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Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs 

Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD): Update for Ontario growers

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In recent weeks, spotted wing drosophila (SWD) populations have increased throughout Ontario. In late September, SWD was found at eight new locations, including the first detections east of Toronto. As of October 12, 2011, SWD has been found at 22 agricultural sites in total, representing approximately 50 per cent of currently monitored sites (*Figure 1*). SWD has been found in traps near peaches, apricots, raspberries, day-neutral strawberries, blueberries, grapes and blackberries. At a few sites where SWD has been present since early August, trap catches have increased dramatically in late September. (*Figure 2*).

We have collected fruit from some unsprayed sites and reared SWD flies from this fruit, indicating that this pest does indeed

infest fruit in Ontario. Fortunately, there have been no reports of problems with infested fruit on a commercial scale.

Harvesting is now complete in most fruit crops in Ontario; however, growers with fall fruiting raspberries, especially raspberries in high tunnels, should be on the lookout for a late season build-up of this pest.

Why is SWD a problem? SWD are like other vinegar flies; they lay eggs in fruit, where larvae develop and pupate. The difference is that normal vinegar flies, like the annoying ones you find in your fruit basket in late summer, are attracted to OVER-RIPE or DAMAGED fruit, that is about to spoil anyway. By the time the larvae develop, the fruit is usually spoiled or mouldy. SWD is different in that it lays eggs in fruit that is RIPENING, or NEARLY MATURE. This means that SWD larvae may be present in fruit when it is harvested. Infested fruit breaks down very quickly, and is especially leaky, reducing the expected shelf life substantially. Consumers are likely to notice infested fruit because the larvae will try to escape from the fruit as it is cooked or frozen.

What crops are most affected?

Information from other regions suggests blackberries and raspberries are preferred hosts, followed by blueberries, strawberries and other soft-skinned fruit. Tender fruit, such as apricots, peaches, plums, and possibly tomatoes and some types of grapes are also potential hosts for this invasive pest.

Will SWD overwinter in Ontario?

We expect a small percentage of SWD adults will overwinter in southern Ontario in most years. We expect they will overwinter in sheltered locations, such as around building foundations and

wild hosts. We don't know how quickly populations will build up each year. Also, we have more to learn about alternate and wild hosts for SWD in the spring and early summer. We expect that

how you can manage field culls and unharvested fruit to reduce build-up during harvest. Investigate options for custom spray application during harvest. Plan to attend some meetings where you can learn about experience in other regions. For example, Dr. Rufus Isaacs from Michigan State University will be speaking about this pest at the Ontario Berry Growers Association Annual Meeting in February.

Is there any good news? We are learning a lot about SWD from our colleagues in British Columbia, the Pacific Northwest, Michigan and Florida. The Ontario Berry Growers Association has secured some funding for us to expand our monitoring project next year. We will continue to

More information: Do you have questions about SWD? More information is posted at the following sites:

Identification of SWD:
www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/pest-alert-swd.htm#id
Monitoring program and weekly trap catches for Ontario:
www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/swd-catches.htm
Management of SWD in Ontario:
www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/swd-management.htm
Registered products for SWD in Ontario 2011:
www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/swd-registrations.htm
Links to more information about SWD:
www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/cr

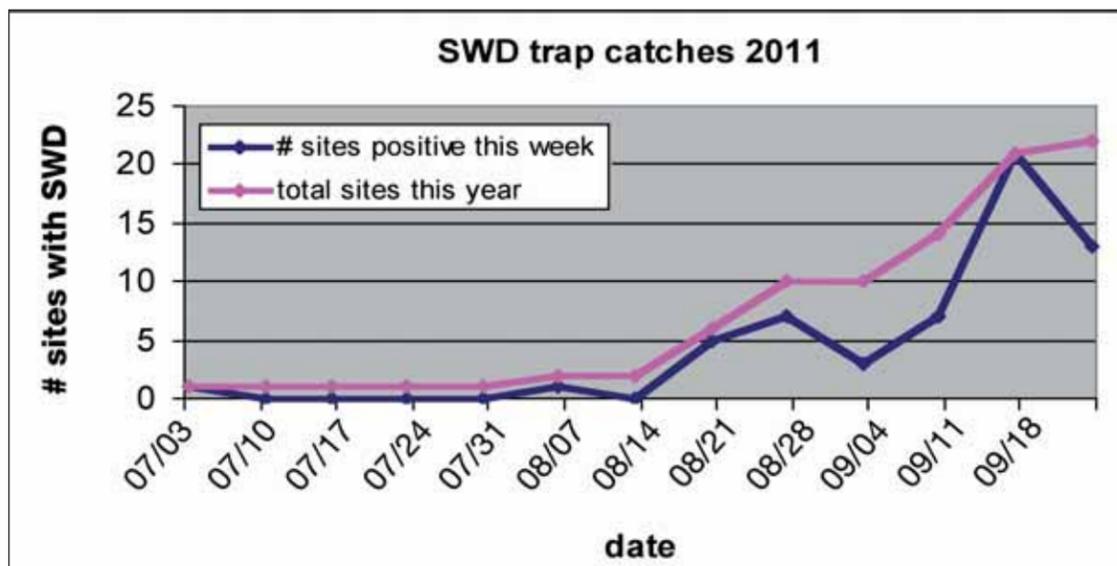


Figure 1: # sites with SWD flies in traps in 2011

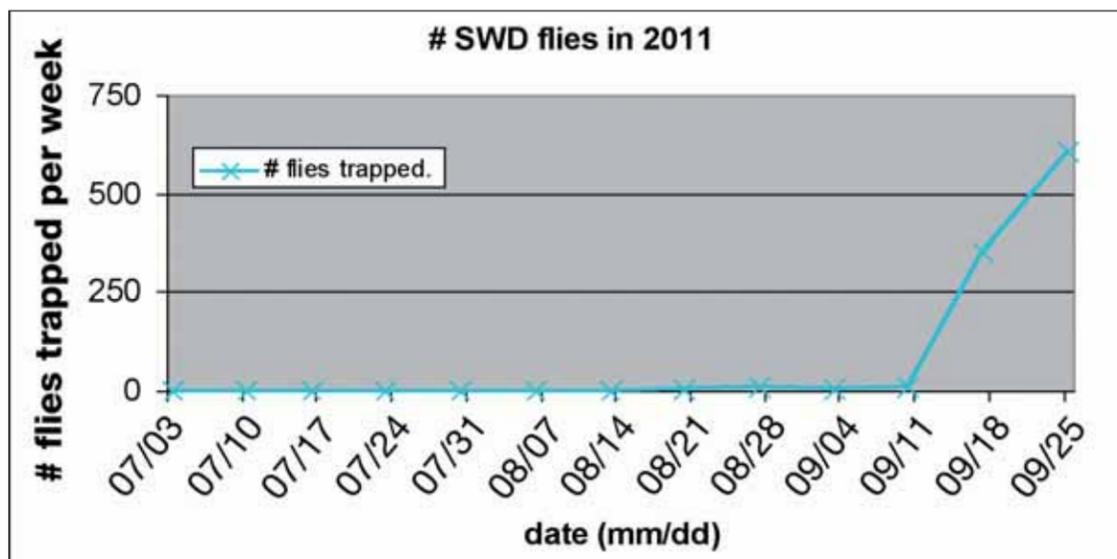


Figure 2: Number of SWD flies trapped per week in 2011

wild raspberries, wild blackberries and possibly other wild fruit such as elderberries will provide reservoirs for this pest.

What can you do to prepare for next year? Learn as much as you can about the pest. Think about

monitor for this pest and provide the latest news and information in 2012. The other good news is that SWD is manageable. An effective IPM program will include monitoring, sanitation and pesticides applied when necessary.

[ops/facts/swd-links.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/swd-links.htm)

Still didn't find the info you are looking for? Send us your question and OMAFRA's SWD team will do their best to address it. Pam.fisher@ontario.ca, or hannah.fraser@ontario.ca

Dirty money!

DON BLAKELY, ON-FARM FOOD SAFETY SPECIALIST, OMAFRA

When we think of dirty money we conjure up thoughts of ill-begotten dollars through illegal activities such as the drug trade. When it comes to food safety, dirty money is pathogen, fecal-covered coins and bills. Just think of the number of hands money comes in contact with, which may or may not be clean. Plus money never gets washed so that contamination stays around for a long time. It is

refreshing to go into a sub shop and watch your order prepared by staff with gloves on which are then removed when they take your cash payment. The same cannot be said about stopping at a farmer's roadside produce stand and watching an attendant handle your purchase with dirty hands, collect your cash then proceed to service the next customer without any attention to washing their hands. If you have a roadside stand or sell at a farmers' market you can increase your customer's confidence in food safety by keeping your hands

clean by washing them if running water and soap are readily available, using plastic gloves to handle produce then removing to handle cash or keeping a ready supply of disinfectant wipes and hand gel available which are used after handling cash. The Canadian Government will soon be introducing new plastic bills, which in addition to being difficult to counterfeit could be laundered to clean them. Maybe then we can look forward to cleaner money but for now we are stuck with dirty money!

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