

Preparing for SWD management in berries

As we begin monitoring for spotted wing drosophila (SWD) and the first flies are caught it is time to review your management plan.

Successful control of SWD in berry crops requires a combination of management practices and insecticide application. Here are some specific things for berry growers to consider when developing a management program for SWD on your farm.

- Apply an insecticide every 5-7 days.
 - Reapply after ½ inch of rain.
 - Use products from different groups (SWD registrations for 2020 are attached).
 - Spray in the morning (6-10am) or in the evening (6-10 pm) when SWD is active.
- Calibrate your sprayer. Slow down & spray every row.
- Strip bloom and fruit buds from new plantings which won't be harvested.
- Keep weeds and vegetation mowed or otherwise controlled in and around the field.
- Control wild hosts (cut below the fruiting zone).
- Keep alleys clean- either remove unmarketable fruit or crush it in the alleys. Destroy unmarketable fruit removed from the field.
- Pick regularly and clean!
- Cool fruit as soon as possible after harvest and keep it cool through all stages of marketing (below 2C).

June-bearing strawberries: Strawberry harvest could be well underway before SWD populations build up enough to cause damage. Pay attention to SWD trap catches in the area. If SWD adults are being trapped while ripe fruit is being harvested, an insecticide might be needed.

- Late season varieties could be at risk, depending on how quickly SWD populations develop.
- Encourage clean picking.
- Renovate as soon as harvest is complete. Do not wait for late varieties to be harvested to renovate earlier blocks.

Summer red raspberries: Begin weekly insecticide applications when SWD are found in traps in your region and fruit is turning colour.

- If preharvest intervals permit, adjust your harvest schedule to pick every second day instead of every three or four days.

Day-neutral strawberries: Begin weekly insecticide applications when SWD are found in traps in your region and fruit is turning colour.

- Harvest day-neutral strawberries on a regular basis as much as possible.
- Overwintered day-neutral fields are more at risk compared to new plantings, because extra foliage and plant debris in older fields make clean harvest more difficult. As you drop fields at the end of the season, mow them or do something to destroy fruit.

Blueberries: Begin weekly insecticide applications when SWD are found in traps in your region and fruit is turning blue.

- Encourage clean picking.

Fall-bearing raspberries: Begin weekly insecticide applications when SWD are found in traps in your region and fruit is turning colour.

- Laterals from buds at the base of primocanes often produce berries ahead of the main crop. These fruit should be harvested or stripped from the plants.
- The most important management strategy for raspberries is clean and frequent harvest.

Get set up to monitor for SWD damage by floating fruit in salt water to look for larvae. Check out this 3-minute video on doing a salt water test: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2X_F3bHiOSg

Remember, if SWD is identified on your farm or in your area and ripe fruit is present, it is time to spray.