If you have any questions concerning pecan production or any other agricultural production problems, please do not hesitate to call our office at 870-779-3609, or visit Room 215 in the Miller County Courthouse, 400 Laurel, Texarkana.

Hope to see you at the Pecan Grafting Seminar, Thursday, April 17, 2014, at 1:00 p.m. at the REA building.

Sincerely,

John L. Turner
County Extension Agent
Agriculture
JLT:jds

PECAN GRAFTING WORKSHOP SCHEDULED

IMPROVED pecan varieties are developed through some type of modification to the tree or seedling. These improvements are usually the results of budding and bark grafting techniques. There is a definite season to perform these techniques for optimum success. The bark grafting season is determined by when the bark is loose enough to peel from the tree. Break a small twig and see if the bark will peel, similar to a banana.

APRIL is the month for starting pecan bark grafting; therefore, now is the time to get out your grafting tools.

We have scheduled a grafting workshop for THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2014. The lecture on grafting will be held at the SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE BUILDING (REA), located on Hwy. 82 East, Texarkana, AR, 1:00 PM. From there, we will go to our grafting location.

If you have pecan trees from 1 TO 4-INCHES in diameter and desire to understand the bark grafting techniques, please come out and join us. Also, if you are going to participate in the workshop, please bring A SHARP KNIFE, SMALL HAMMER, GLOVES AND SAFETY GOGGLES. We will have all other supplies on hand.

NEW NITROGEN RECOMMENDATIONS

There are two critical nitrogen need periods during the season; first early season foliage growth and second, kernel filling and food storage. Crop load and the alternate bearing cycle should now be used to help growers determine if, when, and how much nitrogen is applied.

1ST SPRING NITROGEN FOLLOWING AN OFF YEAR: Trees beginning growth after an “off” year start the year with a full supply of stored food in the stems, trunk, and roots and they do not take up nitrogen at this time. Therefore, delay spring nitrogen until the leaves and shoots are 75% expanded. This is later than normal with a rate of 50 lb. nitrogen per acre. This recommendation is drastically different because, in the past, most fertilizers applications were made at budbreak.

1ST SPRING NITROGEN FOLLOWING AN ON YEAR: Trees starting growth after a heavy “on” year have few stored reserves and must have nitrogen at bud break. Such trees need nitrogen right away to stimulate good growth, catkin development, and nut set. These need 50 lbs. of nitrogen at bud break in late March or early April.

2ND SPRING NITROGEN APPLICATION: A second application is made in May following nut set but before the month of June is over. It would be 50 lbs. of nitrogen.
if the crop is large and 20 to 30 lbs. if moderate. If the crop is low or zero, there is no second spring application. If you look closely during the month of May, you will see nut set on improved varieties.

Trees in the “off” year cycle of alternate bearing will have sufficient nitrogen and will not need fertilization. Nitrogen fertilization is extremely important and recommendations have evolved greatly over time. These guidelines should help replace alternate bearing with the regular production of quality pecans.

**ZINC FERTILIZER RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Zinc** is a major essential element responsible for pecan tree growth and nut production. It is a natural plant hormone responsible for inducing cell elongation and cell division with all subsequent results for plant growth and development.

Over 40 years of pecan zinc research confirms that the pecan tree is a poor accumulator and transporter of zinc, especially when grown in high pH soils, which are typical of much of the pecan belt. Trees that have adequate zinc with resulting good growth and nut yields exhibit long, thick shoots with large dark flattened leaflets. Symptoms of zinc deficiencies include small, narrow, crinkled leaves growing on thin shoots with shortened internodes, which results in low nut yields and poor quality. Prolonged zinc deficiencies and bunch terminal growth lead to shoot, branch and canopy die-back.

The most effective method of providing zinc to pecans is through foliar spray application applied to young developing buds, leaves, and shoots. These young plant tissues have not yet developed thickened cells or cuticles which can retard or prevent absorption of zinc.

High humidity during spray applications slow evaporation and can increase absorption. Foliar zinc sprays have become the standard application method in most pecan orchards.

Soil pH has to be 5.5 or below for pecan to take up zinc through the soil, but this is not very effective. Most recommendations are to raise the pH of acidic soil for zinc to be taken up through the foliage. Pecans like a pH range of 6.5 to 7. It has been found that foliar zinc applications are more effective.

**FOLIAR ZINC TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Two pounds of zinc sulphate (ZnSO₄) per 100 gallons of water plus one quart of 32% liquid nitrogen or one pint of zinc nitrate plus one quart of liquid nitrogen Zn (N0₃)₂.

**ZINC SPRAY SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Spray</th>
<th>Green Tip</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Spray</td>
<td>1 week after green tip</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third Spray</td>
<td>3 weeks after green tip</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth Spray</td>
<td>With Casebearer Spray</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fifth Spray</td>
<td>Eight weeks after green tip</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young Trees</td>
<td>Every 2 weeks from April to August</td>
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