

LEMANCE Crop report – Week#7
Belgium, February 10th, 2003.

All plants have been put on the hole and the third cluster is open in most nurseries. You can already see that the plants want to grow vegetatively, especially the grafted crops. Where it is clear plants are vegetative, a leaf should be taken out in the head when taking out the top sucker. This will keep the crop more open and the plants will utilize the light more efficiently.

On a few nurseries we see some boat-shaped fruit on the first truss. This is rare for Lemance. A possible explanation is a more vegetative plant at the start. It could have been the lower temperatures relative to the light that the plants received. A temporary drop in temperature in the plant-raising phase during the first cold spell may have contributed to this. The boat-shaped fruit is usually the first one on the truss and often points upwards. It is safest to cluster prune after fruit set is complete.

The message is to steer generative. Avoid cold heads during cold clear nights. Those with grow-pipes should use them. Where this pipe is just above the heads, it is better not to use it for a brief period to avoid stretching and weakening of the heads. When the pipe is below the heads, it may go up to 50°C. The maximum pipe temperature is limited to 80°C or even better to 75°C during the coming period with frost.

Once the third cluster flowers we reduce the light increases. Instead of 4 - 5°C we use a light increase of 0.5°C on the heating setpoint and +0.5°C on the venting setpoint during the day. Also make the light decrease of the minimum pipe large enough to avoid sudden spikes in temperature and the risk of BER.

During mild weather (7 – 11°C outside), the vents of very tight greenhouses may be cracked a little on the leeward side. When there is no wind, both sides can be cracked open.