



## Spraying around blossom time

Posted by [Ian Graham](#)  
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[Ian Graham](#)  
[Spraying around blossom time](#)

Registered: 10 years ago  
Posts: 59

May 02, 2017 11:31PM

With a mixed orchard of pome and stone fruit, I will have trees in all stages of bloom. Quick question: should I never spray the Holistic Spray when blooms are open? Or is it only the Neem to avoid getting on open blossoms?  
Now is scab season here in ON Lake Ontario 5b, very wet. I don't collect degree day data so am 'spraying in the dark' having re-read The Apple Grower and THO sections. Most apples are about 1/2 " green, some tight cluster. Rain the last two days, damp today, clear tomorrow and then 2" forecast for thurs/fri. Should I spray today even tho damp leaves or wait till after the big storm?  
(Even if replies come in too late it will be helpful for others and next year!)

Old 99 Farm and permaculture site  
Dundas ON 5b

[Reply Quote](#)  
[David Maxwell](#)  
[Re: Spraying around blossom time](#)

Registered: 11 years ago  
Posts: 197

May 03, 2017 02:59PM

I hesitated as to whether to post publicly or via PM, but decided that it may be useful to a larger number of Canadian growers. The Depts. of Agriculture in Atlantic Canada, and Quebec, at least, have created a real-time freely-accessible web-based application with which one can readily determine degree-day accumulations for a range of pests and diseases and sites, including Mills model and MariBlyte. [[atl.agrometeo.org](http://atl.agrometeo.org)]. This is the Atlantic Canada site. It appears from the site that there is an equivalent site for Quebec, but it is not apparent that it has been extended to Ontario. (Maybe contact AgCan or [info@solutions-mesonet.org](mailto:info@solutions-mesonet.org) to clarify and/or lobby for it.)

[Broomholm Orchard](#)  
Zone 5b in Nova Scotia

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[Ian Graham](#)  
[Re: Spraying around blossom time](#)

Registered: 10 years ago  
Posts: 59

May 07, 2017 08:36PM

still in doubt about spraying the Holistic Spray, with neem and fish on open blossoms? Yes it will terminate pollination???

[Reply Quote](#)  
[Mike Biltonen](#)  
[Re: Spraying around blossom time](#)

Registered: 11 years ago  
Posts: 298

May 07, 2017 11:42PM

Ian,

What rate of neem are you spraying? And, just to be clear, it is pure neem oil, not a commercial preparation, right? I assume it is pure, but you don't specify.

As far as the fish or other holistic sprays - let the sprayer rip!

Mike

[Mike Biltonen, Know Your Roots](#)  
Zone 5b in New York

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[Joanne Corkum](#)  
[Re: Spraying around blossom time](#)

Registered: 8 years ago  
Posts: 34

May 17, 2017 09:55PM

I have the same question re holistic sprays and different stages of bud development. We have a number of different cider varieties and some are at half inch green and others tight cluster to pink. I might also mention that the trees are non bearing at this point - except for a row of Golden Russets.

Should we simply avoid spraying the trees that are in bloom ? Using .5% neem, fish fertilizer and EM...

Joanne

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[Karen Brindle](#)

[Re: Spraying around blossom time](#)

May 31, 2017 06:22AM

This post was helpful even without a firm answer, Yesterday I sprayed everything with the Neem mix except Yarlington, Dabinett and Vilberie because they are still in bloom, and also avoided pears. Following this post to learn the reason why, is it because of bees, or damaged to the blooms?

[Vista Ridge Orchard](#)

Zone 8a in Washington

235 Cider and heritage apple trees, 72 varieties,

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: Spraying around blossom time](#)

May 31, 2017 03:32PM

This was one of those broad questions a guy could dedicate a whole chapter to in a book. Plus I truly like to see others chime in here, be it intuition or direct observation. I have spoken about "average pink" and "average petal fall" before when considering a mixed varietal orchard. The bloom time recipe for a Competitive Colonization Boost addresses a means of keeping full-rate neem and fish oils off delicate flower petals. Keep in mind that *Holistic Orchard* came out in 2011 and that since then important updates are offered up in haphazard editions of the [Community Orchardist](#) newsletter, [workshops and conferences](#), and even a rather exciting [new fungal book](#). Not that I'm trying to promote all that . . . it's just the means by which all evolves and gets out there.

Now a few key points to further drive this conversation amongst this circle of growers:

- Think of the petal fall spray (Spring3) on a mid-season apple as the pink spray (Spring2) on a late blooming bittersweet. In essence, those late bloomers get an extra round of holistic love, just like the stone fruit.
- I do allot neem on the early bloom end and again on the late bloom end when averaging out the timing of things. The likelihood that this is going to do bee larvae harm back in the hive is extremely slim. (And yes, this is what the bees "tell" me! Bumble and solitary bee populations here are strong.)
- A holistic app has effectiveness on the order of 7 to 10 days in terms of immune stimulation and biological reinforcement.
- A day of sunshine with accompanying photosynthesis helps get immune metabolism in gear . . . but if it's a rainy period, then you must find the "misty downtime" to spray if infection parameters demand it. Systemic apps are so much more accomodating than layered apps like sulfur or kaolin clay. Tracking degree days and wetting events (as suggested in *Apple Grower* and further refined since 2005 to include net spore release) really, really helps to see the big picture.

Keep thinking. Listening. Learning. Discussing.

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 06/01/2017 04:11PM by Michael Phillips.

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