

# Why Growing Fruit Trees in the Backyard May Not Be for Everyone

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Follow these blue arrows!

**START HERE**  
Oh, Yes! Fruit trees are beautiful at flower bloom and again at harvest. Just drive along the any valley in eastern Washington and enjoy the view. And nothing is more satisfying than supplying family and friends with the fruits of your labor. But please consider the following concerns before you plant a fruit tree.



Apples, pears and cherries have serious insects that directly infest the fruit. Proper pest management requires lots of labor AND often requires pesticide applications to keep your fruit pest-free year after year. **If you grow these fruit trees, the following pests will come — I guarantee it!**



The codling moth is 1/2 inch long. One female moth lays dozens of eggs on a tree that hatch into worms looking for an apple to feed in and call home. Once inside the apple, pesticides can't reach the worms (mature worms are 3/4 inch long).

**Top 3 control strategies include:**  
 > Pesticide sprays starting 10 days after petal fall and continuing every 10-14 days until harvest (at least 3-5 sprays per season are necessary)  
 > Periodically scouting, picking & destroying all infested fruit on the tree  
 > Early in the season, bag all fruit on the tree.

Apples & pears attract **codling moth** "worms"  
 Apples & hawthorns attract the **apple maggot**, a new pest in eastern WA.  
 Cherries attract **western cherry fruit fly**.  
 And what could be worse than finding a worm or maggot in your fruit? **Well, maybe finding only half of one!!**

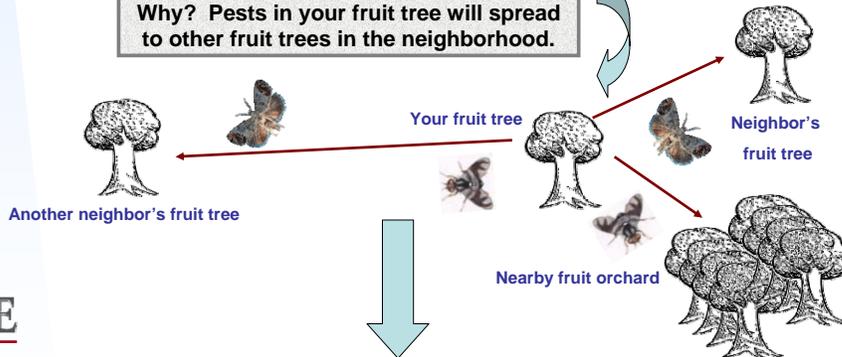
The adult fly is 1/4 inch long. One female can lay dozens of eggs under the surface of apple fruits. Eggs hatch into hungry maggots that tunnel and feed within the fruit. Once inside the apple, pesticides can't reach the maggots (mature maggot is about 1/4 inch long).  
**Top 3 control strategies include:**  
 > Pesticide sprays starting early July and continuing every 10-14 days until harvest (3 to 4 sprays / year)  
 > Periodically scouting, picking & destroying of all infested fruit on the tree  
 > Trapping adult flies with sticky traps or red spheres.



**WARNING**  
 Washington State Law (RCW 15.09.060) states that property owners must control horticultural pests on their property.  
 Why? Pests in your fruit tree will spread to other fruit trees in the neighborhood.



The adult fly is less than 1/4 inch long. One female fly can lay dozens of eggs just under the surface of a cherry that hatch into maggots that tunnel and feed within the fruit. Once inside the cherry, pesticides can't reach the maggots (5/16" long).  
**Top control strategies include:**  
 > Pesticide sprays targeting adult flies starting late May and continuing every 10 days until harvest (3 to 4 sprays per year)  
 > Trapping adult flies with sticky traps



**CONCLUSION**  
 Do not plant apples, pears or cherries in your backyard. Insect pest management necessitates multiple pesticide sprays.  
 Consider planting plums, peaches or apricots as these fruits can be grown in eastern Washington and do not have serious insect pests that infest the fruit.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL WSU EXTENSION OFFICE OR COUNTY HORTICULTURAL PEST & DISEASE BOARD (509) 574-1600, Franklin Co. (509) 545-3580.**

**KEEP IN MIND:**  
 Washington State is the leading producer of apples, pears and sweet cherries in the USA. These fruits are like the Boeings and Microsofts to the economy of eastern Washington. Please support your economy, remove all unmanaged backyard fruit trees and let the "pros" grow your apples, pears and cherries!