

Program Update - Michael Fargione

Cornell Cooperative Extension Hudson Valley Regional Fruit Program (HVRFP)

Supervising County – Ulster

Programming Period: 5/20/04 – 7/12/04

- Delivery of **grower alert messages** continued during this reporting period providing specific and timely reminders and alerts regarding current tree fruit issues. Messages were provided daily Monday through Friday through May, and twice per week since that time. Twenty-four messages were sent out during the reporting period. The e-mail message list has increased to 105 individuals. A recorded telephone message continues to be available as well.
- Distribution of **electronic versions of the Hudson Valley Tree Fruit News** newsletter was begun and 2 editions were sent out during the reporting period. Electronic format speeds up delivery (by about a week), reduces printing and postage costs (current cost savings estimate \$500 annually) and allows delivery of color photographs. This has proven to be particularly useful for educating growers about insect and disease problems. At present, 94 growers, Cornell extension and faculty staff, and agriculture-related industry representatives receive the newsletter electronically (this represents more than 40% of the Tree Fruit Program enrollees).
- The Hudson Valley Regional Fruit Program Web Page (www.cce.cornell.edu/hvfruit) has been updated to include a new **Photo Gallery** section. The section is designed to tie the web page to the tree fruit alert messages growers already receive, and to increase grower use of Cornell web resources. Photographs of insect and disease symptoms relating to topics discussed in the grower alert messages have been added to the Photo Gallery. Growers can click on a link embedded in the alert message they receive and go directly to a web photo that illustrates some aspect discussed in the email message.
- I continued collaboration with Cornell staff on **research projects in grower orchards**:
 - Drs. Robinson and Schupp - enhancement of fruit size on Gala.
 - Dr. Cheng – impacts of nitrogen on Gala fruit size.
 - S. Hoying – peach planting system trial.
 - Dr. Carroll and K. lungerman – expansion of NEWA weather system into eastern NY.
- On June 30-July 1, I co-hosted (with Drs. Rosenberger and Straub) a meeting of the **Cornell Tree Fruit PWT subcommittee** in the Hudson Valley. The program included tours of Fix Brothers (Columbia) and Mead (Dutchess) Orchards on the first afternoon and a PWT meeting and orchard tour of the Hudson Valley Lab on the second day.
- Professional development activities during the period included participation in orchard tours (June 1-2) in Westchester and Eastern Long Island with HVL faculty, and participation in the Premier Apple Cooperative Marketing Forum (June 28-29) in Syracuse, NY.

Activities relating to Supervising County (Ulster)

- Participated in screening activities (including farm visits) of applicants requesting inclusion in Ag Districts (for Ulster Agricultural Farmland Protection Board).
- Began efforts with Ulster Planning Dept. for review of Ag District 1.
- Provided county summary and photos for Cornell County-based Soil Sample Survey Report (available at http://nmsp.css.cornell.edu/publications/articles/extension/ulster_soil.pdf).