

Checking the Back Forty



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Weekly Growing Degree Days and Rainfall thru July 3, 2011

Station	Temperature (°F)				Growing Degree Days (GDD) (Base 50°F)					Precipitation (Inches since 4/1/2011)			
	High	Low	Avg	Departure from normal	Week of June 13- June 19	Since May 8	Departure from normal	Since May 22	Departure from normal	Week	Departure from normal	Season	Departure from normal
Cobleskill	82	52	66	0	114	748	+142	655	+129	0.12	-0.80	13.72	+2.22
Morrisville	82	50	65	-1	109	719	+148	611	+117	0.09	-0.81	15.38	+4.13
Norwich	84	46	65	-2	109	787	+185	660	+140	1.36	+0.47	20.41	+8.85
Oneonta	83	46	66	+1	112	774	+219	662	+179	0.91	-0.04	19.41	+7.03

*From the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service New York Field Office and the New York Department of Agriculture and Markets
 Weekly accumulations are through 7:00 AM Sunday Morning*

I will be keeping track of Growing Degree Days (GDD) during the season using 50°F as a base temperature. There will be two dates of reference for these GDDs, May 8 and May 23, 2011. Rainfall accumulation will be from April 1 on.

Wild Parsnip a “growing” issue

Most people have seen this yellow-green flowered plant along roadsides, ditches and hedgerows in increasing numbers over the past few years. Its increase in these undisturbed areas I think is troublesome and I would encourage that as time allows you mow or trim these areas to prevent flowering.

Wild Parsnip is a biennial so controlling seed production can provide a good deal of control. Cutting when flowers first come in bloom and a follow up if there is regrowth can be effective over time. Note how this plant thrives where mowing ends. Caution is the word with this plant as its sap causes a photosensitive reaction when it is on skin that is exposed to sunlight. Severe long lasting welts or sores occur so keep skin and eyes well covered if you use a string trimmer or if you hand pull these weeds.

Reference:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/fact/parsnip.htm>



Alert: Potato Leafhoppers (PLH) are present in alfalfa fields

Continued scouting of alfalfa fields has shown numbers are high in many alfalfa fields. The picture at right is about as good as I can do to show you the size and color of these insects. These small green wedge shaped insects are adults and fly. The even smaller yellow-green nymphs or immature insects are difficult to see and do not fly.



If you are holding off 2nd cutting alfalfa thinking it should have more growth you may find the PLH are stunting it and harvest is the best control measure. If you were hoping to give fields another week or so you may want to reconsider and harvest them early. Shorter fields 3 to 10 inch range are more candidates for insecticide control if PLH are present. I can not encourage enough that although numbers are high in general some fields need control and in some fields numbers are just not high enough to justify general insecticide applications. If there is an exception it would be with new seedings that even after first cutting may harbor enough PLH to justify a spray. My insecticide choice would be price based as all labeled to a good job of control, although you may want to look at harvest restrictions also.

As always: **READ THE LABEL!**

References: <http://ipmguidelines.org/Fieldcrops/content/CH04/default-8.asp>

Alert: Leaf spot diseases are present in alfalfa fields

At this point I am not sure it matters what leaf spot is causing the problem the control measure is the same: cut! I have seen many fields with leafspot and it is not always clear what is causing the yellow and stunting, PLH or leafspot or both. Warm temperatures and damp leaf conditions that allow the spores of the fungus to spread by splashing have certainly been present. But the disease will continue to spread in this cutting so harvest gets rid of the diseased material and opens up the canopy for a dryer (hopefully?) next cutting.



http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/publications/alf_lf_spots_mgmt/files/alf_lfspots.pdf