



The only thing worse than finding a caterpillar in your apple is finding half a caterpillar. That caterpillar is the codling moth, the major pest that affects both orchardist and the humble home gardener by infesting their apples, pears, quince, walnuts and prunus species including peaches.



The codling moth is greyish with light-grey and copper stripes on the wings. The females lay eggs on fruit or leaves, which hatch into black-headed yellow larvae that attack fruit immediately. Each larva burrows into the fruit and eats for about three weeks, then leaves to overwinter in the ground and in crevices in the bark. This is why there is such a high chance to find a worm in your apple. No need to worry though; with good prevention and attack methods, you can be munching on your summer fruit without worry.

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Female moths lay eggs from October to March so you should have your codling moth pheromone traps placed in the tree prior to October. I recommend late August to mid-September as sometimes these moths are present in September in warmer areas.

The traps work by attracting the male codling moth with the scent (pheromone) that the females use to attract a mate, and the males then get entangled in the sticky bait. By attracting and catching the male moth you reduce the number of fertilised eggs, this is true, but really the traps should be used as an indication that the moths are present and it is time to spray your trees. Traps shouldn't be used as the sole prevention method. Each trap is enough to monitor 3–5 trees and replacement sticky traps are available from your local Odeerings Garden Centre.

You need to check your trap at least once a week. If you have caught more than five moths in one week you have a heavy infestation of codling moth, which means you need to spray your tree with an insecticide like Yates Success Ultra.



It's important to wait 10 days from the time the moths arrive before spraying, as the eggs must hatch into caterpillars before spraying is effective. Then re-spray in 7–10 days' time. Remember to remove the traps when you spray so the chemical does not interfere with the pheromone smell the trap gives off, and then reattach the trap to the tree six hours after spraying.

If you would like to keep your garden free of harmful chemicals there are a few things that can keep those nasty codling moths in their place. Neem Tree oil can be sprayed every seven days till numbers drop in your traps.

Also Neem Tree granules can be spread around the base of your fruit trees every four to six weeks till under control. The smell of the Neem granules is what deters the moths from coming near your trees.

If you're lucky enough to own chickens they are fantastic at gobbling up any pests lurking on or around your tree. Don't use Neem Tree crystals where your chickens can eat them.

Make sure you remove and destroy any fruit that has been infested to stop the moths from spreading farther.





Oderings Tips & Tricks for Codling Moth

- Place traps in the tree in August.
- Each trap will monitor three to five trees.
- Traps are an indicator only. Use as guide for the correct time to spray.
- Moths generally fly and lay their larvae at night.
- Check the traps weekly.
- If you catch more than five moths in a week you have a heavy infestation and will need to spray your trees.
- Wait 10 days after catching the moths before you spray, then reapply the spray in 7-10 days' time.
- You may need to repeat spray on a weekly basis until you are catching fewer moths in the traps.
- Remove the traps before spraying so you don't interfere with the pheromone smell the trap gives off. Reattach the traps after six hours.
- All sprays need ample drying time; do not use within six hours of rain.
- Always spray both the top and underside of the leaves on your trees; this ensures you are targeting as many of the pests as possible.
- Remove and destroy any affected fruit.



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Codling Moth

