

Matrix Crop Report – Week #36
Belgium August 31st, 2004

Crop harvest has caught up now. Average fruit weight has gone down to 200 – 220 gram and quality has improved. It is striking that fruit setting of Matrix continued to be good during the warm period. Therefore, we expect a strong finish.

Until now we have had 15% less light than last year. Also, these days we have less light than last season. Many growers will top their crops in September, but a few growers are thinking about continuing a bit longer than originally planned. Those with virus problems will be better off to top earlier rather than later because of the larger risk of fruit symptoms and subsequent yield reduction.

In the coming period we will try to grow as active as possible. This means a somewhat higher pipe temperature and sufficient venting so that it does not get too warm. With mild weather, vent at 0.3 to 0.5°C above the heating set point and with cooler weather at 0.5 to 1.0°C above the heating target.

From now on it is best to support the clusters so that fruit size will be maximized. We prefer the use of ‘J-hooks’ or bands. We recommend against the use of arches/’U-clips’ because of the risk that the entire cluster will tear off and also because of the risk of more Botrytis. Plant losses from now on are mainly due to Botrytis, so checking and treating infected areas are a high priority.

In some greenhouses the heads are lighter in color and have light spots on leaves, something that can be an indication of iron or manganese deficiency; in other words, a root problem. The cause can be that the fruit load was too high in the period just behind us. It can also be caused by watering too much or stopping too late, which can lead to loss of roots. Adjust the start and stop times and add some Fe-EDDHA.