

Funky Crop Report – Week #6

Holland, February 7th, 2005

Fruit set occurred on all sowings from between October 10 to October 25. Most growers started with fruit thinning last week (week 5). This job should be completed this week. Growers with fruits that set before week 3 will prune to 1 fruit per stem, later sets will be pruned to two fruits per stem.

Fruit thinning depends of course on the plant condition. A strong crop can have a heavier load than a thin crop. Harvest color also counts; if picked green, more fruits can stay. Figure on a maximum of 13-14 fruits/m².

As it looks now, we can expect the next setting in week 6, 7 or 8. How soon fruit setting will resume depends on:

- Volume of plant
- Current fruit load
- Correlation between 24-hr temperature and light

We already have quite a good size plant, a plant that needs assimilates for its own maintenance. To achieve a good second set in week 6 or 7, we must keep a close eye on the head of the plant. The strength of the buds and flowers will dictate what the 24-hr temperature should be.

On light days, 500 Joule or more, 24-hr temperatures of 20-20.5°C will be appropriate for Funky. But on dark days, especially when there are a number of dark days in succession, do not continue with a high 24-hr temperature. React immediately to the lower irradiance by reducing the pre-night temperature.

The thirty-year averages for irradiance in weeks 6 and 7 are 450 and 525 Joule per day. Standard set points for such light can be: pN 18.5°C, aN 20°C, and a day temperature of 21°C, so that the 24-hr temperature will be about 20.2°C. Reduce or increase the pre-night when the irradiance is lower or higher respectively than average.

The numbers of hours that the screen will be used depends on the weather conditions, but also take into consideration crop condition (bud and flower vigor). Crops with weak flowers and buds and a vegetative nature need fewer hours with a closed screen than thin, generative crops. The ideal plant: a strong flower one node below the head and a nicely bent flower two nodes under the head.

Make sure enough water is given. Irrigate also on light now: 2.5 times irradiance = amount of water. The fruits are swelling fast thus the amount of drain should be 5-10% on dark days and 20-25% on light days.