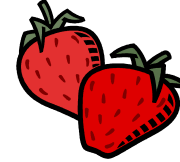




STRAWBERRY UPDATE

March 18, 2008



Dr. Ferrin and I had a chance to get out and look at some strawberries this past week. The crop actually looks remarkably good for all the wet weather we have had, not to mention the freezes and constant putting on and taking off of the protective cloth. There were several situations that we observed and I wanted to pass those along.

Gray mold

You might image there is the real potential for a gray mold (*Botrytis*) outbreak. Of course we have a lot present but there is a fair amount of damage from freezes that make us even more vulnerable. Dr. Ferrin suggest that you stay on a good spray program for gray mold and try to bring the infected fruit out of the field when feasible. By throwing infected strawberries down in the middles you continue to release millions of active spores in the field.

The gray mold fungus attacks flowers, calyxes, fruit and leaves. Many times you will see it initially as a light brown and soft spot on top of the berry where the calyx touches.

Dr. Ferrin has the highest rated fungicides for gray mold as Elevate, Captevate, Captan and Switch.

Angular Leaf Spot

Angular leaf spot is the bacterial leaf spot that shows up as small triangular shaped spots under the leaves that appear to be wet or oily. This is not a problem in all fields but in some the bacteria is all the way to the top of the plant. In those cases you may want to go ahead and spray with copper before it gets too hot.

The bacterial cells are spread primarily by rain splashing and wind driven rain. The disease develops best under cool, wet conditions. Dry warm weather will go a long way to curing this problem.

Spider Mites

We are already seeing spider mite outbreaks so keep up a good scouting schedule. In warm weather the generation interval gets much shorter and you could have a population explosion. Recommended products include: Acramite, Agri-Mek, Vendex, Omite, Zeal, Savey and Kelthane.

Most of these products work better on a light infestation than a full blown outbreak so start early.

Sincerely,

Kenneth W. Sharpe
County Agent
Livingston Parish