

May 2018 President's Message

April Snow brings May heat waves. That's not right. How does that old saying go?

Last month I talked about how different this season has been. That trend continues. We have experienced a change from average temperatures in the high forties and low fifties to average temperatures in the mid-seventies to the low eighties in just a few days. We have had a severe hail storm just to our south and one just to our north in this past week. Along with that we have had a week of rainy warm weather with some bloom still open, a plant pathologist's dream. I don't know if weather this erratic is just an anomaly or due to "climate change". Either way it sure keeps a grower on his or her toes.

Even with these challenges, our crop here seems to be coming along okay. We haven't had any major time consuming breakdowns, and have been able to hit what open windows there have been with timely sprays, I think. I hope the same is true for you.

I am concerned about how much "natural" thinning we are going to have due to hot weather in bloom and this extended cloudy weather, but yesterday I smelled apples. I will never forget the first time Dad told me he smelled apples at petal fall. "I smelled apples this morning, we'll have a crop". I thought he was nuts. I never smelled apples at any time during the growing season prior to harvest. Then one day, I don't know if it was that same year or some years later, I did. It was as if it smacked me in the face that I could smell the crop. It didn't last long, but it was distinct and undeniable. I'm sure many of you have experienced it too. What a blessing to have a job that provides that kind of experience.

As I said, it has been a busy Spring, and continues to be. With that in mind, I am cutting this message short to get back to it.

Wishing all of you limited breakdowns, favorable weather and some time to relax before the Summer/Fall Harvest push begins.

Chris Baugher
SHAP President