

Apple Maggots

In the past years many homeowners with apple trees had crops of apples with the following symptoms:

- Winding trails in apple flesh
- Brown flesh
- Damaged fruit becomes rotten & drops from the tree.

These symptoms are a sure sign of a tree infested with apple maggots (*Rhagoletis pomonella*). This maggot has spread throughout most of North America & has been a significant problem for the past few years in Alberta. The mature larvae overwinter in our soil, and in spring pupate into the adult Apple Maggot, known as a Fruit Fly. Adults look similar to a house fly with distinctive black bands on their wings.

The female fruit flies puncture fruit, then insert eggs just below the skin. The eggs hatch into maggots which leave tunnels/trails in the flesh of the fruit as they feed. In late summer, larvae drop to the ground to overwinter.

There are a few steps in preventing Apple Maggot infestations:

- It is important to start control early. In early June, hang apple maggot traps in trees to lure and trap adults. These plastic traps resemble an actual apple, and contain a lure and a sticky substance. By hanging traps early, your



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are trapping adults that would otherwise lay eggs in fruit. Traps should be checked from mid-June to harvest; 2 or 3 times a week. If traps are full of insects, you may have to re-apply glue. The idea is to catch as many adults as possible before the fruit is formed. Egg laying activity begins in July and carries on until August.

- When fruit begins to ripen in late summer and fall, ensure ALL fallen fruit is picked up daily until no fruit remains.
- In late fall, once leaves have fallen from trees, place Remay cloth on the soil under the tree. This can help prevent adults from emerging from the soil next spring.



For more information on Apple Maggots and their control, visit the [What's Bugging](#) section of greenlandgarden.com or call Greenland at 780-467-7557.



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