Old and new pest problems on tree fruits in the Mid-Columbia area

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Abstract: New pest problems are emerging and some old ones are gaining in importance as pest control programs on tree fruits are undergoing major changes and organophosphate and other broad-spectrum insecticides are being replaced. Codling moth has again risen to the top as the major pest of apples and pears. The reasons for the growing codling moth problem are not entirely clear yet but may be due to a combination of factors including changing seasonal emergence patterns, inadequate control programs and possibly resistance. Pear psylla, once the most feared pest of pears, has become more manageable thanks to improved biological control. On the other hand, a number of species have become more noticeable in recent years including pear thrips, a potentially very destructive pest just before bloom on pears, apples and cherries. In the ‘new pest category’ is the snail case bagworm which caused heavy leaf damage in 2002 in a high-density apple orchard but did not infest an adjacent cherry block. Tentiform leafminer has diminished as a problem on cherries while obliquebanded leafroller larvae continue to pose a threat, particularly as contaminants in harvested fruit. A major outbreak of twospotted spider mites was observed in 2002 in an old cherry orchard and was likely related to use of disruptive sprays. Western flower thrips has caused some minor scarring from egg-laying punctures on cherries and has also been implicated as the cause of silvery surface blemishes close to harvest (first seen during the 2002 season). Additional cherry problems observed during the last two years have been redhumped caterpillar, shothole borers in orchards with stressed trees and poor sanitation and, for the second year in a row, cherry lacebug.

Weevils attacking tree fruits in Washington

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Abstract: Weevils are not currently considered tree fruit pests in Washington State, but attacks by weevils have been mentioned as early as 1911. The advent of modern synthetic organic pesticides may have virtually eliminated weevils in commercial orchards in the intervening period. Recently several cases of weevil attacks have occurred on apple and cherry in several fruit growing regions in Washington and Oregon. The first case (in April 2000) occurred in a newly planted cherry orchard in Arlington, Oregon. The buds were heavily attacked by adult weevils shortly after planting, and could have caused substantial growth reduction or distortion. The weevil was identified as Lepesoma[Dyslobus] n. sp. Reports of bud-feeding were made and investigated on two additional cherry orchards in Washington State in 2001. In one orchard (Quincy area) the predominant species was Ophryastes cinarescens, and in the other (Brays Landing area) the predominant species was Stammodeses lanei, with some O. cinarescens present. Sagebrush (Artemisia tridentata) is probably the native host of all three weevil species, and the common thread of the attacks was cherry orchards planted into uncultivated ground in or near sagebrush. In 2002, a severe infestation of a leaf-notching weevil species (tentatively identified as Otiorhynchus meridionalis) was found in an apple orchard on Bench Rd., ca. 5 miles west of Othello. This same species was subsequently found at three other apple orchards, one in East Wenatchee near Pangborn Airport in an organic orchard; one in the Brewster-Bridgeport area; and one near Vantage, WA. At the latter orchard, an isolated 600-acre apple ranch on the west side of the Columbia River, two additional weevil species have been problematic for a number of years. These species, tentatively identified as the strawberry root weevil (O. ovatus L.) and the black vine weevil (O. sulcatus F.), girdle the stems of developing fruit in late spring and summer.