President’s Message

I just returned from a four day weekend on the Bay with my four children (All in their 20’s). It’s the first time we have all been together since last August. Precious time, for sure. After such a challenging Spring, it was a welcomed chance to relax and enjoy family. I hope each of you have gotten or will get the opportunity for some down time this summer, as well.

The tides on the Bay rise and fall. They don’t care whether or not we are ready for them. It’s much the same in our industry. Our lives can get so hectic at times. It is important to stop and recharge from time to time.

It appears as though this season’s challenges will continue, surprise, surprise. Misery loves company, they say. It sounds, from what I am hearing around our area, that many of us are cutting out fireblight, finding pockets of scab, and observing a June drop that is heavier than we wanted or expected. That is true for us, as well, but I think overall the crop still has good potential. The fireblight seems to have stopped spreading; where there is scab - it is mostly on the leaves, not the fruit, and there will still be a crop to pick, albeit a little short in places.

It sounds as though the apple crop nationally is going to be big, and with the current trade wars going on, we who depend on apples for our primary income, may be in for a tough marketing season. Hopefully, the bottom feeders won’t get too anxious, and prices can hold, but I am concerned. Perhaps high freight rates and our close proximity to the markets will keep us competitive and profitable. I am going to remain optimistic.

I hope you are planning to come to the field day at PSU FREC in Biglerville on July 10th. If you haven’t heard, it’s the 100th anniversary of our premier fruit research facility in Pennsylvania. Given all the troublesome problems FREC has taken on, and solved over the years, I wonder what our industry would be like without them. I’m certain less vibrant than it is today.

Please set the time aside and come join in the celebration. You can register online at https://extension.psu.edu/frec-centennial-celebration-and-field-day and there is more information on page 13. The cost is $20 per person and includes a chicken barbeque dinner. I hope to see you there.

Chris Baugher
SHAP President