President’s Message

Apple harvest 2022 is underway and seems to be following the trends of this year. While harvest is generally a chaotic time no matter how well you plan for it, this year seems especially erratic. The rain I’ve been looking for since June apparently decided it needed to all show up at once right when we were going to start picking Gala apples, delaying the start of harvest by five days. Luckily, since our Galas are on the small size this year, the cracking was no where near as bad as I expected. Blocks where the generally reliable product, Retain, was applied seemed to have missed the memo on its usual reliability, as it worked exceptionally well in some places and erratically in others. Looking through the bins as they were brought back to the storage, I am amazed at the overall quality of what we are bringing in. While size is a problem in nearly every bin, what is coming in is clean and reasonably colored fruit for the most part. While this is a small comfort when you can see that it won’t make up for small sizes and lack of bushels in general, sometimes we have to look for the positives when most things are looking pretty negative.

Despite it being the busy time of the year, things are still moving forward on many different projects. The new website for the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention has gone up online. I would encourage everyone to take a look at it as I think it is a large upgrade to the previous one with a much more modern look. I’d also like to express thanks to Maureen Irvin, Bill Troxell, Daniel Weber, and Don Seifrit for their work coordinating its development. The SHAP website is also in the final stages of getting an upgrade and I look forward to seeing the results.

While January still feels a way off, it’s never too early to start reminding everyone that the Pennsylvania Farm Show will be here before we know it. I know we all get busy this time of year and generally push off answering emails or signing up for anything, but I would like to ask that when the volunteer sign ups begin appearing, please consider signing up for at least one shift. The farm show provides a large amount of the money we put towards research projects for the next year, but this only happens with the support of our members in staffing our multiple booths.

Hope everyone has a safe and painless harvest.

Andrew Schwalm

SHAP President