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University of Idaho Extension
Extension Educator
Mike Bauer 263-8511

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

MANAGE FRUIT TREE PESTS NOW

This time of year, it is important to pay special attention to fruit trees. A successful orchard must include dormant insect and disease management. Considering the fact that up to 80% of insect pests will originate on your property, attention to fruit tree pest management in the next two months will go a long way to preventing insect and disease problems later this summer. There are a number of tools you can use to keep pests in check during the dormant period.

Horticultural oils

Dormant oils should be used before the leaf or fruit buds of apple and pear trees open in the spring, and play an important part in preventing insect pests in fruit trees. They are effective against scales, mites and other insects, as well as some diseases. Gardeners who have had problems with certain pests and diseases in the past year should consider applying early season applications of horticultural oils to prevent or minimize pest damage to fruit trees.

Household or automotive oils cannot be used because they will not mix with water and are not formulated for use on plants. Do not apply horticultural oils to blue foliage conifers as the oil will turn the foliage green.

Copper fungicides

Copper is toxic to fungi and bacteria because of their ability to destroy proteins in plant tissues. Copper may kill some plant tissues and carries the risk of injuring foliage and fruit of most crops. Factors promoting plant tissue injury include the amount of actual copper applied, and cold, wet weather. Some of the more common commercial formulations of fixed copper include C-O-C-S, Kocide 101, Tribasic Copper Sulfate, and KOP-R Spray (copper ammonium complex).

Sulfur Fungicides

Sulfur is available as liquid lime sulfur and as dry wettable powders or liquid (flowable) formulations of sulfur. Sulfur fungicides are very effective for control of powdery mildew on most fruit crops, but are not highly effective for control of most other fruit crop diseases.

Michael Bauer is the Extension Horticulture Educator for the University of Idaho Extension in Bonner County.

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