

Implementation

Areawide organic pest management in pear

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Keywords: Pear, areawide, organic, pest management

Abstract: Areawide management programs for insect pests of apple and pear in the western US have been successful since their inception a decade ago. Most projects have been targeted at codling moth, primarily through the use of mating disruption to replace organophosphate insecticides. Pear psylla, another important pest of pear, is amenable to areawide management, in that it is highly dispersive and has a number of potential natural enemies in surrounding native woodland. Establishing organic orchards or orchards using soft management practices among conventional orchards has often been difficult in that pests readily migrate in from the conventional orchards, yet natural enemy immigration is limited by the pesticide use in those same conventional programs. Organic pest management on an areawide basis could provide more opportunities for immigration of biocontrol agents. In 2002, an Areawide Organic Management Program was established on 310 acres of contiguous pear, surrounded by native vegetation. Organic pest management practices were implemented for insect and mite control throughout the project, however other organic practices were not required (e.g., nutrient, rodent, and weed management were often by conventional practices). Overall, there was a reduction in pesticide use and an associated reduction in insecticide costs. This program will be expanded in 2003. See <http://entomology.tfrec.wsu.edu/pearent/pcg.htm> for more information.