



Frost protection, potassium sulfate & apricots

Posted by [Peter Fisher](#)

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[Peter Fisher](#)

[Frost protection, potassium sulfate & apricots](#)

April 08, 2016 07:43PM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 82

Expecting a low of 21-23 tonight with apples and pears at 1/4" green and apricots blooming. My frost protection recipe (source forgotten) calls for potassium sulfate, but I am wondering if the prohibition against lime sulfur or elemental sulfur on apricots extends to potassium sulfate.

My understanding is that I am looking mostly for potassium and calcium. So the molasses and the milk in the recipe make sense, but the recipe also calls for Azomite, which seems like an expensive and inefficient way to add potassium (it is 0-0-.2). And not sure what potassium sulfate adds either, so I am inclined to leave it out. The other ingredient that I have on hand is liquid fish -- Drammatic O, which I think is 2-5-1.

Final question: Is a sticker helpful (I have Therm-X)?

I know there are special products out there that folks have found useful but I don't have time to get them.

I'm not looking forward to spraying in 25 mph wind but what can you do?

Turkey Creek Orchard

Solon, Iowa (zone 5A)

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[Pat Pryal](#)

[Re: Frost protection, potassium sulfate & apricots](#)

April 08, 2016 09:59PM

Registered: 7 years ago

Posts: 76

Good luck, unfortunately I think there is likely to be tremendous damage done in the Upper Midwest and Northeast after this weekend.

Pat

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[Liz Griffith](#)

[Re: Frost protection, potassium sulfate & apricots](#)

April 08, 2016 10:29PM

Registered: 7 years ago

Posts: 46

Yes - good luck to all tonight through the weekend. Supposed to be 22 here tonight but usually gets colder than forecast at our orchard, especially in our lower block (weather station recorded 19 early this past Tues morning when the forecast was for 24). Apples and pears range from green tip to 1/2" green. Only have one apricot - it is not quite in bloom, but I've pretty much said goodbye.

Peter, I'm sorry I don't have any pertinent info for you, but I would love to hear if you find your spray makes a difference. We are not planning on putting anything on tonight--I hope folks report how their frost protection sprays, whatever they are, end up doing. There is another thread in the Biodynamic section that talks about using Valerian [here](#), for example, and I'd love to hear if folks have results using that as well.

So please report back. I have a feeling we are going to need this kind of thing more and more in the future.

Again, best of luck.

Door Creek Orchard

Zone 5a in Wisconsin

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[Ian Graham](#)

[Re: Frost protection, potassium sulfate & apricots](#)

April 09, 2016 10:44PM

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 59

Hello from Hamilton ON, 6a

we've had the same rollercoaster of 20deg temp swings for the last month.

I did a version of the valerian spray but not proper biodyn. (which is flowers fermented for week or two, then stirred and sprayed) I used

what I had, roots dried and dirty, steeped in hot water, added to bpsprayer and out i went at 9pm. of course will not know what worked. did leave a couple trees and currants unsprayed so that later perhaps will know if any effect. I sprayed apple, peach, plum, pawpaw, pear, currant, gooseberry, blackberry and quince.

btw, would you share you recipe of unknown origin, and prior use/results?

Ian

Old99farm

Dundas ON 5b

Old 99 Farm and permaculture site

Dundas ON 5b

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[Peter Fisher](#)

[Re: Frost protection, potassium sulfate & apricots](#)

Registered: 10 years ago

Posts: 82

April 10, 2016 03:32AM

It got down to 20 degrees here in Iowa briefly last night, below 24 for several hours. I assume the apricots are toast, since they are in full bloom. Cutting open a blossom revealed a brownish color at the base of the pistil.

The Asian and European pears were all at tight cluster. So I expected damage there, but cutting into a number of buds revealed just the same light green color throughout. I do not know if that is conclusive evidence that they survived. I will try to include photos of an Asian pear bud and the bud cut open, both taken this afternoon.

The frost protection recipe came I think from the OTFA listserve in 2012. It called for these amounts per gallon of water: 2 oz molasses, ½ oz liquid fish, 2 oz kelp, 2 oz liquid calcium, 4 oz soft rock phosphate water. Milk or yogurt could be substituted for the calcium. Someone suggested potassium sulfate also.

I used what I had at hand. In 25 gallons of water, 3 pints of un sulphured molasses, 12 oz liquid fish, 2 gallons of skim milk, 4 TBS Therm-X sticker. No idea if that's the appropriate quantity of milk. I stayed away from potassium sulfate because I was spraying apricots. I gather we are looking especially for potassium and calcium. The molasses has lots of both, the liquid fish is 2-5-1. Not sure what the kelp is adding.

I can't find a way to include the photos. I could email if anyone is interested.

Turkey Creek Orchard

Solon, Iowa (zone 5A)

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