

Fruit trees can be a challenge as new insects and diseases are found every year that may damage the plant and the fruit.

Adequate care, such as proper pruning and thinning, will help reduce pest numbers and improve fruit quality at harvest.

Community & Media Relations
City Hall
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4
TEL 250 469-8500
kelowna.ca

Caterpillars

Common species include leafrollers, bud moth and fruitworms (picture to right). These insects feed on foliage but can also damage the fruit.

For small infestations, remove infested leaves. Remove the visible caterpillars to prevent an increase in numbers. For large infestations, use least-toxic pesticides such as Btk or spinosad. Apply when blossoms are dropping.



Mites

European red mites, two-spotted spider mites and rust mites feed on leaves of fruit trees, reducing tree growth and fruit quality. Natural enemies usually control the pest mites, except when pesticide sprays eliminate the beneficials.

Use least-toxic products to preserve predators. Apply insecticidal soap where mites are causing visible damage. Follow with dormant oil the next spring to control overwintering eggs.

Brown rot

This disease is common after a wet spring. Affected fruit becomes brown and mushy (picture below).



Remove and destroy all affected fruit. Strict sanitation is critical to manage brown rot. Fruit left on the ground is a source of fungus spores the following year. During winter pruning remove branches with dark gumming, often a disease canker.

Apple scab

This disease is common after a wet spring. Leaves show circular spots of olive green colour (picture to right). In late summer, fruit shows similar spots.



Rake and discard infected leaves in the fall. Infected leaves on the ground are a source of fungus spores the following year. For large infestations, use the least-toxic fungicide sulphur. Spray three times before and after bloom at 7 to 10 day intervals.

Codling moth

This is the main insect pest of commercial apple production. It is a regulated pest that must be controlled in residential areas. Pesticides must be applied by certified applicators. Larvae feed inside the fruit (picture to left). Fruit damage leads to crop destruction.



Hand pull and destroy the affected fruit. Partial control is obtained by wrapping the trunk and main limbs with strips of corrugated cardboard. Destroy and replace in summer and fall.

Cherry fruit fly

This is the main insect pest of commercial cherry production. It is a regulated pest that must be controlled in residential areas. Pesticide must be applied by certified applicators. Adult females lay eggs into the fruit where larvae feed until mature.

Remove and discard all fruit after harvest. Strict sanitation is essential. Fruit left on the tree is breeding ground for late season flies.

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Rating fruit trees



Prunes

Pest management: easy
Main pests: aphids, caterpillars
Other pests: brown rot, mites

Plums

Pest management: easy
Main pests: aphids, caterpillars
Other pests: brown rot, mites



Apricots

Pest management: moderate
Main pests: brown rot, caterpillars
Other pests: blight, tree borer

Peaches & Nectarines

Pest management: moderate
Main pests: brown rot, tree borer
Other pest: thrips, leaf curl, aphid



Pears

Pest management: difficult
Main pests: codling moth, psylla
Other pests: mites, caterpillars

Apples

Pest management: difficult
Main: codling moth, caterpillars
Other pests: apple scab, aphids



Cherries

Pest management: difficult
Main pests: cherry fruit fly, aphids
Other pests: brown rot, caterpillar

Fruit trees are exempt from the bylaw to ensure pest problems are controlled and do not spread into commercial orchards. However, many fruit tree pests can be managed with manual methods or spraying with excluded pesticides.

Kelowna's Pesticide Regulation Bylaw No. 9920

The City of Kelowna's Pesticide Bylaw, passed in January 2009, regulates the use of pesticides for non-essential (cosmetic) purposes.

Pesticides are products used to control unwanted weeds, fungi and insects. Under the Pesticide Bylaw, most pesticides cannot be applied on a residential property.

Least-toxic pesticides on the "excluded list" are exempt from the restrictions of the Bylaw. Certified pesticide applicators are also exempt from the restrictions of the bylaw.

To view the entire bylaw and pesticides on the "excluded list", refer to kelowna.ca/environment, under Pesticide Free.