

Funky Crop Report, Week #12
Holland, March 21, 2005

The growers who seeded mid-October started harvesting last week. The development time for these fruits has been nine weeks on average.

Having a minimum pipe temperature of 45°C during the day will help to speed up ripening. Also keep an eye on the potassium level and aim for a minimum of 5 mmol in the slab.

Fruit size is mainly 70s, and there are more 80s than 60s. Quality is superb, without any internal growth or russetting.

Since last week, the weather has been much milder. Therefore, the humidity loss through condensation will be much less. Aim for adequate crop activity (transpiration) in the morning by having a minimum pipe of 40-45°C and a small vent opening. This applies especially to new, tight greenhouses. A good climate and sufficient nutrient uptake now will result in fewer diseases, such as stem Fusarium, later in the season.

The number of hours that we use the energy screen is getting less and less. As soon as the minimum pipe drops below 45°C under a closed screen in the morning, it must be opened. Close the screen in the evening and night when the temperature difference between the heating setpoint and the outside temperature is 9 to 10°C. Look at the crop; a strongly generative crop may be screened longer than a dense, vegetative crop. Because of the generative nature of Funky, screening during the night can be still done for some time.

We will get more days with more than 1000 J radiation. Make sure that the 24-hr temperatures are between 21 and 21.5°C on such days. A higher 24-hr temperature is certainly necessary for the crops from which much was harvested green and that have strong re-growth as a result. Such crops that have too much vigor, there is a risk of 'sleeping' flower buds (two buds above each other on one stem which do not open) and we must avoid this by keeping a higher 24-hr average.

Also keep in mind that young fruits of less than two weeks do not demand much energy yet. Creating speed in crops with no fruit load is our advice.