

**Matrix Crop Report – Week #15**  
**Belgium April 5th, 2004**

The fruit load is fairly high in general. The heads seem to get a bit thin although the trusses develop strongly. Nevertheless, it is important to make the heads stronger.

To keep power it can be helpful to avoid a high night temperature, especially if the fruit load is large. We suggest targets of about 16.5 – 17.5°C. Make sure that the 24-hr temperature is high enough; otherwise the fruits will not color quickly and stay on the plants longer. This will not help with increasing vigor.

To realize a sufficiently high temperature we advise a day temperature set point of 18.5 to 19°C. We also recommend to expose the lower two clusters to speed up coloring.

Another way to maintain power in the heads is to eliminate nearly all increases on light. Only with cool weather can 1°C be added to the venting temperature. This will also reduce the risk of cold heads. With mild weather, it can be put on '0' again so that a stagnant and humid climate can be avoided.

Also keep the minimum pipe at 45°C to keep the plants active and reduce it no more than 5°C on light so that there is enough of a minimum pipe to speed up the ripening of the fruits. Too low a pipe temperature will delay harvesting so that the fruit load continues to increase.

In a few places we see somewhat blocky fruits in the early plantings. The risk of hollow fruits is then relatively high. Keep the following points in mind:

- Make sure that the slab EC is maintained; avoid watering too much.
- Limit the pipe temperature to 60 – 65°C so that the fruits do not swell too much.

We also see more fruit drop in the early plantings, especially from the weaker clusters. Maintain therefore the Borax content and possibly go higher.

The potassium level is quite low in the slab, even as low as 1 mmol. Matrix takes up a lot of potassium and this also shows up in the leaf color. The K concentration should be adjusted upwards. But do not ignore Ca. Dosing a high EC can be helpful in this regard.