

Kentucky Fruit Facts

May 2004 (5/04)

Fruit Facts can be found on the web at: <http://www.ca.uky.edu/fruitfacts/>

John Strang, Extension Fruit Specialist, Editor
Karen Shahan, Staff Assistant

Fruit Crop News

John Strang, Extension Horticulturist

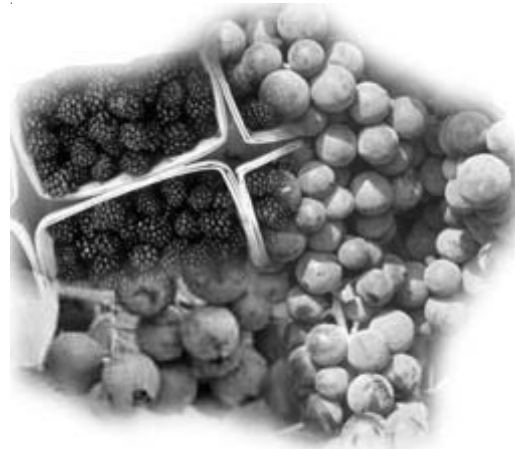
This season has started out to be an excellent fruit season for most growers. Winter and frost damage have been minimal and fruit set looks very good on just about all fruit crops.

Our viticulturist search has been successful and Kaan Kurtural has been hired for this position. Please note the article below. However, our search for an enologist/winemaker is being reinitiated with an application deadline of mid June.

As of May 17 in the Lexington area we have had 9 scab, 9 cedar apple rust and 4 fire blight infections in apple and 4 black rot, 3 powdery mildew, 2 downy mildew, and one botrytis bunch rot infections in grapes. Symptoms of apple scab, frog-eye leafspot, and fireblight are now visible on apple. Lesions of black rot are now visible on grape. Most apple and pear growers have sprayed to control the first codling moth generation.

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Be prepared for Periodical cicada emergence, however most areas of the state will have light to moderate populations and some growers won't even notice them. They have already started emerging in some areas where the average soil temperature has reached 64° F and there has been enough rain to soften the soil and let them out. **DO NOT spray for cicadas unless they are a problem.** Past trials have shown that the pyrethroid sprays have performed the best in controlling cicadas. However, most pyrethroids tend to flare spider mite populations and you may trade one insect problem for another. The exception is Danitol, which at the high rate will provide mite control. See the April Fruit Facts issue for more detailed information on this insect.

The next Home-based Microprocessor Workshop is scheduled for May 24 at the Meade County Extension office in Brandenburg, KY. This will be the LAST session until the fall, so if growers want to sell low acid, acidified or formulated acid foods this summer, they must take this workshop. Please see the College of Agriculture home page to access the registration form on-line. Those that do not have computer access can register

through their local County Extension Office. Contact Dr. Sandra Bastin if you have questions, phone: 859-257-1812, e-mail: sbastin@uky.edu

In the last Kentucky Legislative session, a bill was passed designating the blackberry as the state fruit for Kentucky.

Upcoming Meetings

Jun. 8 Apple IPM Program, Jackson's Orchard, Bill Jackson owner, Bowling Green, KY. Contact John Strang 859/257-5685 or Bill Jackson 270/781-5303. See program and directions below.

Jun. 19 Kentucky Vineyard Society Summer Meeting and Grape IPM Program. Talon Winery, Harriet Allen and Charles Tackett owners, Lexington, KY. Contact Talon Winery, 859/971-9797 or John Strang 859/257-5685. See program and directions below.

Jul. 14-16 American Society for Enology & Viticulture, Eastern Section Meeting, 2004 Annual Technical Meeting and Symposium, Grapes, Wine and Environment - How soils, cultural practices and warm climates affect wine quality, Hotel Roanoke & Convention Center, Roanoke, VA. See web site for further details: www.nysaes.cornell.edu/fst/asev/ or contact Tony Wolf: vitis@vt.edu

Jul. 27 Horticultural Research Farm Twilight Tour, Lexington, KY 40546. Contact John Strang 859/257-5685.

Sept. 11 The KSU/Pawpaw Foundation Pawpaw Workshop, Kentucky State University Research Farm, Frankfort, KY. Contact Kirk Pomper phone: 502-597-5942 or e-mail: kpomper@dcr.net

Oct. 15-16 Kentucky Vineyard Society Fall Meeting and Amateur Wine Competition, Shepherdsville, KY. Contact Len Olson, Phone: 502/540-5650.

Jan. 3-4, 2005 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference and Trade Show, Holiday Inn North, Lexington, KY.

Kaan Kurtural Hired as New UK Viticulturist

We are very pleased that Kaan Kurtural recently accepted our Kentucky viticulturist position that will be located at UK in Lexington.

Unfortunately Kaan's contract with Southern Illinois University at Carbondale will not be completed until the end of the year, so he will begin our position January 1st.

Kaan received his BS degree in Plant and Soil Science from SIU in 1997 and his MS from SIU in 2000. He will complete his PhD this summer at SIU. His research has involved vineyard canopy management, site selection using GIS, plant nutrition, root pruning, and the use of cryoprotectants. His major advisor is Dr. Imed Dami, who is currently the viticulturist at Ohio State University. Many of you will remember that Imed spoke at our January Grape and Wine Short Course several years ago.

Kaan is a native of Turkey where his family has operated a 120 ha vineyard for seven generations growing 'Sultana' and 'Carignane' grapes. During his stay at SIU he has managed the SIU research vineyard, conducted research in grower vineyards, assisted in organizing and participated in grower workshops, field days and grower conferences. Much of the work that he has done in Illinois will apply directly to our industry in Kentucky. We feel very fortunate that he will be working with us.

Robert Scott

*By Dewayne Ingram, Chair UK
Department of Horticulture*

I am sorry to inform you that Mr. Robert Scott passed away on Saturday April 17th after a stroke on Wednesday. He operated a large commercial apple and peach orchard for many years near Covington, KY. Mr. Scott is the donor of funds that support and will continue to support the Scott Scholarship, Work Grants and Research Grants for undergraduates in Horticulture at UK.

On a personal note, Mr. Scott was a fascinating and enjoyable person. At 91+ he pruned his fruit trees and planted new apple trees this spring. He had an extremely sharp mind and was outside working in his landscape when he was incapacitated by the stroke. It appears that he did not suffer. He had commended that morning on how well he felt and how nice it was to have his orchard in such good shape. We can all wish for such a full life. He will be missed.

Commercial Apple IPM Meeting - June 8

Jackson's Orchard
1280 Slim Island Rd., Bowling Green, KY 42101
Bill and Shirley Jackson, Owners

Directions: Proceed south on I-65 to the first Bowling Green exit, exit 28 (at the Corvette museum). Exit to the right and drive towards the downtown area (mostly on 31W). At the 4th stop light turn right on to 6th street. Proceed under the RR (1 block) to the 1st stop light and turn right on to Rt. 185. Follow Rt. 185 for about 3 miles across the river. Roughly 200 yards after crossing the river will be a Jackson's Orchard sign. Turn left and follow the signs to the orchard.

Program: (Central Time)

- 10:00 a.m. Registration
- 10:15 Apple Grower Round Table
Discussion: Coleman Mathis
Moderator
- 11:00 Managing Mid Season Diseases
- John Strang
- 11:30 Summer Insects - Ric Bessin
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch -- available at cost
(Apx. \$6.00) for those that preregister.

Preregister for lunch by June 7. Call Mary Ann Kelley at 270/365-7541 Ext. 216 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. CST weekdays. Give her a count for the Apple IPM meeting at Jackson's Orchard.

- 1:00 p.m. Tour of Jackson's Orchard
- Bill Jackson
- 1:30 Orchard Weed Control
- Joe Masabni
- 2:00 Apple Cider Discussion
- 2:30 p.m. Adjourn

Kentucky Vineyard Society Grape IPM and 2004 Summer Meeting - June 19

Talon Winery
7086 Bates Creek Rd., Lexington, KY, 40515
Harriet Allen and Charles Tackett owners
Phone: 859/971-9797
John Pitcock, winemaker, phone: 502/859-0101

Directions: Upon arriving in Lexington, follow New Circle Rd. or Man O'War Boulevard towards the south side of town to Bates Creek Rd. (Rt. 1974). Follow Bates Creek Rd. South for a little over 5 miles to Talon Winery. Along the way you will pass 1981 on your right and the winery is about a mile past this. You will pass a bed and breakfast on your right and go into a sharp curve to the right. The farm entrance is the first drive on your left just after this. Look for a tall white cylindrical water tower and drive towards the tower.

Program: All times EDT

- 10:00 a.m. Registration, Coffee and Danish
- 10:30 Opening Remarks
- Len Olson, KVS President
- 10:45 Welcome to Talon Winery
- Joy Bush Gilliam
- 11:00 Growing Quality Grapes
- John Strang,
UK Extension Horticulturist
- 11:30 Vineyard Weed Control
- Joe Masabni,
UK Extension Horticulturist
- 12:00 p.m. Insect Management
- Chris Smigell, UK Small
Fruit Extension Associate
- 12:30 Disease Control - John Hartman,
UK Extension Plant Pathologist

- 1:00 p.m. Lunch - A box lunch will be served for those that preregister and will consist of your choice of Turkey & Swiss or Ham & Swiss on wheat with lettuce, tomato and condiment choices. Also included is a side pasta salad, pickle, and dessert. The cost of lunch is \$15.00. **Please preregister by June 15, 2004 by calling 859/971-9797.** Bring a bottle of your favorite home-made wine to share with your friends at lunch.

- 2:00 Mowers for the Vineyard
Tim Mayes, BDI
- 2:30 Round table Discussion on Making Wine Using Fresh Fruit, Concentrates and Kits - Moderator, Raymond Meyer
(Best of show Indiana State Fair 2003)
David Miller (Best of show Kentucky State Fair 2003), and Jim Landrum (Gold Medallist Winemaker Magazine 2004)
- 3:15 Short KVS Board of Directors Meeting

Strawberry Gray Mold Management

by John Hartman, Extension Plant Pathologist

Gray mold, caused by the fungus *Botrytis cinerea* is a serious disease of strawberry. During wet growing seasons, gray mold can decay a high proportion of fruit in the strawberry bed, causing direct yield losses. Management of gray mold requires good cultural practices and timely fungicide applications.

Good cultural practices can reduce disease pressure. If disease pressure is decreased, then the need for fungicide decreases and the effectiveness of the fungicides that are used increases. Some of the non-fungicidal alternatives for gray mold management, include the following:

- Plant new beds periodically in new sites well away from old strawberry beds. As the years pass strawberry beds accumulate more and more dead leaves and other organic debris. Accumulated dead leaves and other debris are often infected with the *Botrytis* fungus. Thus, in each subsequent spring, inoculum levels are higher and disease pressure is increased and fungicide choices and timing become more critical.
- Pick up and destroy old leaves in the bed to reduce buildup of inoculum. This can work well for backyard plantings, but is impractical for commercial growers.
- Reduce the over-all density of the strawberry beds. The environment in the strawberry row affects disease pressure. *Botrytis* needs damp conditions, poor air circulation, poor sunlight penetration, and wet plants to thrive. The thicker and heavier the foliar growth, the longer tissue in the canopy, particularly blossoms and fruit, stay wet.
- Use narrow rows and grow strawberries away from nearby shading vegetation to reduce disease pressure.
- Fertilize strawberry beds at renovation time and during flower bud initiation, but not in the springtime, because it encourages lush gray mold-susceptible growth.

- Reduce disease pressure by using cultivars that are a little less susceptible to gray mold. Strong resistance to gray mold doesn't exist in strawberries, but some cultivars such as Earliglow, are somewhat less susceptible to gray mold than average.

After taking measures to reduce disease pressure, fungicides should be considered. Benlate (benomyl) and Topsin-M (thiophanate methyl), can be very effective against *Botrytis*, as long as the *Botrytis* fungus isn't resistant to them. Elevate (fenhexamide) and Switch (cyprodinil + fludioxonil) are also highly effective against gray mold. Protectant fungicides such as captan and thiram and strobilurin fungicides such as Cabrio (pyraclostrobin), Pristine (pyraclostrobin + boscalid), and Quadris (azoxystrobin) are moderately effective and where good cultural practices have been used will manage gray mold quite well.

Gray mold infections usually occur during bloom, so sprays should have been applied then, while strawberries were in flower. Two or three fungicide applications at bloom time (early bloom, mid-bloom, late bloom) are more effective in stopping gray mold than fungicide applications made after fruit begins to form and ripen. Commercial growers should consult U.K. Cooperative Extension Publication ID-94, Midwest Commercial Small Fruit and Grape Spray Guide 2004 for disease management details.

Cedar Rusts May Be Abundant This Year

by John Hartman, Extension Plant Pathologist

With prolonged rains during parts of April, cedar trees (mostly *Juniperus virginiana*) were seen to be decorated with rust fungi in many locations statewide. Cedar-apple rust (*Gymnosporangium juniperi-virginianae*) was most visible while displaying large galls decorated with masses of bright orange gelatinous spore horns. Cedar-hawthorn rust (*Gymnosporangium globosum*) with smaller galls and orange spore horns could be found on many cedars. Less conspicuous, but omnipresent, cedar-quince rust (*Gymnosporangium*

clavipes) also decorated leaves and swollen twigs of cedar trees with smaller orange spore masses.

Growers who failed to protect their apple trees from rust in April should expect to begin seeing symptoms of these cedar rust diseases appearing on leaves, twigs and fruit. All three rusts can affect apple, but cedar-apple rust is most common while cedar-quince rust is more damaging to the fruit. If rust infections are heavy on apples, it can reduce yields. Growers can help to reduce infections by this fungus by making plans to cut down cedar trees near the orchard before next spring.

Wilbur Donoho

by Les Wilmoth, KY Nut Growers Association

Wilbur Donoho, a long-time member and dedicated supporter of the KNGA passed away on November 15, 2003. He will be remembered for the many services he rendered to our association. One of his major contributions was the collection and assembly of various nuts in display cases for variety identification. (These cases were handed down to John Brittain so that this valuable service could be continued.) He supplied a great quantity of nuts at KNGA meetings for education, viewing, eating and door prizes.

Wilbur spent considerable funds in support of KNGA meetings over the span of his membership. This support consisted of providing name tags, food, drinks, tableware, ice, portable tables, chairs and other items. He often brought gifts to meetings for youngsters he knew would be attending. He was also the "official" sign poster, marking the route to meeting facilities over the years.

Wilbur was a quiet individual, preferring to serve only in an unobtrusive, dignified manner. He declined to hold any office in the KNGA, preferring to leave those duties to the more vocal and articulate members of the Association.

It is hoped that these simple lines describe Wilbur, the thoughtful, kind, gentle, and caring person he was, better than eloquent phrases which could have been written. Wilbur will be missed by many in the KNGA, especially so by those of us who were his closest friends and associates.

2004 Kentucky Produce Planting & Marketing Intentions Outlook

*by Matt Ernst & Tim Woods, University of Kentucky
Department of Agricultural Economics*

Summary

The 2004 Kentucky Produce Planting & Marketing Intentions Survey measured marketing practices and planting intentions of Kentucky fruit and vegetable growers. This is the third consecutive year the survey has been conducted. This year's survey was returned by 401 produce growers representing 2,917 commercial vegetable acres and 886 commercial fruit acres.

Survey responses, combined with a decrease in acreage contracted by Kentucky's four vegetable marketing co-ops, indicates that direct marketing will drive growth in Kentucky's produce industry in 2004. Gross sales of Kentucky produce will increase by about 5 percent in 2004, projected to fall between \$28 and \$35 million. Commercial vegetable acreage will expand just over 6,000 acres while commercial fruit acreage will hold steady at 3,000 acres.

Direct Marketing

Farmers' Markets

The number of community farmers' markets has nearly tripled in Kentucky over the past 10 years. Over 80 farmers' markets will operate in Kentucky during 2004 with projected sales of \$5-7 million.

More than 50 percent of the respondents to this survey indicated that they used farmers' markets to sell some of their produce; 47 percent indicated that 10 percent or more of their sales occurred at farmers' markets.

On-Farm Markets

The next most frequently used market channel is the on-farm market, used by half the respondents. These markets, including roadside stands and Pick-Your-Own, will account for \$7-\$10 million of commercial produce sales in 2004. Pick-Your-Own (PYO) marketing is generating much interest in Kentucky. Of the 401 producers surveyed, 63 (16 percent) reported they are currently using PYO. Twice this

many producers (31 percent) said they are interested in using PYO marketing in the future.

Other Direct Markets

Selling directly to local restaurants is also popular with some produce growers in Kentucky; 12 percent of respondents indicated they had used this market channel in 2003. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) was used by 3 percent of respondents. Both these market channels are popular with certified organic producers, but certified organic production has decreased in popularity with Kentucky producers in 2004. This decrease is primarily due to changes in federal organic certification guidelines.

There continues to be a lack of enthusiasm among current growers about future organic production; only two percent (9) of the growers surveyed said they had plans to grow organic produce in the future, while the same number said that they *might* be interested in future organic production.

Wholesale

Direct to Local Grocer

Behind farmers' markets and roadside stands, wholesaling directly to a retailer was the third most common market channel that Kentucky produce growers used in 2003. This channel was used by 21 percent of the respondents.

Other Wholesale Channels

Other wholesale channels, excluding sales by co-ops, were used by 17 percent of respondents. These include direct sales to grocery chains. Developing wholesale markets accessible to an individual grower or group of growers is a growing market channel for produce sales in Kentucky.

Co-ops

Co-ops were used by 15 percent of the respondents to this survey. Co-op acreage and sales leveled out in 2003 after rapid expansion from 2000-2002. Kentucky's co-ops accounted for about \$5 million in sales during 2003. These sales should increase slightly while co-op acreage holds steady in 2004. Some co-ops will shift production acreage to more profitable

crops. West Kentucky Growers (Owensboro) and Central Kentucky Growers (Georgetown) both report sizable increases in bell pepper acreage. West Kentucky will also contract some processing pepper acreage. Cumberland Farm Products will increase cabbage acreage.

Green River Produce (Horse Cave) will lose significant cantaloupe acreage due to adverse weather and a poor marketing window in 2003. Green River has also been affected by the enforcement of government crop program constraints on the use of land enrolled in grain programs for the production of fruit and vegetable crops.

Auctions

Nine percent of respondents indicate that they use auctions to market some of their produce. Kentucky's sole produce auction until 2004 has been the Fairview Produce Auction in Christian County. This auction, which also sells hay, straw, and small-scale farm equipment, grossed over \$1 million in sales during 2003.

Additional auctions are emerging in Kentucky during 2004 in Lincoln, Bath, and Mason counties. They will be operating at different lengths and volumes during their first season. It is quite possible that the market environment in Kentucky can support some additional produce auctions to increase market channels for wholesale produce.

Producer Demographics and Marketing Trends

Age and Experience

Significant expansion has occurred in Kentucky's produce industry since 1998. Half of these respondents (48 percent) indicated that they have been growing produce for six years or less. This is nearly identical to the percentage in the 2003 survey. Producers also reflect similar age demographics as in past surveys, with only one-fifth of respondents 40 years old or younger.

County Agricultural Diversification Programs

A similar proportion of fruit and vegetable growers in 2003 as in 2002 reported that they had participated in County Agricultural Diversification Programs. About 40 percent of

producers report participating in these programs in 2003. Furthermore, a number of respondents to this year's survey indicated that they had applied for County Agricultural Diversification Funds but had been turned down or had not yet received funding.

Organic Production

In last year's survey, a significant number of producers (20 percent) reported that they were interested in future organic production. Only two percent of producers this year responded that they had future plans to grow organic produce. This sharp decrease appears to be related to changes in certified organic production guidelines and producer perception of difficulty to enter certified production. In addition, since many producers are marketing locally, the economic premium for organically grown produce may not be great enough to warrant going through the certification process.

Acres and Planting Outlook

Producers surveyed indicated that they would be increasing vegetable acreage by 149 acres (5%) in 2004. Fruit acreage was virtually unchanged. The increase in vegetables is fueled by expansion in pepper and cucumber acreage. There will be a significant decrease in Kentucky cantaloupe acreage in 2004, primarily due to producers responding to low profitability in 2003. Acreage of standby crops (sweet corn, pumpkins, and tomatoes) will each continue to increase by more than five percent in 2003.

Pepper Acreage Up

West Kentucky Growers and Central Kentucky Growers will increase pepper acreage by about 60 total acres. Both co-ops will increase bell pepper acres, with West Kentucky also increasing processing and specialty pepper acres. Other expansion in pepper acreage will also come from producers wholesaling directly to regional supermarkets and grocery distribution centers.

Cantaloupe Deal Sours

Producers for both the Green River Co-op and growers selling at the Fairview Produce Auction will decrease cantaloupe acreage this season. A good cantaloupe market year will be crucial for co-op production to rebound; melon sales at auction could also benefit.

Sweet Corn and Tomatoes Standby

Sweet corn acreage will expand among direct market producers. Both corn and tomatoes are reliable sellers each season. Some producers indicated that they will increase tomato production, probably responding to extraordinarily high tomato prices of 2003.

Fall Crops Popular

Fall crop acreage (pumpkins, winter squash, ornamental corn, gourds) will increase slightly in 2004. Pumpkin acreage will remain around 1,000 acres, serving as an entry crop for those new to produce crops and as a direct market standard. The planned produce auction in Bath County has resulted in several producers from that region committing to increase production of fall crops, which can be profitable for wholesale and retail production.

Berries Abound

Blueberry acreage continues to increase, reaching 40 bearing acres in 2004. Berry plantings have been steady and will contribute to increased gross sales from Kentucky produce in future years.

Cut Flower Flurry

Many produce growers have found cut flowers to be a profitable venture. Over 20 acres of cut flowers, mostly for direct sale, were grown by 32 respondents to this survey. Respondents indicated that they plan to increase this amount by four acres (19 percent) in 2004.

Summary

Producers using direct markets comprise the vast majority of produce growers in Kentucky. While some co-op and wholesale producers continue acreage expansion, about half of the expansion indicated in this survey will come from those not using wholesale market channels. This is a shift from trends of previous years, and is occurring due to producer responses to profitability from direct marketing various crops.

** To view this entire report see:

<http://www.uky.edu/ag/hortbiz/pubs/04prodplantmkt.pdf>

Receiving The Fruit Facts Newsletter Electronically on the Internet

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To receive a mailed hard copy, contact:

Joe Masabni
Research & Education Ctr
PO Box 469
Princeton KY 42445-0469
270/365-7541, Ext 247

or

John Strang
Department of Horticulture
University of Kentucky
N318 Ag. Sci. North
Lexington KY 40546-0091
859/257-5685

*John Strang,
Extension Fruit & Vegetable Specialist*

*Official Business
Lexington KY 40546-0229
229 Stadium View Road
Ag Distribution Center
Horticulture Department
University of Kentucky
Cooperative Extension Service*