

Silver leaf management

Treet has been re-established in the market place by Skeltons as an effective means of managing silver leaf infection on apple trees.

Growers are able to borrow a treatment gun and apply the product themselves as a more cost effective way of treating infected trees. Treatment should be made in the autumn immediately after harvest when leaf symptoms are clearly obvious. If you plan to treat in the winter, infected trees will need to be clearly marked during the growing season. Silver leaf symptoms disappear during the growing season following application, however severely affected trees may require a second treatment if symptoms persist going into the following autumn.

In the last two seasons results on treated trees have been impressive. Skeltons technical advisors are available to instruct growers on the correct treatment procedures.



Martin Taylor, Skeltons Technical Advisor, injecting Treet into an apple tree.

Grass seed options for cropping growers

For vegetable growers looking for a robust annual ryegrass there is no better option than Moata, a tetraploid annual. Its vigorous nature when sown, even in drier conditions, and good dry matter production in spring means it is ideal for the Heretaunga Plains.

We have good supplies of quality uncertified Moata. Sowing rate is generally 30 kgs per hectare and cut-off needs to be before soil temperatures drop to 10°C. Talk to your Technical Advisor today.

Autumn weed control

Post harvest control of weeds is generally done by one of two methods, either sheep grazing and/or an application of herbicide. The advantage of a herbicide application is the control over the root system underground, whereas sheep graze off the weed tops allowing the weeds to come away quicker in spring when conditions suit.

An application of herbicide in autumn gives good knockdown with product translocating into the root system, giving longer term control of weeds and the opportunity to go into spring, clean.

Grazing sheep in the orchard during autumn / winter will keep weeds level with the orchard floor. This option is not for everyone because of the need for secure fencing, issues of dogs menacing sheep, and general orchard access.

Post harvest nutrition for deciduous fruit

Post harvest is a critical time for deciduous fruit crops as this is when the tree sets down essential nutrients and carbohydrates that it will require in the spring. Water stress, disease or insect pressure that limits a plant's ability to photosynthesise or causes premature leaf fall, will reduce the overwintering reserves the plant has for the spring.

Post harvest but prior to leaf senescence, apply nutrients like nitrogen and boron that will transmit from the leaf to the overwintering buds and help to produce strong healthy blooms in the spring.

Foliar spraying with phosphorous acid post harvest will assist with controlling soil borne root rots like *Phytophthora cactorum*. This application is highly recommended on any heavy soils or blocks that had water lying during the spring as damage to the root system will have occurred.

Weather watch

Weather summary for March at Trotter Road:

	2009	2010	2011	10 year average
Rainfall (mm)	45.6	13.9	114.8	55.8
Average temp °C	15.3	16.3	16.4	16.4
Average max temp °C	21.8	23.5	21.8	22.5
Average min temp °C	9.1	9.3	11.2	10.5
Growing degree days	177.2	204.3	202.8	205.6
Rain since Jan. 1st (mm)	149.8	225.7	317.5	174.0



Decco wax meeting the demands of the European Union

EU regulations have recently changed and now only allow imports of fresh produce that have been treated with a fruit coating that does not contain morpholine (a food grade additive that is part of all fruit waxes used in New Zealand).

This has wide implications for New Zealand as fruit is mainly waxed for export markets and the morpholine residue can be transferred to fruit destined for the EU.

Decco US has developed a wax coating that does not contain morpholine. Trials carried out in Hawke's Bay recently saw a very good shine to fruit that was comparable to Morpholine-based products. If you have any queries about the wax you are currently using, please contact your Skeltons Technical Advisor.

What's in store for...

Harvest

Harvest is well under way and Skeltons still has a good range of picking buckets and accessories plus orchard ladders and smoko supplies.

Rodents

Autumn is a good time to consider a rodenticide to control rats and mice. Skeltons range includes Talon, Racumin, Pestoff and more.

Post harvest nutrition

Skeltons has a comprehensive range of liquid and granular fertilisers for all pip and stone fruit growers. This is essential to maximise reserves for next year's buds. Consult your technical advisor for advice regarding your situation.

Pruning gear

As picking of stone fruit is coming to an end, consider your pruning equipment needs. We stock a variety of brands of secateurs and spare parts, as well as Bacseal Super and Garrison for pruning wounds. For tree training Skeltons stocks a wide range of horticultural twine and plastic tree ties etc.

Introducing Skeltons new Decapitator

Made from stainless steel, this tool is designed to take caps off most containers easier and faster. With either a 75mm or 85mm cap the Decapitator can also be used to undo and tighten 200L drums with ease. Get one from your local Skeltons or Farmlands store.



Farmlands Card Corner

A Topp Twins party for Hawke's Bay growers

There's no better excuse to use your Farmlands Card than the chance to win an amazing prize. This month Farmlands is launching our 'Win the Topp Twins in your town' promotion, which will run through until the end of June, and will see one lucky town play host to this iconic pair.

To help your town win, simply put more of your usual purchases on your Farmlands Card. The town that collectively increases the use of their Cards will win a sponsored concert; including food, drinks and light hearted jocularly in their town.

The more you use your Farmlands Card, the greater the chance your town has of winning!

Hot tip:

You no doubt know that your grocery bill is one of your biggest expenses - simply use your Farmlands Card to pay at any New World, and selected Pak'N'Save stores (including Tamatea, Napier and Hastings) and you will be tracking fairly smartly for a win.

Remember, all you have to do is put more of your usual purchases on your Farmlands Card and Hawke's Bay growers could be enjoying one heck of an end of season party!



Off season store hours

As of the 1 April Skeltons will revert to our off season hours:

Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm, closed on Saturdays.

Events

Skeltons Golf Day

When: 13 May 2011
Where: HB Golf Club
Time: tbc

ICE Expo and Young Fruitgrower of the Year

When: 1 June 2011
Where: HB Showgrounds
Contact: Lesley Wilson on 021 898 795 or email info@iceexpo.org.nz

Want more information?

Should you require further information on any articles in this newsletter, or on any other matter relating to horticulture, please contact us.

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World Respect Winner 2010

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