



Blueberry Maggot

The Blueberry Maggot (BM) is one of the most destructive pests of blueberry in NH. This close relative of the Apple Maggot differs slightly in form and size and for many years they both were considered the Apple Maggot. Today, it causes damage to fruit throughout the blueberry regions of the Atlantic States.

Description

The adult is a 1/8" fly with black zigzag bands on the wings. The body is black with white markings and a prominent white dot between the bases of the wings. The fly is slightly smaller than its close relative, the Apple Maggot.

The immature stage is a white, legless maggot and can be found in ripened berries. Pupae are oval, hard and tan colored. They are found 1-2" deep in the soil around the blueberry area.

Besides differences in size and structures, the BM differs from the Apple Maggot in that during egg-laying, the female BM deposits only one egg per fruit, whereas the Apple Maggot will deposit more than one egg per fruit. Apple Maggots do not attack blueberries and BM does not attack apples.



Life Cycle

The life cycle of the BM is almost identical to that of the Apple Maggot. The BM overwinters as a pupa 1-2" below the surface of the soil. In July, as the berries ripen, the adult emerges and within a week's time will feed and mate. Females lay their eggs singly beneath the surface of a ripening berry. The emerging larva feeds for a two-week period, during which time it molts twice. When full grown, the larva drops to the ground, if the berry has not already fallen. It pupates in the soil, where it will remain for the winter.

Control

Highbush plantings that are kept well-picked have few or no problems from BM, although sites with lots of nearby unmanaged wild blueberries are likely to suffer more severe BM problems. Lowbush areas frequently have more serious problems because of the single harvest and because rough hillsides are difficult to treat with insecticides. .

Certain Sevin, Imidan and malathion products are labeled for controlling BM. Because these products come in many formulations, *check the label to be sure* the product is registered for BM, then follow label directions precisely. Using BM traps will improve the timing of pesticide applications and help determine the need to treat. The red sphere trap is the most effective trapping device. (See UNHCE fact sheet *Using Blueberry Maggot Traps*.)

Stop! Read the label on every pesticide container each time before using the material. Pesticides must be applied only as directed on the label to be in compliance with the law. All pesticides listed in this publication are contingent upon continued registration. Contact the Division of Pesticide Control at (603) 271-3550 to check registration status. Dispose of empty containers safely, according to N.H. regulations.

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