An update on the
SPOTTED WING DROSOPHILA

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I hope that the 2015 field season was successful for all of you. Mine was filled with baby cries and giggling but my lab continued our work (thanks to Katie Hietala-Henchell and the summer crew!) on spotted wing drosophila (SWD), among other projects. We are conducting field trapping to continue to describe the seasonal phenology of SWD, identifying the pattern of the seasonal morphs, and determining their reproductive status throughout the season. The goal is to understand the reproductive potential of spring and early winter females to help predict population densities in the upcoming field season. We are currently dissecting samples collected from 2014. These female dissections will hopefully provide a better understanding in regards to the overwintering habitat of SWD by comparing flies caught in wooded areas, where wild alternate hosts are present, and in raspberry crops. Comparing the seasonal morphs between these two habitats could provide information on where SWD overwinters. Last year’s preliminary data suggests that we start seeing darker wintermorphs in September and by mid to late-October most of the flies are the darker wintermorph (Figure 1). We also conducted assays to assess the susceptibility of cold-climate table grape, tart cherry, and aronia to SWD. Lab assays are slowly getting wrapped up but our field trapping will continue well into November. We would like to send a major thank you to all of our collaborators for their cooperation with monitoring and also for providing the various fruit crops for our lab experiments!

Figure 1. Two SWD males. The complete third abdominal segment is indicative of the darker winter morph on the left. The dark band on the lower part of the abdominal segment is indicative of the lighter summer morph on the right.
in Helenville. The educational program included a “back to basics” from UW-Extension specialists on strawberry where we talked about the BioIPM Strawberry Workbook and Nate Nourse from Nourse Farms talked about blueberry production. On June 4th and 5th, Patty McManus, Amaya Atucha, Brian Smith and Christelle Guédot presented at a Blueberry and Small Fruit Workshop at Rush River Produce organized by Heidi Doering in Maiden Rock and at a Small Fruit Workshop and Field Day organized by Matt Cogger in Bayfield. Both of these events were sponsored by UW-Extension. Our second edition of the raspberry school sponsored by WBGA, UW-Extension and DATCP took place at Porter’s Patch in Bonduel on August 6th. It was well attended and the topics varied from tissue and soil reports, cold damage, diseases, cultivar selections and establishment, to management and identification of SWD adult and larvae (Figure 2). We also had a lot of fun participating and answering questions at Dane County Farm Technology Days, August 25th to 27th, covering basic entomology questions about various crops.

The summer is finally over and we are slowly settling into fall, which means planning is underway for the 2016 Wisconsin Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Conference. We have a great agenda for next year, in addition to your favorite UW-Extension specialists, Brian Hudelson from the UW Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic will talk to us about what he's seen this season in terms of diseases in berry. Diana Cochran from Iowa State University will talk about her research on strawberry, and Laura Witzling from UW Life Sciences Communication and Environmental Communication will present results on a consumer survey they conducted with farmers on Wisconsin local foods. Greg Zwald (White Pine Berry Farm) will talk about a new grower perspective, Scott and Laura Skelly (Skelly’s Farm Market) will talk about what to do with Facebook, and the grower panel will focus on Facebook, Customers, and Employees.