



JUST PICKED

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 2

October 2015

From the Coordinator's Desk

Happy Autumn, Fruit Growers!

After a summer of huge, regular rainfalls, it's hard to believe we had been dry for over a month here in Western Wisconsin. No longer, though. Cool, wet October weather is making it uncomfortable to get those last fall tasks done – pruning suckers and fixing tree guards in the rain isn't much fun – but perfect for newsletter editing with a warm cup of cider.

Recap of Summer Events

The 2015 growing season was a big one for fruit and orchard events! Our annual OFGA field day at Alternative Roots Farm in Madelia, MN offered a great look at a diversified operation. John and Brooke Knisely raise veggies, apples, and hogs. This seemed to appeal to a lot of fruit growers. Conversation was robust and enlightening. Hoch Orchard, founding OFGA members, hosted two field days, with Wisconsin Apple Growers Association and Land Stewardship Project, detailing high-density orcharding and integrating livestock, respectively, as well as an on-farm biodynamic composting class. And members Sliva Meadow Farm hosted a pear field day, in NE Iowa. If you missed these great events, read on to learn a little bit about some of them.



*Pigs in an orchard
Photo by Rachel Henderson*

What's Next?

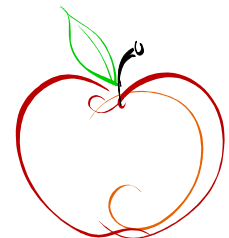
For many of us, winter is conference season! The events page, at the end of this newsletter, contains a quick summary of some of the big conferences and the sessions of particular interest to organic fruit growers.

OFGA will be organizing a winter growers retreat, preceding the MOSES Organic Farming Conference. In the past, participants have found this to be a great time to connect a little more deeply with other growers, and have a grower-driven conversations as we identify our areas of interest and concern. In addition, we'll have one or two scheduled topics. Please watch for details in December!

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Keep up with events and other news at our website organicfruitgrowers.org!



Have a newsletter story or idea to share?

Email
Rachel Henderson
OFGA Coordinator at
info@organicfruitgrowers.org

To Mow or To Manage...

Dan Kelly, Blue Heron Orchard, OFGA President

.... that is the Question. After the long growing season and just finishing the harvest of Winesap apples, can you believe it is time to consider fruit field strategies for next year? I can only address apple orchard issues for semi-standard and semi-dwarf trees, because, in the beginning, I was too cheap to have four hundred trees to the acre. To satisfy my desire to grow apples, I settled on a spacing with an average of one hundred trees per acre. And that meant a lot of space between rows.

That being said, it is mid October in northern Missouri. All the apples are down off the trees and in storage, and the leaves are still hanging on. Here are a few things that I consider now, for next season; Voles (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*) and the Spring disease apple scab (*Venturia inaequalis*).

Before the snow flies, I mow the 'daylights' around all of the trees. Hopefully most of the leaves are on the ground and should be shredded to allow any disease spores that might be hanging on the leaves to biodegrade with the help of soil organisms. Some orchard folk recommend a spray of an organic nitrogen to accelerate the breakdown of the leaves. But I wonder, if the temperatures are too low, will the microbes still work?



Flail mower with cat at Blue Heron Orchard
Photo by Dan Kelly

This mowing practice can be a two for one opportunity: disease management and vole habitat discouragement. Tall grass and dropped apples are 'room and board' for the voles. Chop the leaves up -- real good. And as our mower (see the photo) cannot get too close to our trunks, underneath where the vole create their winter den, use a weed-eater, string-trimmer, weed-whacker or whatever name you call it by, and create a scorched-earth zone around the trunk, three feet out. The idea is to expose that area to encourage feeding opportunities for coyotes, foxes, bobcats, cats, owls, kestrels and dogs. Many creatures love voles, just not me or you.

Continued on next page...

To Mow or To Manage...

Continued...

I repeat this scorched-earth approach in the growing season three times. First after pruning to surmise any damage. Last winter, voles got behind the protective hardware-cloth wire and ate the bark up the trunk about fifteen inches. The other two times are to facilitate mowing with a seven foot sickle-bar mower, to avoid hitting trees with the mower.

For the growing season, my approach is somewhat intuitive. I don't like to bother the trees much and I only do my first major mowing after the apple scab season has ended. I like the idea that any leaves not decomposed are covered over with the spring flush of grass and will suppress their diseased hitchhiker from spewing their spores into the air from spring rains. When the coast is clear from disease threat, then I control all growth, just under the trees.

The focus of my holistic management strategy is to encourage the biosystem. Now we pull back and leave the alleyways between the trees to flourish and to provide alternative refugia, or safe place, for my other favorite summer vole predator, the Black Rat Snake (*Pantherophis spiloides*). Also in these zones, plant species such as the flowering Queen Ann's Lace (*Daucus carota*), an umbilifera, provides nectar for a host of parasitic wasps i.e. (*Itopectis conquisitor*) and tachinid flies i.e. (*Phryxe pecosensis*). These species help to control the complex of lepidoptera, or most all the fruit worms that cause trouble in apple orchards.*

When things get really out of control, it is usually in a confined area. My orchard has had pockets of infestation of the vole, usually where the grass is out of control. My early, post pruning approach in 2015 was to weed-eat down to the dirt around each tree in this zone at least a foot and a half away from the trunk. Then I mowed close to the ground a perimeter around the area. I had on hand a drip torch rented from my NRCS (Natural Resource and Conservation Service). On a calm day, I lit a back-fire on the upwind side of the zone and burned into the wind, a fire break. I let the fire creep through the zone and around the trees making sure no fire got close to the trunks.

All the trees survived this practice, and I will see next year if the trees so badly damaged by the voles in the burned area come back next season.

I might recommend, the next time the coyote hunter come and offers to 'help you out', tell them you already got rid of the varmints, nicely, unlike I did last year.

*FIELD GUIDE For Identification of Pest Insects, Diseases, and Beneficial Organisms in Minnesota Apple Orchards

Close up of flail mower
Photo by Dan Kelly



June 2015 Field Day at Hoch Orchard: 60 years of Planting Apples

Rami Aburonia, OFGA board member

This field day in June was sponsored by Wisconsin Apple Growers Association and was focused on high density plantings. Thank you to Jackie and Harry Hoch for hosting this event on their farm. Hoch Orchard is located in the hills above the Mississippi River in La Crescent, MN. The farm is set on a ridge with steep slopes on three sides. The location is windy and the Hoch's have put in large wind breaks to protect against tree damage. There are 25 acres of apples and several more acres of stone fruit, grapes and berries. The orchard is broken down into 19 different blocks each of which is managed independently in terms of monitoring and pest control.

The Hochs transitioned the entire orchard over time from IPM to organic and all crops produced on the farm were certified organic in 2010. They use a holistic approach to orcharding, integrating animals, pollinator habitats, multistory cropping, extensive pest and disease monitoring, and spray programs.

Hoch Orchard was first planted in the 1940's with standard trees at 30' x 30' spacing. Planting continues today and the variety of spacings and support systems make the orchard a great place to see many blocks of differing tree densities in one place.

See chart on next page for history and comparison of plantings.

Over time, planting density has increased and trellis structure has become stronger. The use of fewer wires and a stake at each tree allows the leader to be maintained in a vertical position (as long as the stake is securely attached to wire and does not slide.)

I put together some of the considerations I think are important when deciding on tree density. Much of this information is available on extension websites. I like the Cornell and Univ. of Massachusetts sites.

- Yields/Acre and first harvest – what kind of yields do you need to meet your goals, how long can you wait until first harvest
- Capital investment – range from \$2000/A of free standing trees to \$15000+ for high density with a large trellis and irrigation
- Site – How windy, what kind of anchorage does your soil provide
- Cultivar – How vigorous is the cultivar, how will I manage the vigor (N.Spy) or lack of vigor (Honeycrisp) to get even growth through the orchard
- Rootstock – Matching the rootstock with the vigor of scion can help to even out the vigor of different varieties
- Equipment – Smaller sized machinery for narrow rows. If planting 12' rows and trees are allowed 3' branches there is only 6' of drive space
- Organic certification – You may not be able to use treated posts, if untreated the posts may need to be replaced
- Orchard floor management – larger trees with less dwarfing rootstock will be able to compete with weeds better than trees with a smaller rootstock

The higher density plantings requires a lot of management. If you are a beginning apple grower, learning the costly ropes of training, on top of pest management, can be challenging. Visit farms like to the Hoch's to see different densities and trellis designs in action. Take time to research the options. Plan ahead, you will need to graft trees or order from nurseries two years in advance of planting to get the varieties on roots that you want.

Evolution of planting densities and trellis design at Hoch Orchard

Chart created by Rami Abouromia

Year planted	Root stock	Varieties	Spacing (trees/A)	Trellis construction	Problems
40's-70's	std	many	30x30 (48)	Self supporting	
1985	M7	many	10x15 (290)	Self supporting	Too close together, trees leaning in wind
1996	M26	Honeycrisp, Sweet16	7.5x15 (388)	Each tree staked	Uneven vigor in two varieties, stakes fall over or break
1999	M26	Regent	8x15 (363)	6' trellis/3 wires	Vigor difficult to control, wires hinder harvest
2000	G16	Buckeye Gala	4x15 (726)	6' trellis/3 wires Large end posts, Line posts- 50'	Planted too close together, trees moved on wire, difficult to maintain leader
2006	B9	Pristine	4x15 (726)	Each tree staked to 7.5' t-post	
2007	B9	Snowsweet, Keepsake, Haralson	6x16 (453)	6' trellis/2 wires, Angled end post and earthanchor. Each tree staked w/7' bamboo	Bamboo too light and too short to maintain leader, bamboo and tree slide on wire
2008	B9	Sweetango	8x15 (363)	6' trellis/H-brace ends/2 wires Line posts -60' Each tree staked w/ 7.5' best angle stake	End posts too shallow in soil, cultivator catches on brace wire
2010	B9	Juliet	2.5x15 (1161)	6' trellis/H-brace ends/2 wires Line t-posts -50' Each tree staked w/ 8' wood stake	Need stronger inline posts, end post need to be deeper
2011	B9	Hard cider variety trial	1.5x15 (1936)	6' trellis/3 wires, large end post w/ earthanchor Line posts -50' Tree staked w/7' bamboo	Trees move on wire
2012	B9	Goldrush, Winecrisp, Enterprise	1.5x10 (2904)	8' trellis/5 wires, end posts w/earthanchor Line posts -60'	Need extra anchorage on ends- wires pulling too much
2012	B9	Rezista Granny	2x10 (2178)	6' trellis/2 wires, end posts w/earthanchors, Line posts -60' Trees staked w/9' bamboo, stake attached to wire w/metal clips	
2013	B9	Crimsoncrisp and companion planting trial	3x12 (907)	6' trellis/2 wires, end posts w/earthanchors Line posts -60' Trees staked w/9' bamboo, stake attached to wire w/metal clips	

From the Listserv: Bacterial Canker in Peach Trees

(In Case You Missed It! The following exchange was originally an email dialogue on the network listserv. It has been reprinted with permission of the contributors and edited for clarity and space.)

Question:

I have 22 peach trees in their seventh growing season. About half of them show evidence of bacterial canker; some have it on the fruiting shoots, but most of the trees only in one or two spots on the trunk, about 16 to 24 inches above ground where scaffold branches join the trunk. The canker is oozing translucent reddish gunk. Some of the trees also have dead or dying limbs, and most have little new growth (from last year) or fruiting spurs.

The trees have been protected in winter with white plastic spiral tree guards, but only up to the first branches. We had a brutally cold and long winter in 2013-14; last winter was better, but we still had 21 below in late March, so winter damage seems likely.

The trees that have bacterial canker are all the PF24C (C for cold hardy -- hah) and PF27A, plus two Hale Haven and one Canadian Harmony.

From what I have read, there is no effective treatment. The recommendation is to prune infected branches well below the canker, but when the canker is on the trunk that means cutting down the tree.

I have a number of questions that I can't find answers for:

Does the rootstock have anything to do with it? The Reliance and Starfire trees that I have are healthy, and they are all on Lovell. The infected ones are seedlings, or on Bailey. But some seedlings and some on Bailey are fine.

Does it spread from tree to tree? One university ag extension source reported that they could not transport the disease with pruning shears when they tried, so it seems that this is not contagious to an otherwise healthy tree, but an opportunistic bacteria that finds a lesion, perhaps created by winter injury.

Should I remove all infected trees as soon as possible? Should they be burned?

If I remove a tree, is there any reason to avoid planting another peach in that spot next spring? Or is it just a matter of being more careful to protect trunks from winter damage, presumably by painting with white latex higher up the trunk?

Peter Fisher
Turkey Creek Orchard
Solon, IA

Responses:

It is possible to reverse bacterial canker with nutrition. When I managed the peaches Doug Murray confirmed that it was no longer active in the orchard. I did use some dry flowable sulfur for disease control. Concentrate on complete nutrition and biology both in the soil and on the trees. Do not be afraid to bring good biology from outside sources. Compost tea may not be all of the microbes needed. Most of the nutrition came from AgriEnergy Resources.

It is my opinion that most plant tissue laboratories do not understand the importance of phosphorus. The values promoted are of averages not truly healthy plants.

Jay McCaman

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From the Listserv: Bacterial Canker in Peach Trees

Continued..

There is a 2-page, very detailed write-up about bacterial canker in the *Compendium of Stone Fruit Diseases*. A key point they make is that climatic and soil conditions can pre-dispose trees to come down with this disease, especially in marginal growing areas. They recommend pruning in late spring rather than autumn or winter to avoid making wounds that heal slowly. Winter injury is also provides entry points for the bacteria.

When I just began working as an agricultural consultant in 1992 in Yakima, some disease was causing a lot of damage there. I was able to identify it as Leucostoma canker (also known as Cytospora canker, caused by a fungus rather than a bacterium). The orchard foreman followed our recommendations to cut out diseased limbs. I think he may also have painted the trunks with white latex paint. This sufficed to contain the infection.

But with regard to bacterial canker, fall copper sprays are mentioned in the *Compendium* as a control measure. Although I live in a very dry climate, I apply NuCop to my peach, nectarine, and apricot trees in the fall at leaf fall because those tiny wounds left by the leaves' abscising can allow an infection to get started.

Bob Purvis
SW Idaho

I'm new to the game, but last year I tried the cheap and cheerful Phillips antidote of a crushed garlic compress on cherry bacterial canker, and to my delight one treatment seems to have done the trick. Good luck with your peaches!

Heather
Little hat creek farm, Roseland, VA, Zone 6b/7a

The book you suggest is still available here: <http://www.apsnet.org/apsstore/shopapspress/Pages/41744.aspx>

I have been emphasizing plant and soil nutrition, with aerated compost tea as well as herb teas, rock powders, seaweed, etc., following the approach of Michael Phillips in the *Holistic Orchard*. Heavy clay-loam soils may be part of the problem, as well as the fact that it is on a slope that was row-cropped for decades before being put in the CRP program about 28 years ago, so the top soil is thin and there is probably hard-pan not very far down. We are also clearly on the margin of peach viability. But when they do produce, they are worth all the heartache.

So I may try to save the healthiest of the trees with only one lesion that is oozing, and cut down the rest, some of which were never thriving as they should.

I have not tried gypsum on the soil but that sounds worthwhile. Thought about planting forage radishes around the trees but haven't yet; they are good for loosening soil. I always wait till bloom to prune peaches, as it seems like a cold rain is likely before that. I spray the peaches with copper every fall after most leaves have dropped to control peach lead curl, but perhaps should be paying more attention to spraying the trunk if it is going to have some effect on bacterial canker.

And I will certainly try the garlic compress.

Peter Fisher

Update from Peter Fisher:

It turns out that I probably misdiagnosed the problem as bacterial canker, due to the gummosis in all the likely places -- cracks in the trunk, in the crotches of scaffold limbs and in some branches up to a height of about 4'. When I learned from talking with our extension agent in August that it was much more likely to be Lesser Peach Tree Borer I sprayed all the cracks in the trunk and branches with Bt (his suggestion) and Neem oil (Michael Phillips' recommendation). Then I plastered the cracks with a clay slurry (Surround and water). I hung a pheromone trap for LPTB on Sept 1 and caught 8 LPTB in 5 days. The only thing that gives me pause is that one peach tree had the gummosis on many twigs higher up in the tree which I think is more characteristic of bacterial canker, not LPTB. So we shall see what next year brings.

Integrating Livestock into Your Orchard

Rachel Henderson, OFGA Coordinator

This summer saw two popular on-farm events focused on integrating livestock into diverse farming operations. At OFGAs own annual field day, hosted by Alternative Roots Farm, we spent a large part of the day discussing the diversified nature of John and Brooke Knisely's small farm, including their decision to raise and farrow pastured hogs as a complement to their apple orchard and vegetable CSA. At a field day organized through Land Stewardship Project's Farm Beginnings program, Harry and Jackie Hoch discussed their ongoing experiment with all kinds of livestock. Harry and Jackie currently raise pastured hogs, sheep, and poultry.

These field days reflect a growing interest among fruit growers for alternative approaches to pest and fertility management, as well as interest in the whole-farm approach of an orchard that integrates animals. (See also Chickens in the Orchard, from the last issue of Just Picked.)



Left: Brooke Knisely discussing pigs; Above: sheep and guard llama at Hoch Orchard
Photos by Rachel Henderson

Benefits of integrating livestock

At their field day, Harry Hoch talked about the historical importance of the role of animals on the farm. He and Jackie both spoke extensively about creating a farm system that comes as close as possible to being a “closed circle” and mimics a natural ecosystem. On a truly sustainable farm, livestock provide essential fertility for vegetable and fruit production, eliminating as much as possible the need to bring in compost or other soil amendment from outside sources.

At both field days, our hosts discussed pest and disease management as one of the primary reasons that they decided to incorporate livestock. Specifically, they and other growers expect to decrease pressure from plum curculio and coddling moth, by eliminating eggs and larvae that are inside the fallen apples, and possibly see some measure of control in apple scab as well. As organic tree fruit growers, we all know the importance of “orchard sanitation,” and getting those fallen apples – lush with bugs and fungal spores – off of our orchard floors as efficiently as possible. On our farm, picking them up by hand became truly challenging this year, as our apple trees start to really produce.

Studies done by Michigan State University, among others, have attempted to quantify the benefit that hogs provide. The published results help highlight the difficulty of on farm research, especially with something as fickle as tree fruit. Really telling results were hampered by uneven production from one year to the next. However in a Michigan State University graduate student grant project titled Potential of organic hogs as a tool for post-harvest orchard floor sanitation and pest management, lead researcher Krista Buehrer concludes “The hogs did a thorough job at removing apples from orchard floor, along with a sizable number of Plum curculio larvae. The 18 hogs needed less than two weeks to remove nearly all dropped apples in a 3 acre area.”

Integrating Livestock into Your Orchard

Continued...

John Knisely experienced another important benefit of hog production in 2015. After a great 2014 season selling organic apples through their CSA and to local food co-ops, Alternative Roots had very low fruit-set on nearly all of their apple trees in 2015. (This was also a topic of good discussion at the field day.) John said that the income from direct sales of their pastured pork helped offset their loss of apple income.

Challenges of integrating livestock

Both Hoch Orchard and Alternative Roots Farm are certified organic in their fruit and vegetable production. Organic standards require a 90-day interval before harvest in which animal manure can't be spread beneath fruit trees. (This window is 120 days for in-ground vegetable harvest.) There was discussion at the Hoch field day about whether a relatively small number of animals actively foraging around an area of orchard should qualify as a manure application. Manure applications are generally measured in tons/acre, which is not what hogs are leaving behind in the two orchards we visited. This is a subject that could benefit from closer study and conversation about the intent of the regulation. At Alternative Roots Farm, John and Brooke resolve the issue by using their hogs to graze on fallen apples post-harvest, and feed them "June drops" that they've collected by hand. In the MSU project report cited above, researchers also mentioned that "Grazing hogs during the June-drop period as well as post-harvest may be more beneficial than grazing them only during the June-drop period, so they have a chance to impact multiple generations of Plum Curculio." However, the whole issue could get more complicated in orchards that need to meet GAPS standards for their markets, or with the still-murky Food Safety Modernization Act. This remains something to watch.

At the Hoch field day, Jackie and Harry discussed the lessons they've learned so far. From their experience, farms need to have a farm team member who is dedicated to working with animals. On the Hochs' large farm, it can be a real challenge for someone who has spent all day working with the fruit to run out to wherever on their 80 acres the mobile chicken coop is stationed that day, to check on the chickens and shut them in for the night. When they began bringing livestock onto the farm, they had an employee who was enthusiastic about taking on those tasks. Since he left, they've struggled to find a consistent replacement. At the time of the field day, they had made the decision to keep the chickens close to the house, allowing them easy access, but losing the benefit of the birds eating up bugs on the orchard floor.

On a smaller farm, some of those tasks might seem easier, but there is still a need for consistent and precise timing with chores. At Alternative Roots Farm, the Kniselys have worked out a schedule that balances the needs of their hogs with John's day job and Brooke's vegetable-related labor.

Another important consideration that Jackie and Harry spoke about at length: To successfully integrate livestock into your orchard, you need to love having animals on your farm. Touring these two farms, it was easy to see the amount of affection that the growers had for their animals, and the joy that they brought to the integrated farms.



Left: John Knisely discussing ladders; Above: pig hauler shelter at Hoch Orchard
Photos by Rachel Henderson

OFGA Update!

The Organic Fruit Growers Association has recently submitted a filing for tax-exempt 501c3 status. We have worked with a lawyer to get our organizational documents in order, and as of this writing, have filed IRS Form 1023. We are awaiting approval from the IRS. Once finalized, OFGA will be able to accept tax-deductible donations. This status could also be helpful to us in grant applications, as well as saving us some money in our administrative expenses. When the organization was officially incorporated (as the Organic Tree Fruit Association), it was the intention of the founding members to seek 501c3 status.



Events!

Fruit Growers Winter Retreat

Tentatively scheduled for February 24th-25th. OFGA will host a retreat for in-depth discussion and presentations on topics of specific grower interest, preceding the MOSES Organic Farming Conference. Please watch listserv, or OFGA website for details in December.

Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable, and Farm Market Expo

December 8-10, Grand Rapids Michigan

Includes sessions on tree fruit, berries, and hard cider!

Minnesota Organic Conference

January 8-9, St. Cloud MN. Fruit workshops include:

- Emerging (or Unusual) Perennial Fruit with Market Potential; Thaddeus McCamant, Central Lakes College
- Starting & Caring for Organic Fruit Trees; Thaddeus McCamant, Central Lakes College

MOSES Organic Farming Conference

February 25th-27th. Workshops of interest to fruit growers include

- Organic Vineyard Table & Wine Grapes; Judith Reith-Rozelle, Stonehoe Consulting
Saturday 8:15 a.m.
- Organic Pest Management in Fruit Crops; Matt Grieshop, Michigan State University and Jim Koan, Al-Mar Orchard
Saturday 3:30 p.m.
- Small Scale On-Farm Composting; Harry Hoch, Hoch Orchards
Saturday 3:30 p.m.
- The Pastured Pig's Perspective, Steve Deibele, Golden Bear Farm
Friday 8:15 a.m.
- Diversified Grower Crop Insurance; Roxann Brixen, Great American Insurance, Harriet Behar, MOSES and Margaret Krome, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
Friday 11 a.m.

Grower Information

How many acres do you currently have in organic (certified, non-certified or transitional) fruit production?

of bearing acres _____
of non-bearing acres _____



What types of fruit to you grow?

Apples _____ Pears _____
Plums _____ Cherries _____
Rhubarb _____ Brambles _____
Grapes _____ Blueberries _____
Strawberries _____ Other _____

What marketing strategies do you use?

Direct to public from farm _____
Farmers market _____
U-Pick _____
Wholesale _____
Other _____

Do you offer value-added products?

Sweet cider _____ Dried fruit _____
Hard cider _____ Vinegar _____
Preserves _____
Other _____

What growing practices do you currently use? (Check all that apply)

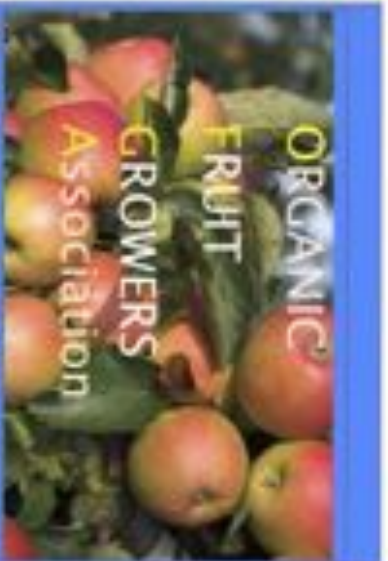
Certified Organic _____
Dual operation – both organic and conventional _____
Use organic practices but not certified _____
In transition to certified organic production _____
Low Input Conventional _____
Other: _____

Please check if interested in participating in an OFGA committee:

Education _____ Research _____ Advocacy _____

Do you have suggestions for a field day topic and/or location?

Organic Fruit Growers Association
c/o Anton Ptak
N3060 630th St
Menomonie, WI 54751



Organic fruit growers fuel local economies, providing local markets with a delicious, nutritious, variety of fruits without the use of harmful chemicals.

Demand for these high-quality products is on the rise!

Learn how to increase production, integrate organic practices, manage disease and pest problems, find new markets, start your own planting and make both your ecosystem and balance sheets more resilient. Share your knowledge and experiences with others.

Join OFGA today!

OFGA is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to serving the interests of organic fruit growers and advancing the organic fruit industry through

Education

Research

Advocacy



What we do...

EDUCATION

As an OFGA member, you will have the opportunity to learn from experienced fruit growers and agricultural professionals, attend current research, find and share resources, and network with other growers through:

Seminars: Intensive full-day courses provide in-depth information on wide range of production and management issues

Field Days: See for yourself how successful plantings throughout the region utilize organic management and engage in on-farm research.

Just Picked - our quarterly newsletter features grower profiles, field reports, event listings, latest research and production-oriented information.

Fact Sheets: Comprehensive concise information on organic production, management and certification issues

OFGA on the Web: We manage a list-serve for our grower members as well as a general list-serve open to everyone. Members, orchardists, hobbyists, and those just beginning to explore fruit production use our web resources to discuss topics related to production, marketing, and policy. **Learn more on our website!**
www.organicfruit.net

Members receive discounted registration for OFGA sponsored events.



RESEARCH

OFGA helps facilitate connections and collaborations with scientific researchers to address the challenges of managing fruit diseases and pests organically in humid regions of the U.S. Our research initiatives focus on identifying and cataloging:

On-farm fruit production research sites

Fruit-related research programs

Scientists interested in organic research

Specific projects that would benefit from collaborative, multi-state testing

Our members are at the cutting edge of solving disease and pest management in organic fruit production.



ADVOCACY

OFGA members have a professional organization capable of representing their interests in political discussions about the policies and programs that affect small growers such as:

National Organic Program (NOP)

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)

OFGA Membership Form

You don't need to be a grower to join. If you want to learn more about organic tree fruit issues or would simply like to support organic fruit growers, please join OFGA as an Active Non-Grower Member or as an Associate Member.

Active Grower and Active Non-Grower Memberships include full voting rights within the organization. Associate Membership does not include voting rights.

All Membership levels receive a \$10.00 discount at OFGA events.

- Active Grower Member = \$50.00 annual fee, plus \$1.00 per bearing acre
- Active Non-Grower Member = \$50.00 annual fee
- Associate Member = \$25.00 annual fee

Name _____

Farm Name _____

Street Address _____

City/Town _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Be sure to fill out **grower information** on the back of this form, & send with check to:

OFGA
c/o Anton Peak
N3060 630th St
Menomonee, WI 54751

Contact us at info@organicfruit.org
www.organicfruit.org

Thank you and welcome!