

Laura Phillips
District Extension Agent, Horticulture

Spray Schedule for Fruit Trees

It can be a challenge to know how to spray fruit trees for pest control. Spray schedules will vary depending on whether the trees have fruit or not. Here are some tips on preparing for your fruit tree pest control program this spring.

Peaches, nectarines and apricots: Often late frosts prevent fruit set on these fruits. Trees that are in full bloom, become much more sensitive to frost damage than those with buds still closed. Temperatures at 28 degrees and lower will harm buds that are in full bloom.

If there will not be any fruit, there isn't any need for being on a spray schedule. If there is fruit, use a product that contains captan or myclobutanil (Immunox, Fungi-Max, Fertilome F-Stop Lawn and Garden Spray) from now until about two weeks before harvest. Spray about every 10 days.

If a specific problem develops such as borers, peach leaf curl or gummosis on peach, see our listing of common problems at our "Common Plant Problems in Kansas" website. Look under "Peach" for possible problems and what to do about them.

Cherries: We often have good fruit on cherries without spraying. However, a wet period as fruit ripens can lead to problems with brown rot. Myclobutanil (Immunox, Fertilome F-Stop Lawn and Garden Spray, Fungi-Max) or Captan will give good protection. Cherry fruit fly may attack the cherries with the maggot causing damage to the fruit. Malathion (check label), Bonide Fruit Tree & Plant Guard or Sevin can be used for control.

Apples: Apples are the crops most in need of a spray schedule. Unless you have disease-resistant trees, cedar-apple rust is a perennial problem. The larvae of the codling moth is the insect most likely to damage fruit. Control can be a challenge due to changing labels and an extended spray season. Look up the K-State publication "Spray Schedules for Growing Apples at Home" on online.

Pears: Pears are often able to escape damage without spraying. If trouble does arise, use the same recommendations given for apples.

You can find more information about pest control on fruit trees in the K-State publication "Fruit Pest Control for Home Gardens." You can also reach out anytime for more guidance.