

Program Update - Michael Fargione

Cornell Cooperative Extension Hudson Valley Regional Fruit Program (HVRFP)
Supervising County – Ulster Programming Period: 11-7-08 – 3-13-09

Highlighted Activities Completed During Reporting Period:

2009 Empire State Fruit & Vegetable Expo – I organized and facilitated one tree fruit session at the Expo in Syracuse on February 16 2009.

Winter Apple Tree Pruning Workshops were held on February 18, 2009 at Dressel Farms, New Paltz and Mead Orchards, Red Hook. Presentations were made by S Hoying and T Robinson. Approximately 100 fruit growers and their farm workers learned techniques for optimal pruning of high density plantings.

2009 Hudson Valley Fruit Grower's School – The Hudson Valley Fruit Growers' School was held February 24-27, 2009 at the Holiday Inn, Kingston. I organized and facilitated Day 1 and 2 Tree Fruit sessions and the Trade Show. I assisted with Berry (Day 3) and grapes (Day 4) sessions organized by Steve McKay, CCE Columbia. More than 300 attendees were present over the 4 days. Staff from CCEUC and Cornell HVL provided significant assistance in this successful event.

Requested information was provided to individuals during the reporting period in person, by telephone and electronically. **Farm visits were conducted** providing growers with hands-on training.

Articles for County Newsletters – Articles on the Fruit Growers' School and Winter Pruning Techniques were submitted to Ag-Focus, The News, and Land & Living.

Highlighted Efforts Currently Underway / Being Planned:

Tall Spindle Video Project (Farm Viability Institute funded project)

As project coordinator, I am collaborating with Cornell researchers S. Hoying, T. Robinson and apple growers in ENY and WNY. The outcomes of this work will be increased adoption of this cost effective apple planting system by growers. We will produce and distribute a "how-to" DVD to NY apple growers, "how-to" video clips placed on the Cornell Fruit web page, and exposure growers to the system at cooperating grower demonstration plantings. During March '09, video clips relating to trellis construction and winter pruning were collected in ENY and WNY.

In-Depth School on Apple Mineral Nutrition

Cornell University will be hosting a one day In-depth Fruit School on Apple Mineral Nutrition on March 24 in Ballston Spa, NY and on March 25 in Newark, NY. It is intended to provide growers and consultants with the latest research information on mineral nutrition and orchard nutrient management practices on apples. S. Hoying, K. Iungerman and I prepared a paper on Diagnosing Nutritional Deficiencies for the proceedings and Hoying and I will co-present the topic at the events.

NEWA Projects (Network for Environment and Weather Awareness) – The NEWA IPM website provides weather records, insect and disease models for various crops including apples and pears. During this reporting period, I replaced the non-functioning NEWA automated weather station at Rose Hill Farm, Red Hook and repaired the station at Minard Farms, Clintondale.

Grower Alert Messages (email & answer machine) were sent as needed to participants regarding meeting schedules and funding opportunities. Daily (5+ messages/ week) messages will resume 3/21/09; Expected 2009 messages to be sent: 90; Expected participants: 160

Host County Activities:

HVRFP Oversight Committee Meeting, HVL Highland, NY – 1/22/09

CCEUC Board & Program Committee Orientation, Kingston, NY - 1/26/09

CCE Orange & Ulster Ag-Focus organizational meeting, Middletown, NY 2/9/09