

season update

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QUEENSLAND – NOVEMBER 2005 REPORT

All growers should have applied their second fungicide by the middle of November. The third application of **protectant fungicide** should be made four weeks after application of the second treatment. This interval should be reduced if more significant rains are forecast before then.

Fruit Drop

The district has experienced significant fruit drop during late October and into November. The overall prediction is for a good average crop at this stage but somewhat less than the large flowering suggested.

Pests

Treatment for **citrus gall wasp** is now due. Microscope dissections indicate that gall wasp eggs are starting to hatch into the first larval stage and this is when treatments are best applied. Good coverage is essential.

Any blocks with high levels of **soft scales** are also due for treatment now. Once again it is imperative that any treatments are made with maximum coverage. If treatments are well applied growers can expect not to have to re-treat for three to five years. However if coverage is inadequate soft scales will build up again quickly and may require re-treatment within 12 months.

Red scale is starting to be recorded in many blocks. This is earlier than is usual. Some blocks may receive oil sprays. If this is the case it is essential that trees are well irrigated and in optimum health before application of any oil sprays. Most growers have made second releases of aphytis wasps by now.

Predatory mite populations have been quite good in many orchards. This is most likely in response to good seasonal rainfall that has been experienced. There have been reports of increased activity from broad mite as well this season.

Activity of **spined citrus bug** and **flatids** have also been noted with some blocks requiring treatment.

Fruit fly baits should be applied in lemon blocks and it is recommended that lower levels of bait be applied to other blocks and orchard perimeters to maintain pressure on the population.

Water and nutrition

Growers should be **irrigating** again following recent rains as monitoring is indicating increased water demand as well as a drying of the soil profile. Soil solutions tests indicate that **potassium** levels are dropping. It is suggested that potassium be applied over the next two to three weeks.

Source: Dan Papacek, *Bugs for Bugs*