

# ORGANIC APPLE AND PEAR CARE SCHEDULE

When choosing and planting trees, follow the guidelines in *Your Organic Orchard*. Also,

- See our *Disease Resistance for Apple Varieties* handout for cultivars that may be easier to grow.
- Avoid planting closely related ornamentals like crab apples, flowering pears and cherries, mountain ash, pyracantha, and cotoneaster, which can harbor pests and diseases.
- Training is especially important for pear trees, since their natural habit tends to be upright. Weights or spreaders can help with better branch angles.

Apples and pears share many of the same pests. In our area *scab*, *powdery mildew*, *apple maggot* and *codling moth* are the major pests of apples. Pears (and some apples) also see *blister mite* and *pear psylla*. Talk with our staff or an experienced friend to identify pests and diseases before spraying.

TIMING	CARE AND MONITORING
<p><b>Dormant Phase</b> After leaf drop through mid-winter (Nov-Feb)</p>	<p>Prune trees for structure, air circulation, access, and production. (<i>Powdery mildew, scab, etc.</i>)</p> <p>Rake and remove leaves within 30 days of leaf fall. (<i>Scab, cutworms, leafrollers</i>)</p> <p>Apply lime within the dripline of the tree, and then mulch to contain fungal spores. (<i>Scab, powdery mildew</i>)</p> <p>Remove and destroy cardboard <i>codling moth</i> traps and the cocoons underneath.</p> <p>If <i>aphids, leafrollers, red mites, pear psylla</i>, or <i>scale</i> have been a problem, spray with horticultural oil. Always read the label for application information.</p>
<p><b>Delayed Dormant Phase</b> (March – April)</p>	<p>Release mason bees, provide clean housing.</p> <p>As leaves start to open, fertilize young trees for structural growth. Follow label instructions to avoid overfertilizing. (<i>Aphids, other pests and diseases</i>)</p> <p>Plant seeds and starts of beneficial insect attracting plants. (<i>Aphids, codling moth, scale</i>)</p> <p>Re-apply mulch after fertilizing to contain fungal spores. (<i>Scab, powdery mildew</i>)</p> <p>Look for <i>mildew</i>-infected shoots and prune out promptly, disinfecting pruners. Check new leaves also for evidence of <i>blister mites</i> and remove the worst.</p> <p>Put crumpled/rolled paper in branch crotches to encourage earwigs, which prey on <i>pear psylla, aphids, etc.</i></p> <p>If <i>aphids, leafrollers, mites, pear psylla</i>, or <i>scale</i> have been a problem, a second spray of horticultural oil may be called for.</p>
<p><b>Prepink</b> Just before blossoms open</p>	<p>Set up pheromone traps for <i>codling moth</i> (these have multiple generations in a year). When traps show adult moths are active, use Spinosad.</p> <p><i>Aphids, scale</i>, and <i>pear psylla</i> are attracted to tender young growth. Use insecticidal soap, avoid aggressive pruning or overfertilizing.</p> <p>A stripe of Tanglefoot around the trunk can stop <i>cutworms</i> and <i>aphid-farming ants</i>. This needs to be maintained to keep it sticky.</p> <p>If <i>scab</i> has been a problem, and the weather cooperates, spray sulfur or copper to reduce the primary infection. Apply according to label.</p>

TIMING	CARE AND MONITORING
<b>Pink Through Petal Fall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hang Red Sphere traps for <i>apple maggot</i> in the brightest part of the tree, 6-7 feet up. Spray Spinosad every 10 to 14 days after detecting the first adult fly.</li> <li>• Every few years, a light sprinkle of Borax will prevent Boron deficiency.</li> <li>• <i>Codling moth</i> and some other fruit-targeting pests can be deterred with an application of Kaolin clay (Surround). Unless the forecast is for rain, now is the time for the first of 3 applications, each 1 week apart.</li> <li>• Caterpillars like <i>codling moth</i>, <i>cutworms</i>, <i>leafrollers</i> can be treated with Bt.</li> </ul>
<b>10-28 Days After Full Bloom</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For <i>codling moth</i>, band tree trunks with corrugated cardboard to trap larvae, which emerge and travel downward starting about 10 days after petal fall.</li> </ul>
<b>Petal Fall Through Early Summer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The tree will self-thin ("June drop"). Pick up all fallen fruit. (<i>Codling moth</i>, etc.)</li> <li>• If evidence of <i>scab</i> is abundant and rain is expected, you can spray sulfur.</li> <li>• Remove and destroy any fruit with signs of <i>apple maggot</i> or <i>codling moth</i> damage.</li> <li>• Thin fruit for better fruit quality, and to protect from <i>codling moth</i> and <i>apple maggot</i>. On small trees you can put bags around apples to protect them.</li> <li>• Sow a cover crop.</li> </ul>
<b>From Spring Until Harvest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for evidence of <i>scab</i> and <i>mildew</i>. If only a few leaves, remove affected leaves. If it's more pervasive, spray with Serenade or sulfur.</li> <li>• Check your Tanglefoot sticky bands regularly to see if they need freshening. (<i>Cutworms</i>, <i>ants</i>, etc.)</li> <li>• Look for <i>aphids</i>, <i>spider mites</i>, <i>pear psylla</i>, and <i>scale</i>. Prune off localized infestations or blast with water. Encourage beneficial insects. Treat with insecticidal soap, garlic/cayenne, neem.</li> </ul>
<b>Summer (July-Aug.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer pruning, preferably on a cloudy day. Remove watersprouts. This is the time for pruning for size control and espalier maintenance.</li> <li>• Ensure regular watering for tree health and to avoid disorders like <i>bitter pit</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Harvest/Post Harvest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove all fruit from tree. Remove traps.</li> <li>• Pick up all fallen fruit within a day or two of falling. (<i>Codling moth</i>, <i>apple maggot</i>)</li> <li>• Harvest mason bee cocoons for winter care.</li> <li>• If <i>pear blister mite</i> has been a problem, this is when they are migrating to the buds and susceptible to a spray of sulfur or horticultural oil.</li> <li>• Enjoy your fruit!</li> </ul>

Build up of copper spray can harm earthworms or aquatic animals. Sprayed after petal fall, it can cause cosmetic damage to fruit, especially clear-skinned pears like Anjou or Comice.