# Texas Agricultural Extension Service

The Texas A&M University System


# VALLEY PEACH & PECAN NOTES

August, 1995, No. 8

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## PECAN CROP FORECAST -----

While the USDA Pecan Crop Estimate won't be released until September, there are some forecasts already available from the Louisiana and Texas pecan growers associations. Those forecasts indicate a potential crop of 225 to 250 million pounds for 1995—which isn't a particularly large increase over last year's crop.

For Texas, the forecasts are for around 67.5 million pounds, which number could admittedly be higher or lower than actual.

If these numbers hold reasonably close to actual production, prices should be good.

## IRRIGATION EMITTER OUTPUT -----

During a multi-county program near Yorktown last month, there was considerable interest in microsprayer and drip irrigation systems for pecans. One question that came up several times was that of how to check emitter output to be sure the system is delivering the water it should.

The simplest way to check output is to bring the system up to speed and check the pressure at several places in the orchard. For this, a regular pressure gauge can be fitted appropriately to insert into the end of polyethylene laterals or into the microsprayer delivery tubes Any supplier of irrigation equipment should be able to outfit such a pressure gauge for you—just take him one of your microsprayers (with tubing) or a small piece of your polyethylene lateral line so that he can make an exact fit.

Another way to check output is measure it at several emitters in different parts of the orchard. All you need is a watch with a second hand, a pocket calculator and a measuring device that is marked in ounces or parts of an ounce.

The amount of water (in ounces) collected in one minute at any given emitter can quickly be converted to gallons per hour—multiply by 60, then divide by 128. A microsprayer that is supposed to deliver 16.2 gph at 20 psi should put out 34.56 ounces per minute.

If your result is sufficiently different

(usually lower) than what it should be, assuming that pressure in the field was optimal when the system was installed, then the system is becoming clogged over time.

Clogging can be caused by any number of factors such as mineral deposits in the lines, sludges caused by microorganisms reacting with certain elements in the water (sulphur or iron, for example) or algae. Clogging is treatable, but the cause of the clogging must be determined first.

**BROWNWOOD -----**

It isn't a "done deal" yet, though the budget-cutting process at the Federal level has again targeted the pecan breeding station in Brownwood for closure. At this time, there have apparently been enough supportive arguments presented to Congressional committees that the Brownwood station will not be axed, though there may some change in the way the facility is maintained and supported.

I dare say that all of us who support the Brownwood facility also support cutting the Federal budget—we just have different ideas than those inside the Beltway as to where the cuts should be made.

**PEACH ORCHARDS -----**

Summer pruning should have been completed at present.

Irrigation is an on-going management requirement through the heat of summer, as is needed weed control in the tree rows. One bright note about the general drouth and lack of rainfall over the last couple of months in deep South Texas is somewhat reduced peach leaf rust problems. That could rapidly change if typical rains do occur in late August and September.

Flower bud differentiation has concluded, so the potential for next year's crop is already there. High temperatures this summer indicate a higher than normal incidence of "doubles" or "twinning" that will have to be removed during thinning operations next spring.

**PECAN ORCHARDS -----**

Hickory shuckworm attacks were anticipated in late July, but I haven't seen any damage, nor have samples been brought in to the office—though the latter usually doesn't happen until extensive blackening of the shuck occurs.

Late propagation from current season's wood should be concluded, inasmuch as late propagations usually continue in active growth until quite late in the season, thereby being at risk of cold damage.

**TEXAS PRODUCE CONVENTION -----**

For the first time ever, several Texas horticultural commodity groups will be meeting together as the Texas Produce Convention and Trade Show. The date: September 20-23, 1995, at the San Antonio Municipal Auditorium and Holiday Inn Riverwalk North.

While a number of general sessions and workshops are planned, each participating commodity group has scheduled separate, concurrent sessions, for topics of interest to such groups, and there will be separate business meetings for those associations.

Registration prior to August 18 is $135 for members of any of the host groups, $185 for non-members and for everyone after August 18. Current members should have received registration information already, others should contact one of the following groups:

Texas Association of Apple Growers
Texas Blueberry Growers Association
Texas Citrus Mutual
Texas Citrus & Vegetable Association
Texas Fruit Growers Association
Texas Vegetable Association

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