

President's Message

It's amazing how quickly things have sped up. It feels like just last week I was scrounging for things to keep our workers busy, and now I'm trying to figure out which project needs to be done to tackle first each day. Hand thinning, summer pruning, finishing up trellising and irrigation... the work just doesn't seem to end, even on a less than stellar crop year. It always astounds me talking to non-growers who seem to think that if we have a lousy crop we just get to take the whole year off. Diseases and insects don't take the year off. I do find it funny though that when you try to save some money by not mowing as often, they are quick to point it out to you.

I hope many of you are planning to attend the upcoming Field Day at the Penn State Fruit Research & Extension Center on July 7th. It is a good chance to see some of the projects that SHAP is helping to fund and all the hard work that our valued researchers and extension agents are doing. I know I always come away having seen something that we look towards incorporating into our operation. Also, what farmer turns down a meal?

Earlier this month we also met to begin the process of planning the Tree Fruit program for the Mid Atlantic Fruit & Vegetable Convention. I feel like we settled on some pretty important topics to our industry going forward. Presentations on production as well as labor management and navigating the H2A program were all put forward. As much as I prefer sitting in presentations that show me new technology or techniques to improve our growing practices, the business and personnel management can't be overlooked either. I know personally I find myself spending more and more time every year in the office rather than out in the field.

Andrew Schwalm
SHAP President