



Week 32

The weather patterns seem to have traded between lower mainland BC and south western Ontario this summer! Still to date Ontario has not seen really high temperatures (for a long period) but Vancouver has. This challenges the growers to respond to unpredicted circumstances in both areas.

It's possible that a grower in Ontario, who has steered toward a fuller bodied plant in preparation for the heat, could find their plants want to go out of balance in the vegetative direction. So the absence of the heat seems good, but can bring some challenges in plant balance. More attention has been needed this summer in Ontario regarding the preN, night and pre morning greenhouse climate. This is because the night temperatures have been cooler, with the sun and morning temperatures rising fast. It's been a reminder that the plants have to come up to temperature before the sun brings them to temperature. In greenhouses where this is not true, there could be some disease and quality problems with the fruit.

In Ontario, the question always remains – will we still get the heat? And therefore do we steer a bit soft now with a leafy plant in case we do (and just try to survive it) Or, really step into the autumn mindset and make sure we don't miss out on any setting? The best answer is to have an active plant. Keep some reserve of a slightly bigger stem and leaf area, but make sure your plants are working. Healthy roots, correct pH, high enough EC (and ready to drop a few points); these things will ensure that your plant has the nutrients and water it needs to survive and even grow in the extremes. Be extra mindful of the irrigation and make sure that the roots continue to regenerate. Giving enough water is very important, but at this time of the year, it becomes more important to give it at the correct times. Start later, stop earlier? Or stop earlier and come back in the night with a shot? Keep up with the crop work so there are no extreme changes in the body of the plant – which will affect the roots. Keep in mind that keeping a bit in

reserve for the heat doesn't mean that you have to build a soft, watery plant.

Growers in the west might have been caught with plants not ready for the extreme high temperatures. There was no time to steer for it in advance. But on the other hand, crops that were healthy and growing fast with a good root system made it through the heat. Fruit size has been maintained in three ways: 1. Enough water 2. Keeping the 24 hr temperature down if the outside night temperature allows 3. Keeping the fruit counts down with pruning. If high temperatures are experienced this time of the year – it can be possible to irrigate too little. This is possible if you don't adjust your irrigation to the lower light levels. The heat means you need to give more water, but the light levels are coming down this time of year. So make sure you have a look and make some changes or use manual starts when necessary.

In general both of these areas are seeing the beginning of autumn. Maybe not according to the calendar, but the conditions are changing. We are soon 2 months after the longest day. This means that more and more you need to focus on creating an active climate for the plants. The risk is that you lose speed, setting and therefore production. Baselga sets good with lower light, but to get the advantage of the highest production, you need to steer to maintain balance and the best possible setting. Soon enough you can consider some boost in the afternoon again, and make sure that the night temperature doesn't go too low. As is the spring time, use the light in the afternoon to boost the temperatures and come down slow into your night temperature.

Minimum pipe temperatures, minimum vent openings, careful consideration of irrigation timing; these are all important now. August usually gives more humidity, less light and warmer night temperatures (less diff). These are all vegetative conditions, so you must use what you can to offset these conditions. If you have been pruning to 2 leaves on the shoots, it's time to go back to one leaf.

For the Baselga crops in the heat last week, there was the advantage of good quality peppers. Shape, colour and soft/ cracking issues were all positive given the circumstances. So now it's time to prepare for the sprint finish!

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