



Growing Fruit Trees: Apples

Proper Care of Trees for Noxious Pest Avoidance

Important Notice:

Before planting fruit trees, it is the residential growers responsibility to familiarize oneself with the RDOS [Bylaw](#). It is necessary that proper care of fruit trees is taken to prevent & control pest infestations.

Before Planting your Tree

Apple trees can only produce healthy fruit if home growers pay careful attention to pruning, sanitation, pest management, & harvest practices. If you are planting the tree for shade or ornamental purposes, consider planting an ornamental tree that will be less bothersome, costly to care for & manage.

General Apple Tree Care

Sanitation: Diligent sanitation practice will reduce the risk of pest infestation. Remove dead & decaying fruit & leaves from the tree & ground. Maintain a good weeding & visual inspection routine to avoid pests.

Pruning: Avoid pruning in fall or winter to prevent winter injury, which makes the tree more susceptible to pests. In early spring (before bud break & at least two weeks after last frost), remove all dead & diseased branches first. Prune the upper part of the tree more than the lower part to maximize sunlight & airflow.

Thinning: Thin the fruit in June (6 inches apart) to improve crop quality & prevent pests, as they prefer to enter fruit where two fruits are in contact.

Harvesting: Remove ALL fruit at harvest (Aug-Oct) & make sure all diseased & insect-infested fruit is disposed of properly. Maturity of fruit is dependent on apple type & varies greatly. If the fruit is beginning to drop, harvest frequently & check for signs of pests.



Apple Leafcurl Midge

CropHealth Advising & Research

Pest Avoidance & Management

Important: Keeping trees healthy by prioritizing sanitation practice will help reduce pest & disease problems. Avoid chemical intervention (pesticides) & use preventative strategies first.

Netting Tree & Bagging Fruit: Net the entire tree or place horticultural bags around the fruit when small & leave on for the majority of the growth process. This reduces the risk of pests, disease, & damage from birds.

Pesticides (last resort): If preventative measures are no longer adequate, consult professionals before use. Always begin with the least toxic product available first.

Pesticide Stewardship: Do not apply in daytime when bees are foraging, when wind speeds are high, or when rain is forecast.

[Tree Fruit Pest Control | RDOS](#)

NOTE: B.C. is bear country, including densely populated areas. Fruit trees are attractants for bears and must be maintained properly to keep wildlife wild and communities safe. www.wildsafebc.com

MOST COMMON APPLE TREE PESTS

Codling Moth

(25mm = 1 inch)

Apple Clearwing Moth



Exit Hole Filled with Excreta



Tunneling Damage



Larvae



Trunk Damage

Amanda Brown



Larva



Trunk Banding

CropHealth Advising & Research



Adult



Adult

BC Ministry of Agriculture

Identification: Exit holes filled with excrement are a good indication of codling moth. Mature larvae leave the fruit to pupate in protected areas. Adults are rarely seen.

Management: Banding the trunks with corrugated cardboard banding helps trap any overwintering larvae. Pheromone traps or homemade traps can also be used. Thin fruit to singles or strip tree entirely to prevent pest.

Identification: Check for reddish brown excrement at tree base, weak/ damaged areas, swollen areas, or on pruning scars. The larvae will tunnel under the bark through weak areas below the crown & can cause early death of trees.

Management: Minimize wounds to trees & remove trees with cankers. Buckets filled with grape juice serve as effective traps but must be cleared out regularly.

Leafroller



Larva



Larva & Damage



Leaf Damage



Fruit Damage

CropHealth Advising & Research

Identification: Larvae are light-dark green caterpillars with a black head. Adult moths have gold, tan, & white coloring on wings. Leaves are chewed & rolled. Fruit may have russeted scars resulting from deep feeding holes.

Management: Prune each year to remove egg masses & thin fruit to singles because larvae like to feed where two fruits are in contact.

Additional Info

Other Pests to Look out for

Spotted Lantern Fly, Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, Apple Aphid, Apple Leaf Curling Midge, Ambrosia Beetle, Shothole Borer, Apple Curculio, etc.

Detailed Pest Descriptions Found Here

[Home & Garden Pest Management Guide for BC Pests of Fruit Trees.](#)

Okanagan Invasive Species Online

This is a useful resource for information on all invasive insect pests of concern in the region. This can be found at: www.OISO.ca

www.OISO.ca
OKANAGAN INVASIVE SPECIES ONLINE

Plant Me Instead Factsheet

For ornamental & native tree or shrub alternatives for fruit bearing trees & shrubs, visit [Tree Fruit Pest Control | RDOS](#)

Fireblight Note

If there is any sign of Fireblight (sudden brown to black withering & dying of blossoms, leaves, branches), contact the [BC Ministry of Agriculture](#) right away and keep away from the tree. This is a serious bacterial disease that will easily spread & should be routinely checked for.

Apple Maggot Note

The Southern Interior B.C. is the last major apple growing area of North America free of this pest. If there is a suspected sighting, contact 250-470-4884 & ask for plant health at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Contact your local nursery/ greenhouse if you are unsure about which management strategy should be practiced & how to properly care for your fruit tree.

Noxious Pest Program Video Media:

[Regional District Okanagan Similkameen \(RDOS\) - YouTube](#)