



Integrated Pest Management Program

Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
UConn Extension

Strawberries and Psylla: March 21, 2022

*Mary Concklin, Visiting Extension Educator - Fruit Production & IPM
UConn IPM Program Coordinator*

No, Psylla aren't attacking your strawberries. But the warm weather is impacting both.

With this warm weather, strawberries are beginning to grow. Soil temperatures around the state are well into the 40s and some are in the low 50s. Move the straw away from your plants, look into the center, new growth is visible. I took this picture today. So it is now time to remove the straw so the plants can get adequate sunshine. You don't need to completely remove it – just enough so that sunshine will reach them and the crowns won't rot. The plants will grow through it. Keeping strawberry plants under straw once the soil is warm and the plants begin to grow will delay bloom – but it will also reduce your overall production. Studies have shown the highest production is on plants uncovered the earliest.



Yes, cold weather with lows in the mid 20s is predicted for Sunday night/Monday morning and Monday night/Tuesday morning. No crown damage will occur unless temperatures drop to 20⁰ or lower. Flower buds are safely tucked away so damage is not expected. If you are concerned, put row cover or straw, not plastic, back over the plants but be sure to remove it in the morning.

Pear Psylla: One of the more frustrating pests to manage! This warm weather is ideal for females to begin flying. Once temperatures are above 45⁰F they will begin egg laying, which usually occurs from green tip through white bud, although the peak is green tip through green cluster stage. Eggs are laid on buds and twigs with nymphal hatch beginning at around green cluster. The first generation of nymphs peak by petal fall. Start the season off on the right foot by applying oil at 2% to **DETER** egg laying by the females. Unfortunately oil doesn't smother them.

Then plan on applying Surround (kaolin clay) at 50#/acre prior to bloom and again after bloom. This strategy has shown excellent reduction of nymphs.

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