

## VARIETAL SUSCEPTIBILITY TO APPLE SAWFLY

Several cider cultivars were assessed during May – July for apple sawfly attack both on the trees and also on the fruitlets dropped post-blossom. Varietal differences in flowering time and colour or UV reflectance of blossoms may be relevant to susceptibility, the later flowering varieties having a higher proportion of sawfly damage in dropped fruit.

Many of the damaged fruit quickly developed brown rot [*Monilinia fructigena*], the pathogen having infected through the insect entry holes.

Losses on Tremletts Bitter and Sweet Coppin were minimal but James Grieve [the pollen parent of many of the new cider cultivars] suffered a significant level of damage and rotting, enough to establish a strong source of rot inoculum early in the season. If there is a high level of codling moth activity in July, the damaged fruit developing on the tree and/or dropped to the ground, will be vulnerable to rot infection from this source.

This high ‘starter’ level of rot infection in early summer predisposes the healthy developing fruit to further losses prior to harvesting. Early effective control of apple sawfly considerably reduces this risk.

Variety [in order of flowering]	Percentage of sawfly damage in dropped fruitlets	Percentage of dropped fruitlets with rot
Tremletts Bitter +	6	1
Nehou +	15	33
Sweet Coppin +	19	0
James Grieve *	24	72
Somerset Redstreak +	26	12
Michelin *	48	28
Dabinett *	50	32
Yarlington Mill *	48	28
Harry Masters Jersey *	37	34

+ = assessed in June

\* = assessed in July