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### ***Mole Control***

If you haven't *seen* them already, it won't be long until you can *feel* them underneath you as you mow. Moles: one of a homeowner's biggest turf grass nuisances...

The soil upheaval is a result of the moles looking for food. With earthworms as their primary food source, moles burrow in the soil in search of them (and grubs), disturbing everything as they go. They can even uproot small plants and feed on flower bulbs.

Control is difficult. There are many home remedies (chewing gum, broken glass, etc...), but most are inconsistent and unproven. Poison baits tend to fail because moles feed on earthworms and grubs, not the vegetable matter base typical of most baits. Grub control products might reduce grub populations, but they are less effective against earthworms, leaving the mole's primary food source untouched. Traps are the best control method. They come in different forms (harpoon, choker, and scissor-jawed), each one effective once their placement and setting is fine-tuned.

For the best trapping results, start by determining the active runs. Some are abandoned soon after construction. Others are used for longer time periods. Determine active runs using a broomstick or other object to poke holes in multiple runs. Return a day later. If they've been repaired, they are active runs and should be used for trap placement.

Place traps in active runs by digging out a little soil, placing the trap and then replacing loose soil. Secure well so the trap's recoil will not lift it out of the ground. Make sure the triggering mechanism is in the center of the run.

Finish by pushing down two more holes, one on each side of the trap. The hope is that moles will be caught when they try to repair the tunnel. If you haven't caught a mole in three days, move the trap and start over!

For mole control references and a how-to video, see our K-State Research and Extension mole control page located at <http://www.wildlife.k-state.edu/species/moles/index.html>.

### ***Fruit Damage from Cold Temperatures***

Twenty-eight degrees. That's the temperature where most fruit trees see the start of damage from cold temperatures. It differs by crop and growth stage, but 28 degrees is a good baseline. Apple research, for example, shows the potential for around a ten percent kill of fruit buds when temperatures drop to the 28-degree level.

How cold did it get? Every microclimate is different, but good general area information can be obtained by checking out the Kansas Mesonet sites at <http://mesonet.k-state.edu/>. An analysis of soil temperatures from the Rossville station show multiple hour time periods during the morning hours of April 10 and 13 that could cause mortality. Fortunately, temperatures didn't drop at this site to the lower temperatures necessary for much greater mortality rates.

For information about fruit specific damage potential, see the latest KSU Horticulture newsletter: [https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/2020/April14\\_2020\\_15.pdf](https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/2020/April14_2020_15.pdf). This article also includes a great description on how to evaluate fruit buds for damage.