***Editorial Views***

*By Dr. Rob Crassweller*

**Summer Is Here and Spring is a Memory”**

The long cold winter has finally passed and it seems after a very cool slow spring we have jumped right into the hot humid days of summer. Fruit seems to be growing by leaps and bounds. We seemed to go from tight cluster through a quick bloom and thinning season came and went. This year was the first year for extended operation of the apple carbohydrate model to be tested. We put out seven runs of the Cornell carbohydrate model from nine sites across the state. There were no wild swings in the carbohydrate balance from the model although as most orchards were headed into petal fall there was a period of deficit. If you want to review the season go to the Fruit Times Newsletter site and you can follow the entire season. Compare the model recommendations with the times you made your thinner applications and see how your thinning turned out. Access to the model and the NEWA weather system was made possible by a grant from the State Horticultural Association of Pennsylvania’s Extension Advisory Committee. This is money that was raised primarily through sales at the Farm Show apple booth. If you found the information helpful, please let the committee members or members of

the Executive Board know. I would also point out that the NEWA system also provides predictive models for apple diseases and insects, grape forecast models and assorted vegetable diseases.

This year we were very serious about trying to chemical thin our apples. In the past because we have such a mix of cultivars we could not blanket all the orchards with single sprays. The end result was that we usually ended up doing a lot of hand thinning. I wanted to minimize hand thinning as much as possible. All our trees received a shot of 10 ppm NAA at petal fall on

May 19. We followed that with carbaryl plus oil 7 days later. Our program then degenerated into spraying small specific blocks with carbaryl plus oil in some and carbaryl plus oil plus 15 ppm NAA. Our last shot was ethrel on June 10. I will let you know this fall if we were successful. Right now we are still getting some fruit drop.

There is one other model at the NEWA site that tree fruit growers may find of use. Under the same crop management tab is one called Apple Irrigation. This model will estimate potential moisture deficits in apples based on temperature, humidity and rainfall. While it does not take into account soil characteristics and tree characteristics except tree age, it is better than

the standard method of estimating water deficits based upon evaporation from a grass surface. Weather forecasts over the past few weeks have been a series of hit or miss thunderstorms that may or may not occur in your area. We have had cases where it poured down on campus,

lightly rained at my house on the west side of town and no rain fell at Rock Springs.

Finally here is some Penn State news. We still have not heard if we have a new Dean of the College. The last two candidates came in the first week of June. The search for a dean has been complicated by first, the search for a new Provost (the person that actually runs the day to

day operations) followed by the search for a President (the person that gets to do all the fun things and public relations). Second, Dr. Rich Marini will be stepping down as chair of the Plant Science Department. Rich has been chair of the Horticulture then Plant Science department

since 2004. He is the longest serving chair in my tenure at Penn State. He will stay in his position until we have a new chair. There will be a search committee formed soon and the process will begin. On the bright side, once a new chair is selected we will regain a full time pomologist!