Strawberry virus sampling
Caitlin Simopoulos, Undergraduate Student Experiential Learning Program, University of Guelph

Strawberry viruses are generally controlled through clean plant propagation. Although viruses are rare in cultivated strawberries, wild strawberries can potentially harbor viruses that can spread to neighboring cultivated fields. While many viral infections show no symptoms, mixed infections of more than one virus can cause up to 80% crop loss (Chang et al., 2007).

OMAFRA and the University of Guelph’s USEL (Undergraduate Student Experiential Learning) program have introduced a strawberry virus research project to investigate the type and amount of virus in strawberries across Ontario as well as to develop tests to diagnose possible viral infections. After program completion, we hope to develop information sheets on specific virus symptoms, as well as more information on the development and use of strawberry virus diagnostic tests.

Sampling in fields showing possible viral infections is in progress. Some symptoms we presently believe could be caused by a virus are interveinal chlorosis (Fig. 1), crinkled leaves (Fig 2.), mottling (Fig. 3), stunted plants, small and asymmetrical leaves, cupped leaves, and a patchy field. If you have observed these symptoms in your strawberry fields, please contact Pam Fisher at pam.fisher@ontario.ca.

Thanks to the Ontario Berry Growers Association for supporting the project with funding from the Farm Innovation Program.

NEW REGULATION 119/11—PRODUCE, HONEY AND MAPLE PRODUCTS UNDER THE FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY ACT, 2001

FOR ONTARIO’S FRUIT, VEGETABLE, NUT, PEANUT AND MUSHROOM INDUSTRIES—REPLACES REGULATIONS 378, 384, AND 386

REGULATION 119/11 REPLACES, MODERNIZES AND CONSOLIDATES THREE REGULATIONS

On July 1, 2011, Ontario introduced a new regulation regarding fruit, vegetables, honey and maple products. Regulation 119/11 falls under the Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001. It replaces three regulations in the Farm Products Grades and Sales Act: Regulations 378 - Grades, Fruit and Vegetables, 384 - Honey and 386 - Maple Products which have been revoked.

Regulation 119/11 applies to fresh fruit and vegetables, honey and maple products. It also includes sprouts, fresh culinary herbs, in-shell nuts and peanuts and edible fungi, not subject to the federal Canada Agricultural Products Act. This provincial regulation reflects current industry needs and practices and removes barriers to innovation while promoting food safety.

Labelling requirements are in addition to any federal requirements that may apply under the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act (Canada) and the Food and Drugs Act (Canada). Refer to federal government requirements to ensure compliance.

This document notes several important changes for farmers and packers. An official copy of the Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001 and Regulation 119/11 - Produce, Honey and Maple Products can be accessed on the Ontario government e-laws website, under Current Consolidated Law at http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

What is Covered

✓ This regulation applies to any produce that can be commercially grown or harvested in Canada. This includes fresh fruit and vegetables and, for the first time, sprouts, fresh culinary herbs, nuts and peanuts in the shell, and edible fungi.

✗ This regulation does not apply to:

- produce grown and harvested for personal use and consumption,
- minimally processed fruit or vegetable products, for example sliced mushrooms, fruit or vegetable trays or apple cider. Please refer to Regulation 119/11 for a comprehensive list because this is new,
- any produce imported from outside Canada that is not commercially grown or harvested anywhere in Canada
- any fruit or vegetable grown for the purpose of seed production,
- and for the first time, in-shell nuts and peanuts harvested for any purpose other than for human consumption. Please note this is new.

Regulation 119/11 prohibits harvesting, selling, packing or transporting contaminated produce.

Grade Standards

Produce, other than potatoes, no longer needs to be sold by grade as of July 1, 2011—this is new in this regulation. As requested by industry, grade standards still apply to potatoes until July 1, 2016.

Packaging and Containers

This regulation now allows produce, other than potatoes, to be packed in any suitable package of any size. Between July 1, 2011 and July 1, 2016 potatoes are required to be packed in the package sizes specified in the regulation.

Advertising and Display

In the previous regulation, advertising rules applied to “print” materials only. Regulation 119/11 advertising and display guidelines apply to any “media” (for example: print, electronic, digital) after June 30, 2011. The regulation requires the product’s origin, the net quantity for packaged produce and in the case of potatoes, their grade.

To help consumers, signs are required for displays of produce at retail outlets and farmer’s markets. After June 30, 2011, the signs must include these elements:

- The origin of the produce.
- The price per unit of weight, if sold by weight.
- The word “sweet” or “hot” for peppers, as appropriate.

The print on a retail display sign must be readily discernible and of a size reasonable in proportion to the size of the sign.

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Product Labelling
Regulation 119/11 requires produce packages or master containers to be labelled with the packer’s name and full address (or that of the person for whom it is packed). The label must also identify the country or province of origin of the produce. The print size required is the same as that required under the Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Regulations under the Canada Agricultural Products Act.

- If labels on produce contained in master containers are easily and clearly discernable, the same information need not be applied to the master container.
- If the produce is packed in such a way that it is not readily visible, the common name of the produce must be indicated.
- If labels on previously used packages or master containers do not meet the new regulation’s labelling requirements, they must be completely removed or obliterated and replaced with new labels.
- Packages of nuts, peanuts and edible fungi must now comply with origin labelling requirements by July 1, 2013.
- Unlike the previous regulation, labelling is not required on field-packed packages of raspberries and strawberries that have a capacity of 1.14L (1 quart) or less.
- Packages of peppers need to state whether they are “hot” or “sweet”.
- Potato packages must be labelled with the grade of the potatoes (until July 1, 2016). Packages of yellow flesh potatoes are required to indicate that the contents are “yellow fleshed potatoes”.

Packages of apples, pears and Yukon Gold potatoes no longer need to be labelled with the varietal name.

Regulation Prohibits Misrepresentation
Regulation 119/11 also protects farmers, packers and consumers from misrepresentation. The Regulation outlines specific requirements prohibiting false or misleading information on labels, packaging and containers, or master containers. In particular, it prohibits the misrepresentation of:

- the name and full address of the packer of any produce or the person for whom it was packed
- the place where produce was grown or harvested
- the amount of produce in a package
- any grade of potatoes established in the regulation.

Checklist for worker policies training
Colleen Haskins, On-Farm Food Safety Program Lead, OMAFRA

When training your workers in policies on the farm, especially for work during crucial productions times such as harvest and final packing, it is necessary they are aware of all the food safety risks and are trained appropriately.

Areas that need to be addressed during Worker Policy Training are:

- Worker Practices – designated areas for eating, drinking, smoking, medications and other personal belongings
- Hand Washing – ensure training on proper hand washing techniques, using potable water, soap, hand wipes and sanitizing gel
- Clothing and Foot wear – suitable clothing, footwear (and safety equipment) for the expected task is available, clean, intact, and there is separate storage space for work clothes
- Injuries and Illness – any open wounds, cuts or individuals displaying symptoms of an illness are not in contact with food without taking the appropriate measures to prevent contamination.

Keep in mind, a “worker” is any individual on the farm associated with the farm processes and production of the

OBGA season wrap-up and farm tour: Sept 14, 2011
The Ontario Berry Growers Association will hold their annual twilight meeting and get-together at Jennen Market, near Thamesville, September 14, 2011. This meeting is traditionally a time to get together with other growers and share stories from the season. The farm tour will feature high tunnel production of strawberries and raspberries. For more information, please contact the Ontario Berry Growers Association: 613-258-4587 or info@ontarioberrries.com
Success and Entrust Insect Control Products granted several new minor use label expansion registrations for caneberries, bushberries, strawberries, bulb vegetables subgroup 3-07B, greenhouse vegetables and brassica vegetables

J. Chaput, OMAFRA, Minor Use Coordinator, Guelph

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) recently announced the approval of URMULE registrations for SUCCESS 480 SC and ENTRUST 80 W Naturalyte Insect Control Products for control and suppression of several new pests in Canada on caneberries (crop subgroup 13-07A), bushberries (crop subgroup 13-07B), low-growing berries (crop subgroup 13-07G), bulb vegetables (crop subgroup 3-07B), Brassica vegetables (crop subgroup 5) and several greenhouse vegetables. Success (spinosad) and Entrust (organic formulation of spinosad) were already labeled on a wide range of fruit, vegetable, ornamental and turf crops for a variety of insect pests.

The following table is provided as a brief, general outline only. Users should consult the complete Success and Entrust labels for timing, water volumes and other guidance before using these products.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop(s)</th>
<th>Pest(s)</th>
<th>Success (rate product)</th>
<th>Entrust (rate product)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bushberries (blueberry, currant, elderberry, gooseberry, Saskatoon, sea buckthorn; cultivars, varieties and/or hybrids of these)</td>
<td>OBLR, Spanworm, Winter moth</td>
<td>145 – 182 mL per ha</td>
<td>80 – 109 g per ha</td>
<td>Maximum 3 applications per year at 7 to 10 day intervals; pre-harvest interval (PHI) 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caneberries (blackberry, raspberry, Loganberry; cultivars, varieties and/or hybrids of these)</td>
<td>OBLR, Cabbage looper, Spanworm, Winter moth</td>
<td>145 – 182 mL per ha</td>
<td>80 – 109 g per ha</td>
<td>Maximum 3 applications per year at 7 to 10 day intervals; PHI 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low growing berries, subgroup 13-07G (strawberries, lowbush blueberry, bearberry, bilberry, cranberry, lingonberry, partridgeberry; cultivars, varieties and/or hybrids of these)</td>
<td>OBLR, Cabbage looper, Winter moth</td>
<td>145 – 182 mL per ha</td>
<td>80 – 109 g per ha</td>
<td>Maximum 3 applications per year at 7 to 10 day intervals; PHI 3 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow all other precautions and directions for use on the Success and Entrust labels carefully. These minor use projects were sponsored over the course of several years by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Pest Management Centre (AAFC-PMC) as a result of priorities established by growers and extension personnel.

For copies of the new minor use label contact Pam Fisher (berries), OMAFRA, Simcoe (519) 426-2238, or visit the Dow Agro Canada website at http://www.dowagro.com/ca/index.htm

Food safety audits and record keeping

Colleen Haskins, On-Farm Food Safety Program Lead, OMAFRA

The requirement of having a food safety audit for farm production is increasing, and some of the major retailers are requesting a short turn around time for these to be completed and producers to be certified. Produce commodities are classified into different risk categories, and some retailers are requiring high risk produce to be certified first. Audits are focused on the season in which the commodity is being produced, and typically occur during harvest or packing. Many audits require a minimum of 3 months of records to be completed prior to an audit being conducted. However if nutrient applications were made in the previous fall for the next year’s production, those records may be considered during an audit as well. With any food safety program, it is imperative to maintain and keep your records as proof of due diligence for your farm productions and often to be kept for 2 years at a minimum. Contact your retailer or customer to verify which food safety program they require and the requirements for record keeping before you schedule your audit. Now is the time to get started and the good news is, we can help! Food safety questions? Ask us. Visit our website for more food safety information and additional resources. www.ontario.ca/good-ag-practices.