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Holistic Orchard Network  
Online Community

Grow Organic Apples

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## Should I clean up this mess?

Posted by [James Smith](#)

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[James Smith](#)

[Should I clean up this mess?](#)

Registered: 2 years ago

Posts: 57

February 12, 2021 03:21AM

The orchardist who maintained my orchard put minimal effort into it and sanitation was not on his list of things to do. When fruit was thinned, it was tossed on the ground. When fruit was picked the damaged fruit was tossed on the ground and apples left on the tree. At the end of picking last year he walked away from the orchard, thus all the leaves from last year are still there. Being the apple noob that I am, I had no idea of what should be done. Now I'm wondering if there is something I should do now before spring and growth starts. Either something to promote beneficial effects or something to hinder any heeby jeebies that may be lurking there.

Washington Okanogan Valley

Zone 6b

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[Karen Brindle](#)

[Re: Should I clean up this mess?](#)

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 103

February 12, 2021 07:14AM

Hi James, while I don't thin, I wonder how hard it could be to wear a picking bag and put thinnings in that rather than on the ground? To lower disease pressure from the critters that like to have part of their life cycle in fruit, we are meticulous with keeping the orchard as clean as we can. We hired local young kids to pick up all the June drops and put into buckets which was fed to our sheep, when they were also weeding (pulling thistle). I also pick up every unharvested apple that got missed when I'm pruning. I don't do anything with the leaves except make sure they get coated well with the fall holistic spray to help the microbes do their job. The Fall spray has really made a difference in our wet climate.! Hope this was helpful, hope you are able to make it over this way and you can pick my brain on what works for us with Holistic orcharding!

[Vista Ridge Orchard](#)

Zone 8a in Washington

235 Cider and heritage apple trees, 72 varieties,

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