



Fruit Advisory Services Team LLP



School of Fruit Growing

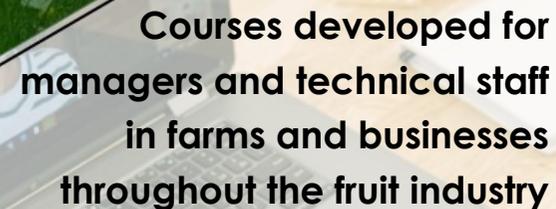
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**Courses developed for
managers and technical staff
in farms and businesses
throughout the fruit industry**

- Blueberry
- Cane fruit
- Fertigation chemistry
- Stone Fruit
- Strawberry
- Top Fruit

With a combination of over 35 years experience on a wide variety of farms, FAST's staff are ideally qualified to present these courses on how to grow soft/ tree fruit successfully. Following the successful introduction of on-line courses last Autumn, we are pleased to announce that these will continue into the coming autumn and winter.

To exploit the high value markets and make best use of a limited supply of labour, choosing the right growing system and harnessing the power of scientific knowledge alongside more traditional growing skills has never been more important. The courses are grounded in sound scientific principles to give attendees a thorough understanding of the fruit production cycle and how soils, the environment, management practices and husbandry techniques influence yield and quality.

In depth explanations of the life cycles of the pests and diseases will enable course members to understand how current and future control measures can meet the objectives of growers and consumers.

Matching output with demand or with available labour, requires a good understanding of the different plant types and the effect of planting date and growing systems for berry fruits.

Picking dates and storage systems are of similar importance for successful top fruit production, while an understanding of covering systems has become increasingly important for stone fruit growing production cycle, on yield and quality for stone fruit.

Communication systems now enable us to provide excellent live class-room style interaction on-line, providing a rich mix of slides, video clips and 'break out' discussions.

'Live' courses: Our team will be pleased to visit client premises to provide live courses for small groups where these can be carried out safely with due regard to the risks posed by Covid-19 but for the coming winter our focus will remain on the provision of on-line courses.

Bespoke courses: These can be tailored to match the needs of your enterprise in terms of crop mix, team skills/experience and business aims using material from the FAST School of Fruit Growing as half or whole day courses, on-line or in classroom.



Covering systems



Ladybird larvae in raspberries

More recently we introduced a new one-day course **Fertigation Chemistry**, covering both theoretical and practical aspects of substrate fertigation.



FAST School of Fruit Growing courses:-

Top Fruit - five-day course

Having the right soil nutrition, planting systems, crop loads and pruning all contribute to the growing of a successful orchard. Of similar importance is an ability to identify pests, diseases and beneficial organisms, combined with knowing how to use prediction models. This knowledge is essential as we seek to reduce reliance on, conventional pesticides and seek to better integrate production systems with a healthy natural environment. Having grown a crop, quality at and after harvest becomes vital. These depend on identifying optimum harvesting methods, picking dates, storage regimes. The course concludes with a module devoted to the study of the market value of top fruit and production/investment costs. Production and investment costs e.g. planting costs, profitability, investment appraisal techniques etc.

Stone Fruit - two and a half day course

Discussing the physiology of stone fruit, getting the right variety and rootstock as well as the growing and covering systems. Recognising pest and diseases and their lifecycles plus nutrient deficiencies. Production costs and orchard planning (*half day*) - establishment costs, gross margins and cash flows etc.

Strawberry - three-day course

Know the biology of a strawberry plant, its morphology, physiology and annual growth cycles. Choose the best growing systems and the factors influencing the success. Learn more about pests, diseases and beneficial organisms: Recognise them and develop a better understanding of lifecycles and the interaction between environment, crop and pest or disease.

For courses that run over several days, consist of different modules and you can select some or all. Request a full break down of the modules covered on each day - contact the FAST office

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Find more about how nutrition affects plant performance and gain a basic understanding of soil and substrate feed programmes. The course also concludes with a module devoted to the study of production and investment costs, bringing focus to many of the practical ideas concerning the manipulation of crop timing discussed in other modules.

Cane Fruit - one-day course - It may be helpful to attend the 3-day strawberry course, before this one.

Biology and physiology looking at plant structure and interaction with the environment. Managing different growing systems, the purpose and function of support structures, soil & soil-less systems and plant types. Identification and understanding the biology of the major pests, diseases & beneficial organisms. Growth stage adjustment, feed recipes and common problems specific to cane fruits

Blueberry - one-day course

This course covers blueberry taxonomy and breeding, the growth and development of plants including morphology, physiology and growth cycle. Nutrition of soil and substrate. Field management like pruning, pollination and harvesting. Identification of pests and diseases and their lifecycles and threshold levels.

Fertigation Chemistry - one-day course

A one-day course covering both theoretical and practical aspects of substrate fertigation, in particular the course includes detailed discussion on the interpretation of laboratory analysis results, lab based demonstrations of titrations (online courses will use video clips) for acid dose calculations and how we use our feed recipe calculator workbook.