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Coronavirus Edition

This are unprecedented times, at least for most of us. A pandemic this severe has not been experienced in 100 years in the U.S. It is difficult to comprehend. How do we deal with it? It will be a long process to get through, although no one knows exactly for sure how long. So right now we are all in a holding pattern — places are closed, stores shut down, and business is, well, not good. But, we will get through it even though at times it may seem impossible. When I get down about it, I think back to the old quote: “When eating an elephant, take one bite at a time.” It may sound trite, but frankly it is the only way to get through this massive unknown situation. So, there isn’t much more for me to say. If you have questions, needs, comments, or anything else let me know. MSU Extension is still on the job for you. Be good to yourself and others, wash your hands often, wear your mask, and keep calm.

Blueberry Jubilee 2020

Eric T. Stafne, Fruit Extension Specialist, MSU-ES

At this time (April 23) the 2020 Blueberry Jubilee in Poplarville is still on, but we are still contemplating options. Of course this is a difficult decision to make. You may not know but planning for this event is nearly a year-round endeavor. We take a short break in the summer before gearing up again in the late summer/early fall. My part is the whole thing is very small, but there are lots of dedicated folks who make it go. It is a great event for the blueberry industry in Mississippi, so I hope you all continue to support it (whether or not we hold it this year). Once I know more, I will pass it on to you.

COVID-19 and its impact on the food industry (produce and meat industry)

Description: In this webinar we will discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the food industry. We will provide perspectives on the recent impact of the pandemic on the supply chain, prices, demand, and food safety. We will also discuss considerations for stakeholders and consumers amid the Coronavirus.

Discussion will include common questions such as: Will there be food shortages? Will the pandemic impact agricultural production? Will food prices go up? Will the pandemic affect the demand for food? Is the food supply safe?

Audience: Extension educators, consumers, producers, and anyone interested in the implications of COVID-19 on the food supply chain.

Time: Apr 24, 2020 11:00 AM in Central Time (US and Canada)

Register in Advance for this Webinar by copying and pasting the link below into your web browser:

<https://msstateextension.zoom.us/webinar/register/>

[WN I sPBXVCTuu6dsIIoMaW w](https://msstateextension.zoom.us/webinar/register/?wnI_sPBXVCTuu6dsIIoMaW_w)

COVID-19 Related Pick-Your-Own Extension Publication

For those of you who are running PYO operations this spring and summer there are some good guidelines to follow that have been developed. Below are some links to information that may prove helpful:

COVID-19 FAQ FOR U-PICK FARMS STEPS FOR FARM MANAGERS <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/FS/FS33800.pdf>

COVID-19 and food safety: Common questions from fruit and vegetable growers <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/covid-19-and-food-safety-questions-from-fruit-and-vegetable-growers>

A guide for local producers to navigate the COVID-19 outbreak <https://www.purdue.edu/newsroom/releases/2020/Q1/a-guide-for-local-producers-to-navigate-the-covid-19-outbreak.html>

Best practices to minimize COVID-19 risk while harvesting fresh produce

<https://www.lsuagcenter.com/profiles/aiverson/articles/page1584982168555>

Best practices to minimize COVID-19 risk at the farmers market

<https://www.lsuagcenter.com/profiles/aiverson/articles/page1584983561595>

Cleaning and disinfection of food-contact and touch surfaces for the COVID-19 virus

<https://www.lsuagcenter.com/profiles/aiverson/articles/page1584982539502>

COVID-19 preventative measures for food industry professionals (English and Spanish)

<http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/covid-19-preventive-measures-for-food-industry-professionals>

<http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/covid-19-medidas-preventivas-para-profesionales-de-la-industria-de-alimentos-incluyendo>

COVID-19 Resources for Businesses, Farms, and Communities <http://extension.msstate.edu/content/covid-19-resources-for-businesses-farms-and-communities>

Now Available: USHBC Webinar Recording!



Retail Rapid-Response Plan, Consumer Campaign Launch



During the webinar, we outlined our retail rapid-response plan and new consumer campaign, and subject matter experts provided updates on the state of the market and consumer buying habits during these challenging times.

Watch or rewatch it all now! Reach out to Andrea Walters at awalters@blueberry.org if you'd like to receive the PowerPoint presentation referenced in the webinar.

Watch the recording here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4Sk4AoeSx4&feature=youtu.be&utm_source=Industry+-+NABC+and+USHBC+combined&utm_campaign=127f6bc8d0-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_01_31_11_50_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_70fbed78d-127f6bc8d0-369771669

Diseases of Fruits, Nuts, and Vegetables: Staying Connected and Available Resources

Rebecca Melanson — Extension Plant Pathologist, Mississippi State University

Small Fruit Integrated Pest Management Guides for Commercial Production. The integrated pest management guides for small fruits (blueberry, caneberry, muscadine, bunch grape, and strawberry) produced by the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium have been updated for 2020 and are available on the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium website (www.smallfruits.org). We are also in the process of printing a limited number of selected guides for distribution to commercial small fruit producers in Mississippi. Mississippi small fruit producers and agents assisting small fruit producers can send an email request for a FREE hard copy of the specific guide(s) by selecting the appropriate link: Blueberry IPM Guide (Conventional), Caneberry IPM Guide, Muscadine IPM Guide, Strawberry IPM Guide. *Please provide your name, farm name, and complete mailing address. Guides will be mailed out as soon as possible.*

Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium Newsletter. Mississippi State University is now a member of the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium! We have been working with the Consortium to update various integrated pest management guides for a number of years, but our membership in the Consortium allows greater opportunity for small fruits research and agent training. The Consortium also sends out a quarterly newsletter, Small Fruit News, with articles covering various horticulture and pest management topics. Past issues are available at the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium website on the News page. There, you can also subscribe to the newsletter to receive it directly in your email inbox! The April 2020 issue of Small Fruit News should be coming out soon!

Outreach Through Social Media. If you are a social media user, consider “liking” or “following” some of our program pages/accounts to get updates, notices, and information!

On Facebook: MSU Extension Diseases of Vegetables, Fruits, and Pecans (@MSUextDiseasesVFP) by Rebecca Melanson, MSU Extension Plant Pathologist

On Twitter: MSU Extension Plant Diagnostic Lab (@MSUextPlantLab) by Clarissa Balbalian, MSU Extension Plant Diagnostic Lab Diagnostician

Fruit and Nut and Vegetable Disease Extension Publications. A number of Extension publications on various fruit, nut, and vegetable diseases are available on the Fruit and Nut Disease Publications and Vegetable Disease Publications pages on the MSU Extension website. New publications are added when they become available, and new and updated publications are marked as such on these pages. A number of other publications are in the process of being produced or updated, and I hope these will be available in the near future. Follow MSU Extension Diseases of Vegetables, Fruits, and Pecans on Facebook and register to be on our producer list to receive updates!

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Building a List of Commercial Vegetable, Fruit, and Pecan Producers in Mississippi

Rebecca Melanson — Extension Plant Pathologist, Mississippi State University

Earlier this year, efforts were initiated to begin building a contact list of Mississippi's commercial vegetable, fruit, and pecan producers.

This list is to be used by MSU Extension Specialists to distribute crop-specific and/or site-specific information to our producers. You may visit <http://msuext.ms/nwslt> to read the details about this initiative. This link is also where producers have the option to sign up to get added to the list.

Please help spread the word about our efforts to build this list by emailing the link with a bit of information about the initiative to your producers or by including this information in your producer newsletters. Feel free to use the following blurb should you find it appropriate for your producers:

Do you produce fruits, nuts, or vegetables commercially? Help MSU Extension help you! LET US KNOW WHAT YOU GROW AND HOW YOU GROW IT! Visit <http://msuext.ms/nwslt> for more information.



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[http://extension.msstate.edu/
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vaccinium-journal](http://extension.msstate.edu/newsletters/mississippi-vaccinium-journal)

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Mississippi Vaccinium Journal

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Mississippi Blueberry Field Day 2020

Eric T. Stafne, Fruit Extension Specialist MSU-ES

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has led us to the difficult decision to cancel the field day for 2020. It was going to be a great time — we had speakers lined up from Oregon State University, University of Arkansas, USDA-ARS, and Mississippi State. There was going to be a big celebration because it was the 50th anniversary of blueberry research in Poplarville and the 100th anniversary of MSU research at that location. But, what else can one do when a pandemic is ravaging the entire globe? We hope that 2021 will allow us to do it again — maybe even bigger and better! Thanks to all of you who attended last year and who planned to come this year.