenhouse Thrip

Thrip are now starting to reappear on the old fruit still on the avocados and will start moving onto the new fruit over the next 6 weeks.

We are finding Thrip on the berries, mostly in low numbers in the outdoor blocks. As the tunnels come to the end of picking, the Thrip numbers are increasing. We are seeing Greenhouse, Kelly's and Flower Thrip in the tunnels now. If you are not wanting to spray, releasing Cucumeris is a good solution, especially for local market.

• Fullers Rose Weevil (FRW)

There is only a little bit of damage about, but that may increase from December. Damage needs to be 1sqm to be recorded.

• Natural Predators

The Lacewings are around in significant numbers in the berries and Green Lacewing eggs are appearing in avos. Recently large numbers of Cucumeris were seen feeding on Thrip in a tunnel house. This is a block where they have been

introduced after buying them in from Bioforce in Karaka, Auckland.

• Blueberry Pests

We have noticed some orchards are using Mating Disruption rings this year to tackle Leafroller. We are seeing some Leafroller, but numbers are down on those blocks compared to other blocks. This will be interesting to follow.

Mites are present on some blocks we have visited, some in high numbers. If you know of someone who is exporting and is not monitoring, please encourage them to contact Cathy. Every block that exports without monitoring and proper control programs, risks having the whole blueberry crop banned from Australia.

• Blueberry Conference

The conference was enjoyable and we met some interesting people plus met up with many we had not seen for a while. Thank you Sam for organising such good venues for us to visit. We particularly enjoyed the visit to Tomra and seeing their orchard. What a challenge growing fruit deliberately to have blemishes and disease!

Thank you Oakberry and Berryco for supplying fruit for us to check under the microscope on our stand. Most of the fruit was very clean, with nothing to be found.



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WEATHER EVENTS

I have just read the comments we put in the last newsletter about it being very wet. We are now at the point of irrigating, especially in the Waikato where it is starting to get very hot and drying out.

We have been seeing Avocado trees that are still stressed after the prolonged extremely wet conditions over the last year, with some orchards looking rather unhappy. Remember to talk to your advisors and take action with pruning and injecting your sick trees.

The blueberry plants that were badly affected by frost last year are showing the after affects with less fruit than usual on those plants. The crop is looking good though and we will be hopefully enjoying a much better year than last.

SAFETY NEWS

Bees will be out of all avocado blocks now. Please remember to tell our staff before they enter a block if bees have just been moved, particularly if they have been moved during the day.

Again it is important to inform your monitor if you are picking so they can avoid the orchard when hydralada's are working. We have noticed a lot of mowers and hedge trimmers in the orchards too; please let us know if they will be operating when we are in the orchard and we will avoid them. The machinery can move so fast and often will not see us, even if we are wearing hi-vis gear.

PERMACULTURE WORKSHOPS

I recently called into Palmers on the corner of Welcome Bay and Ohauti Rd. Ryan extended an invitation to anyone interested to a **free** permaculture workshop on 9th December (Saturday) and 16th December (Saturday) from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Details are on their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/WelcomeBayPalmers/>. Below is some of the information.

- Learn How To Level Up Your Food Forest!
- In thanks to all who attended our last workshop, we're continuing to offer more free and relevant content to our Welcome Bay and Tauranga communities
- Palmers Welcome Bay in collaboration with Guest Speaker Byron from Backyard Paradise is hosting a four-part series on permaculture and agroforestry.
- Come one or all - we look forward to exploring and discovering the secrets of creating edible ecosystems in your own backyard. Please RSVP your spot by contacting us instore.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL



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

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Permaculture Workshop

Two part series to create
your own edible ecosystem
in your backyard!

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Saturday 9th &
16th December

Time: 2pm to 4pm

Guest Speaker:
Byron from Backyard Paradise

LOCATION: PALMERS WELCOME BAY

Numbers are limited

Email welcomabay@palmers.net.nz to register
your interest



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