

Program Update - Michael Fargione

Cornell Cooperative Extension Hudson Valley Regional Fruit Program (HVRFP)
Supervising County – Ulster Programming Period: 9/17/04 – 11/8/04

- Distribution of **electronic versions of the Hudson Valley Tree Fruit News** continued with one edition of the newsletter distributed during the reporting period.
- The **Harvest Maturity Program** was completed in late October with 14 reports distributed to the apple industry during the harvest period. This program helped growers optimize the timing of apple harvests in order to improve fruit quality and storability. Fruit samples were collected weekly from grower blocks throughout the region and the maturity of sampled fruit were evaluated. Each week, a preliminary report was issued after Ulster and Orange samples were evaluated and a final report followed once fruit samples were processed from Rensselaer, Columbia and Dutchess Counties. A major success of this year's program was the early identification of concerns about internal fruit firmness. This information helped growers optimize harvest timing to meet export and domestic market demands for high-quality fruit.
- I made an invited presentation on deer damage impacts and mitigation techniques at the October 27th Dutchess County Environmental Management Council public meeting.
- A **seminar on crop insurance options**, including the new apple policy for 2005, was held at the Hudson Valley Lab on November 4, 2004. Cornell Cooperative Extension, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, and the NYS Horticulture Society cosponsored the meeting. Other agencies/organizations participating in the seminar included USDA Farm Services Agency and First Pioneer Farm Credit.
- I attended the Farmland Protection In-service training held by Cornell in Ithaca on October 13-14, 2005.
- I attended **LEAD NY training** sessions (October 3-6 on US Government in Washington D.C. and October 31-November 3 on U.S. / Canadian relations and trade in Ottawa, Canada) as part of my efforts to learn more about issues relating to NY agriculture, and to develop additional leadership skills to better serve the Hudson Valley fruit industry.
- Planning is currently underway for the following events:
 - ❖ **Adjusted Gross Income (AGR) and "AGR Lite" insurance seminars** to be held in Columbia and Ulster Counties on December 8, 2004.
 - ❖ **Fruit Growers' Workshop Series "Planning for the Future"** to be held on 3 consecutive Wednesdays (12th, 19th and 26th) in January. Steve Hadcock (CCE Columbia) and I will hold this series to help apple growers assess and redirect their businesses using the Cornell Apple Growers' Workbook.
 - ❖ **2005 NY State Fruit & Vegetable Expo** to be held February 14-17 in Syracuse, NY. I will be moderating one session on tree fruit.
 - ❖ **2005 Hudson Valley Commercial Fruit Growers' School** to be held February 22 and 23 at the Holiday Inn, Kingston.
- Activities Relating Primarily to Supervising County:
 - ❖ Currently collecting data for **review of Ulster Agricultural District #1**
 - ❖ Set up for **Business-To-Business Showcase**