

APPLES

It's our people that make the difference

- With green tissue showing on early sites and early varieties (Jazz, near right, and Smitten, far right, in Kent on 8th March), scab season is truly upon us. Even some of the early cider varieties (e.g. Tremlett's Bitter) are showing some green tips on early sites. Risk of primary infections is relatively low at present with low temperatures slowing the maturity of ascospores. However, the risk of conidial infection has been high for much of the last week and will continue going forward this week with unsettled weather forecast. After a mild, dry winter, the risk of scab infection overwintering on the tree is higher than average, and especially significant in orchards which had a scab infection last year. Therefore, even if scab models tell you that risk of primary infection is currently low, you must be protecting vulnerable tissue from conidial (secondary) infection.
- One way to reduce scab infection risk, is to ensure that leaf litter does not remain under the tree (an example shown right). If you can blow or brush remaining litter into the alleyway to be pulverised, or encourage breakdown by applying a 5% urea solution to the leaves (add it to your herbicide spray if it is due), then this will reduce the scab pressure.
- Whilst the weather has gone back to more normal temperatures, clearly the brief warm spell has spurred [Apple Blossom Weevil](#) to life. Last week we have found signs of feeding damage (circled, near right) and also tapped out weevils from trees (far right). Wait until its warmer to consider treatment. The weevils will fly at temperatures above 12°C.
- Weeds are starting to grow, so don't let them get away from you and take weather window opportunities to apply herbicides in good conditions. Remember that glyphosate needs at least 6 hours without rain to get the best result and you should avoid applying in quick drying conditions.



PEARS

- Pear Sucker eggs have been found (picture taken in East Anglia last week) so adults were busy during the 'heatwave'. Check your chemical store for Insegar as this may be your chance to use it up before its approval expires at the end of April.
- Pears are at bud burst but you can still apply sulphur for the suppression of Pear Leaf Blister Mite, up to white bud.
- Given that we are starting to see signs of Apple Blossom Weevil activity, the [Pear Bud Weevil](#) (*Anthonomus spilotus*) can be expected to be found in affected orchards now. Again, wait for some warmer, settled weather before considering treatment.



PLUMS

- Early plum varieties are at white bud so this may be your last chance to apply an insecticide before flowering. Calypso and Gazelle SG both work well at low temperatures on aphids.
- Apricots are in flower so you should be applying Signum or Switch for blossom wilt and rot control.

CHERRIES

- Buds are starting to move and growers have held back from skinning tunnels due to the high winds. Without covering, risk of bacterial canker infection is higher, although temperatures are not conducive for new infection at present.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Spraying season is here and your sprayer should be NSTS tested (every year if you are in Red Tractor) and be clean and ready to use efficiently and accurately. The picture (right) was taken on a farm last week.
- Don't forget that we can supply tree ties (e.g. Tree Fix), Stabfix clips, bamboo canes, rabbit guards (plastic and wire) and a whole range of support structures.



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