UMass Extension Landscape Message #26 - 2004

November 5, 2004

Scouting Information by Region

Environmental Data

The following growing degree day (GDD) and precipitation data was collected from October 7 through November 3, 2004. Soil temperature and phenological indicators were observed on November 3, 2003. Accumulated GDDs represent the heating units above the 50° F. baseline temperature collected via our mini-computers since the beginning of the current growing season. This information is intended for use as a guide for monitoring the developmental stages of pests in your location and planning management strategies accordingly.

Region/Location	2004 GROWING DEGREE DAYS		Soil Temp *(°F at 4" depth)*	Precipitation *(1-Week Gain)*
	4-Week Gain	*Total accumulation for 2004*		
Cape Cod	113	2567	52° F	1.50"
Southeast	77	2488	48° F	2.25"
East	~110	~2570	n/a	n/a
Central	~100	~2480	n/a	n/a
West	75	2575	49° F	2.60"
Berkshire	47	2294	49° F	1.70"

Regional Notes

Cape Cod Region - General conditions: October proved to be a cloudy, gray month. While we didn't have a lot of actual rainfall, there were many days of drizzle. The first light frost occurred in Marstons Mills on the morning of October 5, while a hard, killing frost occurred on October 27th. In areas closer to the water, including the lower Cape, a hard frost has yet to occur. **Pests/Problems:** No significant pest or disease problems occurred in October.

Southeast Region - General conditions: Beautiful fall color for the past month still prevails. Many areas of Plymouth County received only a light frost some weeks ago and one again last night. In those areas of light frost, annuals like geranium, impatiens, and salvia are still in bloom. Fall foliage color is still terrific with much of the color coming from oaks, beech, kousa dogwood, flowering dogwood, styrax, witchhazel, and clethra. Late season perennials still in bloom are: *Aconitum* sp., (Monkshood), *Aster tataricus*, Sheffield Pink Chrysanthemum, Korean Chrysanthemums, and a few garden phlox. Fruits of Viburnum trilobum and Kousa dogwood are also proving color. Hanson received 2.25 inches of rain over the past 4 weeks and soils are moist. **Pests/Problems:** Ladybugs, one of the fall invaders have started to enter buildings. There are no other insects or diseases to report. Now is a good time for fall cleanup especially those areas that had significant plant disease problems like powdery mildew, apple scab, black spot, anthracnose, etc.

East Region - General Conditions: No report.

Central Region - General Conditions: No report.

West Region - General Conditions: Except for several wet days in mid-month, October was a dry, as well as cooler than normal period. Newly transplanted evergreens would benefit form weekly soaking until the ground freezes if the weather stays dry. Most of the autumn color change has past in the Pioneer Valley, except for the gold and burgundy of oak, beech, gingko and some later maples. **Pests/Problems:** Meadow voles are active, feeding on newly planted bulbs. There are no extraordinary disease problems. There are

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some nuisance insects evident that are making their way indoors for winter.

Berkshire Region - General Conditions: The soil moisture is high despite low rainfall amounts for the past month. Frosts thus far have been light but killing frost expected tonight (Nov. 3). Oaks still providing lots of color in natural landscape. **Pests/Problems:** Asiatic Lady Beetles are prominent on sunny sides of light colored siding of houses.

- CAPE COD REGION - Roberta Clark, Horticulturist for Barnstable County, Barnstable.
- SOUTHEAST REGION - Deborah Swanson, Horticulturist for UMass Extension in Plymouth County, Hanson
- EAST REGION - James R. Allen, Horticulturist and Greenhouse Manager for UMass Biology Department, Boston
- CENTRAL REGION - Joann Vieira, Superintendent of Horticulture, Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Boylston.
- WESTERN REGION - Dan Gillman, Plant Pathologist, Urban Forestry Diagnostic Lab, UMass, Amherst.
- BERKSHIRE REGION - Ronald Kujawski, Nursery Specialist, UMass Extension Agriculture & Landscape Program, Amherst.

Woody Ornamentals

Insects

Caterpillars

The vast majority of insects are now dormant. However, a few remain and a few others are about to have their last period of activity for this year.

- **Red-headed Pine Sawfly** may still be active in the more moderated climates (coastline) where cold weather has not yet been enough to cease their activity. However, they are virtually through for this year.
- **House invaders** are still very active. These include: Asian ladybird beetles (ladybugs), western conifer seedbug, boxelder bugs, mimosa webworm caterpillars, others. Work to prevent them entering the home by fixing screening and caulking.
- **Hemlock Woolly Adelgid** has become active and will continue to feed and develop from now until next March whereupon new eggs will be produced and then a second generation of adelgids will become active. Last winter's unprecedented cold spell greatly reduced the numbers of this pest but they will rebound. Monitor for developing populations and earmark them for treatment next spring.
- **Fall Cankerworm** and **Winter Moth** adults will appear starting around Thanksgiving time. Flight may continue into December if temperatures remain mild. Both species have winged males that can fly and wingless females that do not fly. Eggs will be laid and will remain dormant until the spring. Last year's population of winter moth was extremely high and male moth emergence was often described as "a blizzard of moths". Both species are active night fliers and are attracted to lights. Many trees in the Plymouth County area, which have been defoliated for several consecutive years by winter moth, started displaying signs of decline this last growing season. Make note of such trees and be prepared to provide them with some extra TLC next spring, if possible.
- **Forest tent Caterpillar** and **Eastern Tent Caterpillar** populations have been on the rise in MA as well as in much of southern New England. Monitor host plants for their egg masses and be prepared to intervene early next spring in those areas of high populations.
- **Gypsy moth** is also showing signs of increasing in numbers across the state. Monitor for their egg masses as well.

Reported by Robert Childs, Entomologist, UMass Extension Landscape, Nursery and Urban Forestry Program, Amherst

Diseases

Deciduous Trees and Shrubs - As the plants go dormant, it is a good time to prune dead branches, and collect fallen leaves to reduce overwintering inoculum (the resting structures of leaf spot, blight and canker fungi). If this debris is not removed more of these disease fungi will be present in the area to initiate infections next spring. Also, if leaf spots and blights are recurring, unsightly problems, resistant varieties or other plants better adapted to the site may be available to replace them.

Ramorum blight, also known as **Sudden Oak Death (SOD)** - The fungus *Phytophthora ramorum* causes Ramorum blight. It is a severe disease of oak and tanoak in certain Pacific Northwest fog forest areas. In 2004, *Phytophthora ramorum* was found in nurseries in California, Oregon and Washington. These detections demonstrate that the pathogen is not necessarily limited to the moist coastal regions of northern California and southern Oregon. All of these nurseries distribute nursery stock nationwide, including Massachusetts. Canada has identified three infested nurseries in British Columbia; one of which is a production nursery that shipped potentially infected plants to 19 nurseries in CA, OR and WA.

Phytophthora ramorum has a wide range of host plants, including rhododendron, viburnum and camellia, which are potential "carriers" of the fungus when plants are transported. The damage on non-oak hosts involves minor leaf spotting and twig dieback. However, infections on these non-oak hosts may contribute to a rapid build-up of the fungus in an area, serving therefore as a reservoir of inoculum. Not all of the details of how the fungus spreads have been worked out, but these reservoir plants may play an important role.

SOD (*Phytophthora ramorum*) surveys in nurseries and forest areas around the state were performed this year. To date, *Phytophthora ramorum* has not been found in Massachusetts, but nearby states in which it has been positively identified include Pennsylvania (indoors), New York (however, there is some doubt about this situation) and New Jersey. On July 2, APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) confirmed the presence

of *Phytophthora ramorum* in Nassau County, NY. The team collected the positive sample from a mature red oak tree located in a 192 acre forested county park. Further surveys are underway to identify other possible infected plants and infested sites.

As of September 29, 2004, the total number of confirmed positive locales from the trace forward, national, and other survey finds is 160 in 21 States. The breakdown per State is: AL (3), AR (1), AZ (1), CA (53), CO (1), FL (6), GA (18), LA (5), MD (2), NC (9), NJ (1), NM (1), NY (1), OK (1), OR (13), PA (indoor), SC (3), TN (2), TX (11), VA (2) and WA (25). *It is important to note that only three are from residential landscape situations, two in Georgia and one in South Carolina, as well as one possible environs find on Long Island, NY*.

Landscape, Nursery, and Urban Forestry Diagnostic Lab Report

The following are some of the interesting disease/abiotic disorder samples received at the UMass Extension Landscape, Nursery, and Urban Forestry Diagnostic Lab in Amherst during the period October 4 through October 29, 2004:

- **Boston ivy** - well established plant with scattered spots on many leaves and occasional 1-foot shoot sections dying back; Guignardia leaf spot and canker.
- **Common lilac** - new plants on foggy site near tidal estuary with spotted leaves and premature loss; lilac anthracnose (Glomerella)
- **European beech** - ~100-year-old tree with areas of dead bark, some of which are weeping, formed at base of main stem; all lesions well compartmentalized/no disease or insect found that causes these symptoms/contributing agents: soil compaction + physical injuries + environmental stress (e.g., water shortage + winter freeze damage)
- **Privet** - mature hedge with yellowed, spotted leaves in August and by September scattered dieback; rust mites/opportunistic Phomopsis leaf blight + canker/windy site/compacted soil/water shortage
- **Sugar maple** - mature tree with branch tip dieback, smaller than normal leaves and early fall color; Valsa canker/previous seasons of heat stress + water shortage/ soil compaction/deicing salt use on nearby walks + driveway/possible root damage or disease

Reported by Dan Gillman, Plant Pathologist, based in the Urban Forestry Diagnostic Lab at UMass, Amherst, Mass

Landscape Turf

Diseases

Fusarium patch (pink snow mold) occurs during cool (less than 60° F) rainy weather. The disease is also known as Microdochium patch because the name of the fungus was changed from Fusarium to Microdochium. Patches are usually from 1 to 5 inches in diameter and the grass will appear water-soaked, similar to Pythium blight. The overall coloration of the affected turf is usually tan but in the spring, after snowmelt, a pink to salmon-coloration is often evident. The disease is favored by nitrogen applications so if you have a history of Fusarium patch, go easy on the nitrogen this fall. The fungus is easily spread with mowers so do not mow diseased grass when wet. A wide range of fungicides will control this disease. Fludioxonil, iprodione, PCNB, propiconazole, and trifloxystrobin should give excellent control.

Rob Wick, Professor, Microbiology/Plant Pathology, UMass, Amherst, Mass.

Insects

Diazinon 'Stop-Sale' Date Approaching - EPA has issued a notice to remind retailers of a Dec. 31, 2004, stop-sale date for all outdoor diazinon home, lawn and garden products. It will be unlawful to sell diazinon outdoor non-agricultural use products in the United States after the end of this year. This is part of an agreement between EPA and diazinon registrants to phase out and eliminate all residential uses of the insecticide diazinon. Discontinuing diazinon use in home, lawn and garden care is part of EPA's ongoing effort under the 1996 Food Quality Protection Act to reduce the risk of pesticides, especially to children.

Diazinon registrants are offering a "buy back" program to assist with removing these products from the market and preventing further sale. The registrants will repurchase any unopened, unused outdoor residential products from retailers or formulators. Retailers should make all possible efforts to sell their diazinon products back to the manufacturers by March 31, 2005.

Consumers may continue to use diazinon residential products according to label directions and precautions (for New York State use, the registrant must continue to register their products with the NYSDEC). If consumers choose to discontinue use, they should contact their state or local hazardous waste disposal program or local solid waste collection service for information on proper disposal. Consumers are advised not to dispose of pesticides in sinks, toilets, storm drains, or any body of water. The local government may recommend that consumers take diazinon products to a household hazardous waste collection site.

The organophosphate pesticide, diazinon, has been one of the most widely used insecticides in the United States for household lawn and garden pest control, as well as for indoor residential treatments. All indoor use product registrations have been cancelled and retail sale ended on Dec. 31, 2002.

Reported by Pat Vittum, Professor and Extension Turf Entomologist, UMass, Amherst, Mass

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