Issue 3 – May 27, 2026

Fruit Crop Report

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Provincial Overview

Saskatoons, sour cherry and haskap orchards are in full to late bloom. Straw mulch has been removed from plants in all strawberry fields. Initial observations indicate good winter survival overall for many strawberry fields. The bulk of transplanting, the approximately 600,000 bare-root strawberry plants, has occurred. Frost events over the third week of May may have caused some strawberry leaf damage to newly emerged leaves in established fields. This would be seen mainly on the leaf edges, which would curl and turn black.

Commercial Fruit Crops - Timely Topics

Saskatoons

Protect Flowers from Rain Showers

Figure 2: White tip stage in Saskatoons.

Application of a recommended fungicide is often necessary in Manitoba, to protect flowers from disease causing fungi. The primary disease of saskatoon plants in the spring is *Entomosporium* Leaf and Berry Spot disease. If *Entomosporium* inoculums are present in an orchard at full bloom, then ideally **a fungicide application should be made within 4 days of a rain event.** A second fungicide application should be applied, if at least 7 days has elapsed since the first application, especially if rain has fallen during that time.

Plants left unprotected during a rainfall are at great risk of severe crop losses. If a disease outbreak caused crop losses last year, favourable conditions this year may result in more disease, if there are no attempts at management. Once the flowers and fruit are infected, those fruit are unmarketable. Fortunately, dry conditions in 2025 resulted in low disease levels, so levels of leaf and berry spot spores available to infect plants will likely be lower.

Timing for fungicide applications is often based on an estimate of when a certain proportion of the flower buds are fully open. 'Full bloom', in the context of pest management, describes the stage when most blossoms in the orchard have fully opened, even though some flowers may already be fading and others are still developing. Fungicides registered for use on saskatoons include many products with the active ingredient propiconazole (chemical group 3, Bumper 432EC, Fitness and Princeton) or a cyprodinil and fludioxonil combination (groups 9, 12, Button, Switch) or boscalid and pyraclostrobin combination (groups 7, 11, Pristine, Empire). Always refer to product labels for application details and precautions. Information above is only a guide and current to April 2026.

Report compiled by Anthony Mintenko
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Saskatoon Insect Pests - Apple Curculio

Figure 1: Adult apple curculio.

Apple curculio (Anthonomus quadrigibbus) is a weevil that affects chokecherry, saskatoon, apple, crabapple, hawthorn, plum, and pear. This insect is found in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and the northern United States. The adult overwinters in leaf litter near the host plant and there is only one generation per year. The adults emerge in the spring, at the same time as apples, plums and saskatoons begin to flower. They migrate into orchards, when temperatures are below +20°C, by walking on the ground and up the tree trunks. When temperatures are warmer, they can also fly to an orchard.

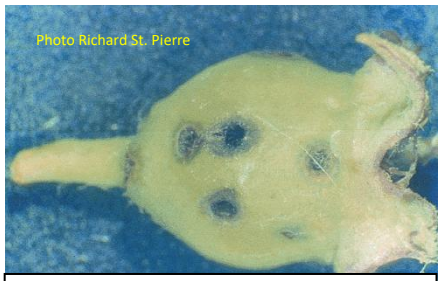

Figure 2: Apple curculio feeding holes on saskatoon blossom.

Adults are 5-6 mm long, with a distinct curved slender snout and are reddish-brown in colour (Figure 1). Adult curculios feed on immature fruit and shoot tips resulting in puncture marks (Figure 2). Egg laying occurs roughly one month after peak flowering into immature fruit. The larvae, when fully grown, have a cream-coloured, C-shaped body 6-9 mm long, with a brown head, and are legless (Figure 3).

Scouting

Inspecting saskatoons, for feeding damage holes, on developing fruit or buds (Figure 2) will assist with determining if populations are increasing to the point of requiring chemical controls. Another method, to determine the presence of adult apple curculio, is using a drop cloth to collect adults, as the beetles may be difficult to see on the plant. Place a white drop cloth underneath branches and knock branches with a stick and see if any apple curculio weevils fall onto the cloth.

Figure 3: Apple curculio larva in green saskatoon berry.

For more information see:
https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/seasonal-reports/pubs/fruit-report-2024-09-11.pdf

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Strawberries

Scouting for Cyclamen Mite

The cyclamen mite is quite small and is impossible to see with the unaided eye (~0.25 mm long). Growers may mis-diagnose the cause of damage, as mistakes in cultural management, spray injury, winter injury, or viral disease. Young, new growth is very susceptible and will develop abnormally. Flower buds may not open or blossoms may be destroyed and drop early. Leaves often appear crinkled, twisted, and stunted. Leaf yellowing and dieback can also occur.

In the past, cyclamen mite was thought to be a minor pest. But with higher incidence of the mite in Minnesota strawberry fields, growers in Manitoba should be aware of mite infestation symptoms. Treat accordingly if a field shows a higher percentage of abnormal, crinkled, twisted leaves as the plants begin to grow (Figures 4,5). Another good time to scout for mites is after renovation. Magister and Agri-mek are miticides registered for use in strawberries.

Figures 4,5: Cyclamen mite damage on young strawberry leaves.

Resources

Province of Manitoba | agriculture - Mites
Crop Protection Hub OMAFRA Ontario fruit-pest-control

Note: Confirm on the label if products are registered for use in Manitoba, and there are no restrictions on regions (i.e. BC only). The product label is a legal document, and label instructions must be followed. The information provided above is general information only.

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