Fraser fir IPM Series

Jackson County’s Christmas tree IPM Series will meet on the 2nd Friday of each month in August and again in September from 1:00-3:30p.m. Our August 14th meeting will take place in the Pine Creek area at the first house on the left just past the Pine Creek Baptist church. Look for cleared land and a metal building (Barbara Henderson’s place). If you are unable to attend, come join us for our last meeting on Friday September 11th! Two pesticide credits will be offered for each series in the “X” subclass category. Growers from neighboring counties are welcome to participate.

Covered topics include the balsam woolly adelgid, balsam twig aphids, grubs, spider mites, hemlock rust mites, hemlock elongate scale, scouting, pest life cycles, ground cover management, calibration and more!

If you're interested in this program or need directions, contact our office at phone # 828 586 4009.
Upcoming Seminar

Pest Control Crib Notes

By Dr. Jill Sidebottom NCSU IPM Conifer Specialist

All Pests:

- Any pesticide application has an impact. Spraying for one pest can make another worse. That may be one reason elongate hemlock scale is becoming more of a problem. So always scout to make sure a pesticide is really necessary.
- To scout you need a hand lens, pocket knife, pruners, and flagging. Some pests can be dislodged by beating foliage over something white to catch the bugs that fall out. A white plastic plate works great!
- Be sure to write down your scouting observations.
- Getting good coverage is more important than what pesticide you use. Calibrate your equipment and do a trial run with water to make sure you’re getting good coverage.
- One way to get better coverage with a mistblower is to add an adjuvant to make spray droplets larger like Vail.
- Spraying when it is too windy (>10 mph) or if it rains an hour after spraying is a waste. Pick days with good weather. Stop spraying if conditions warrant it.
- How do you know if the wind is too strong? Use a wind gauge!
- Butt pruning your trees may be the single most important cultural practice to making pesticide application more efficient.
- Be sure to rotate your pesticides. Don’t use materials from the same chemical family like the organophosphates over and over year after year.

Spruce Spider Mite (SSM): Small red mite. Worse in dry years. Causes yellow spots on needles.

- Leaving a ground cover around your trees will keep spider mites from being as bad a problem.
- Coverage is key to SSM control. Mist blowers don’t always give good enough coverage.
- Envidor is a new miticide labeled for Christmas trees that controls both SSM and HRM.

Hemlock Rust Mite (HRM): Very small wedge-shaped mite that may look whitish to orangish. Causes bronzing of foliage and badly damaged needles fall off. Usually a spring-time pest that goes away when night time temperatures are in the mid to upper 60’s.

- Rust mites are often a problem after use of synthetic pyrethroids like Asana or Talstar. This is usually less of a problem if these materials are applied in the fall, but still be on the lookout.
- The treatment threshold for rust mites is 80% of shoots with some mites on them and at least one needle with 8 mites on it. But, if you are finding rust mites before bud break and plan on treating for twig aphids, be sure to use a material that will control mites like Dimethoate or Envidor.
- Envidor is a new miticide labeled for Christmas trees that controls both SSM and HRM. Horticultural oil and sulfur are also good controls for rust mites.

Balsam Woolly Adelgid (BWA): Introduced pest that kills trees, living on the buds, shoots and bark of the tree. Causes hard wood and crooked tops.

- Do a thorough job of scouting once a year in all your trees. Be sure everyone who works in your trees can recognize BWA. Get them to flag suspect trees.
- If you found BWA you have until bud break of the next growing season to control it. Pick a time that will allow you to control another pest, or not make other pests worse. Fall is one of the best times to not create further problems with mites and perhaps control BTA as well.
- Get good coverage. Be sure when spraying the entire tree and trunk are covered. All kinds of factors can make this harder – tall weeds, trees on steep hillsides, cut-over trees so you lose track of where you are. Some people have gotten spray back to the truck, but ended up leaving a narrow strip on the trunk that doesn’t get sprayed. Experiment with water before treating to make sure you’re getting coverage.

Recommendations for the use of chemicals are included in this newsletter as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage and examine a current product label before applying any chemical.
August

**Pest Control:** Continue scouting for balsam woolly adelgid (BWA). If found, treat before bud break the following year. Continue scouting for spider mites (SSM). If spider mites are found above treatment thresholds, treat immediately. Scout trees for rosette bud mite (RBM) damage. In particular, trees between 3-5 ft. need a thorough rosette bud mite assessment. Selectively tag rosette bud trees for early harvest. If level of damage is greater than treatment threshold, plan to treat trees the following year. Fields can be scouted for white grubs in late August where grub damage is suspected because of dying or yellowing young trees. Scout new ground, particularly pasture, for grubs.

**Ground Cover Management:** Monitor recovery of weeds from the chemical suppression treatment. List beneficial and problem weeds in order of abundance. Determine the need for a spot treatment to kill specific undesirable weed species in September. Map their location. Ground covers can now be mowed without encouraging white grubs.

**Shearing:** Continue shearing. Trim tops left earlier to straighten.

**Marketing:** Continue grading and tagging trees.

September

**Pest Control:** Continue scouting for balsam woolly adelgid. If found, treat before bud break the following year. Continue scouting for spider mites. If found above treatment thresholds, treat immediately.

**Ground Cover Management:** Use semi-directed applications of Roundup or Garlon 3A before frost to kill pokeweed, hardwood sprouts, vines and other perennial weeds. Avoid spraying beneficial ground covers with killing rates of herbicide. In young trees, a pre-emergent herbicide may be banded over the tree row to control winter annuals like goldenrod and catchweed bedstraw. Sow clover or rye for ground cover establishment.

**Fertility:** Take soil and plant tissue samples to determine spring fertility needs. Look for calcium deficiency symptoms in trees and treat with calcium nitrate and/or gypsum, especially in go-to-market trees. Put out fall applications of fertilizer and lime.

**Shearing:** Lighten up shearing because secondary buds will no longer develop on trees.

**Marketing:** Firm up contracts with customers. List any extra trees with the NCCTA and NCDA marketing Division. Work on leases, permits, and other details for your retail lots.
Comments on This Years Market
Bill Glenn, NCDA Marketing Specialist (spoken at the July 10th IPM meeting)

▼ We have a real good crop of trees coming on this year!
▼ Region wide we have an access amount of trees that would be a problem even with a good economy.
▼ Unemployment is up and the market is down.
▼ One in nine North Carolinians are unemployed.
▼ The latest predictions are that the economy will stop sliding late this year early next year before it gets better. There are pockets of economic growth e.g., Huntsville Al, Chattanooga & Cleveland TN.

What Does This Mean for You?

▼ Trees will sell this year. People with jobs (8 out of 9 North Carolinians) will celebrate Christmas.
▼ Orders will come late this year. Few customers will commit early. Late orders will probably happen again.
▼ Flexibility will be important in handling late orders, re-orders, partial loads, and the willingness to build loads.
▼ Not too late to call on old and potential new customers by phone or in person.
▼ Attend Exhibit and Trade Shows.
▼ Most importantly, know your bottom line. Understand what it takes to stay in business this year, next year and the year after.
▼ Hang in there! This too shall pass.

Sincerely,

Christy Bredenkamp, Extension Agent
Agriculture-Horticulture

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Jackson County Center
538 Scotts Creek Road, Suite 205
Sylva, NC 28779