



# Texas Agricultural Extension Service

The Texas A&M University System

## VALLEY PEACH & PECAN NOTES

OCTOBER, 1995

VOL. 10, NO. 10

### IN THIS ISSUE:

**DORMEX® LABEL APPLICATION  
DORMEX® ON BLACKBERRY  
PRE-PLANT PREPARATION  
PECAN HARVEST  
1995 PECAN CROP ESTIMATE**

### **DORMEX® LABEL APPLICATION -----**

As you might recall, a special local need label for Dormex® use on peaches in Texas was available last season because of the mild winter in most Texas production areas. A full label has been requested for the coming season and we anticipate that full registration will be forthcoming before the end of the year.

Hopefully, the label will be granted in time for use in the Valley (which timing is about December 15 to 25). It would certainly be more economical to be able to apply Dormex® and zinc sulfate (for defoliation) to Valley and deep South Texas peaches in the same operation, but the Dormex® label as it exists does not permit combinations with any other products.

### **DORMEX® ON BLACKBERRY -----**

Tests at Rio Farms last spring provided some interesting data of the effect of Dormex® on blackberry. Without going into

detail as to Lukefar's tests, Dormex®-reated Brazos blackberry produced over a third more flowers and pounds of fruit than untreated plants. Moreover, peak production occurred a week earlier in treated plants.

In tests with Choctaw blackberry, Dormex® treatment resulted in nearly twice as many flowers and about five times the volume of fruit. However, production on Dormex®-treated Choctaw was only about 10 percent of that of untreated Brazos, which supports what we concluded some time ago—Choctaw blackberry is just not adapted to the Valley, even with Dormex®.

Moreover, this work on Choctaw also supports our conclusion from work with FloridaKing peach and Dormex® over several years of testing at Weslaco—Dormex® will substitute for some of the chilling requirement of deciduous fruit varieties during years of marginal chilling, but it will not allow varieties to be grown in lower-chilling zones than recommended.

### **PRE-PLANT PREPARATION -----**

For orchards that are to be planted this winter, now is a good time to do the

necessary land preparation. The first necessity is to eliminate existing perennial weeds, grasses and brush species by cultivation and to chisel as deeply as is feasible or necessary to break up hard pans or plow pans. It may be easier to chisel first, then switch to turning plows (especially if weeds or grasses predominate on the site) and to disks for final preparation.

If it rains between disking and planting, repeat disking will be necessary. Shortly before planting, the ends of rows should be staked off, after which a disk or field cultivator in conjunction with a pre-plant herbicide such as Treflan® can be operated on the tree rows to incorporate the herbicide and provide final cleanup.

There is good evidence that planting onto beds, even in good soils, results in better tree growth. Bedding can be accomplished with special bedding plows, border machine disks (those used to make wide permanent irrigation borders in citrus orchards), blades and/or road graders. If bedding on irregularly-sloping land, the Natural Resource Conservation Agency (formerly the Soil Conservation Service) should be contacted for advice on bedding with respect to surface drainage.

### **PECAN HARVEST -----**

The 1995 pecan harvest is underway in South Texas orchards, and growers are again reminded to maintain good soil moisture relations in pecan orchards through this period. Obviously, orchard irrigation should be scheduled so as not to interfere with planned harvesting operations.

### **1995 PECAN CROP ESTIMATE -----**

The official U.S.D.A. estimate of the

1995 pecan crop is in, though the initial estimate will be subject to periodic revision through the season. At present, the estimate calls for 248 million pounds, which is roughly 25 percent over that a year ago. Moreover, this estimate is very close to that of some industry estimates.

The Texas crop is estimated at 60 million pounds, up 50 percent from last year, but about 11 percent under the industry's estimate. The composition of this crop is 20 million pounds of natives and 40 million pounds of improved varieties.

Because the California almond crop is less than half of last year's, it would seem that quality pecans should command excellent prices this season. Moreover, the Mexican crop is reportedly off and some areas of the Southeast have experienced weather-related production problems.

---

### **JULIAN W. SAULS, Ph.D.**

Professor & Extension Horticulturist  
2401 East Highway 83  
Weslaco TX 78596

\*\*\*\*\*  
THE INFORMATION GIVEN HEREIN IS FOR  
EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. REFERENCE

---

TO COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS OR TRADE  
NAMES IS MADE WITH THE UNDERSTANDING  
THAT NO DISCRIMINATION IS INTENDED AND  
NO ENDORSEMENT BY THE COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION SERVICE IS IMPLIED.

\*\*\*\*\*