



Above: The crop covers as they appeared during the tests.
 Right: An example of a cranberry fruitworm damaged berry.

damage, and so that threw off the results. Cranberry Fruitworm damage was uniquely high in that one particular plot probably because it was located along the end of the bed and thus there was an “edge effect” to contend with. That would not have been an issue had the cover material been applied early enough, but we were later than we wanted to be at applying the cover, as mentioned before. Cranberry fruitworm moths typically visit the edges of a bed first when depositing their eggs because the berries tend to be larger along the edges.

No statistically significant difference in total number of berries (i.e. yield) between the covered versus uncovered plots.

No statistically significant difference in berry weight between the covered and uncovered plots.

Plans for 2004

This year, Ted received a New England SARE Farmer-Grower grant to try the experiment again, but with a few changes. This year we plan to put the cover material on the entire 1-acre bed of Early Black, with a 1-acre adjacent bed

of Stevens serving as a comparison (or ‘control’). It won’t be as good a comparison as it would if the beds were both Early Black, but there should still be a sizeable difference in cranberry fruitworm damage between the two beds, regardless, and cranberry fruitworm isn’t known to be very fussy when it comes to preferring one variety over another (somebody please correct me if that isn’t true).

We also hope to apply the cover material earlier this year (closer to the 50% out-of-bloom mark), and we will probably leave it on longer, too, to cut down some on any fruitworm damage from larvae migrating into the bed from outside areas. Some of the damage we saw in our three ‘cover’ plots between August 4th—when the three covers were removed—and September 26th, was probably attributable to larvae migrating in from the bordering uncovered plots. Surely that happened to some extent, so keeping the material on a few weeks longer will hopefully reduce some of that contamination, and this year any migrating larvae would only be coming from the adjacent bed of Stevens, so they would have to climb up and over the bank separating the two beds.