

SIR parcel tax rate unchanged for sixth year in a row.

SIR is happy to announce that for the sixth year running, we are able to continue providing our area-wide IPM program without increasing our tax rates. We continue to search for efficiencies and innovations that would save the program money, while investigating other possible revenue streams to support your pest management needs.

If you are replanting this year, keep the SIR tax deadlines in mind. With planning, you can avoid paying the first year of parcel tax.

Put in new plantings after February 28, 2017.

Plantings put in the ground before the end of February must be added to the tax roll for 2017. Plantings put in the ground after February 28, 2017 will not be taxed until 2018.

Pull your trees (and let SIR know) by April 15, 2017.

Plantings pulled out of the ground before the end of February will not be added to the tax roll for 2017. If the trees are pulled after the end of February, but before April 15, 2017, SIR will issue you a tax rebate for the removed acreage.



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Your BCFGA has asked us for changes. We're listening.

At their 127th Annual Convention, the British Columbia Fruit Grower's Association passed the following resolution related to the SIR program:

"that BCFGA and SIR develop a plan for area wide pest control for Apple Clearwing Moth, Spotted Wing Drosophila and other tree fruit pests for the consideration of growers."

Times have changed since the SIR program began in the 1990's, and so have the pests, crops, varieties, and climate. Maybe it's time the SIR program changed, too.

SIR and the BCFGA have partnered to gather input directly from you, the growers. What pests do you wish you had help with? What other fruit would you like to see included? Which services do you value the most?

Please fill out our online survey on the SIR website www.oksir.org, or pick up a paper copy from the BCFGA, SIR, or your local Grower's Supply.

We want to hear from you.

GROWER UPDATE 2016



2015: The year in review.

Last year we returned to sterile insect release as the primary control method for all regions, ending the four year mating disruption pilot program in the central and north Okanagan. Results from the return to sterile insect release were positive. For the first time since the pilot was started in 2010, the program reached the operational target of having more than 90% of pome acres with less than 0.2% damage at time of harvest sampling.

Spring came early in 2015 and it stayed unusually warm all season long. As with everything else, moth activity started almost 2 weeks earlier than normal last year. We had planned for an early spring and began releases in late April to make sure the sterile moths were ready and waiting when the overwintered moths emerged.

We had three generations of codling moth in the Okanagan last year. The warmest parts of Washington had four generations.

Washington growers that were without the benefit of sterile insects or mating disruption would have required as many as eight sprays for codling moth last year.

The warm weather of 2015 made timing crucial for those growers that needed to spray for codling moth. The calendar isn't enough anymore—growers need to watch degree days, trap counts, and signs of damage. SIR staff and your BCTF field service are here to help.

Codling moth, Clearwing, and Apple Maggot: SIR in 2016

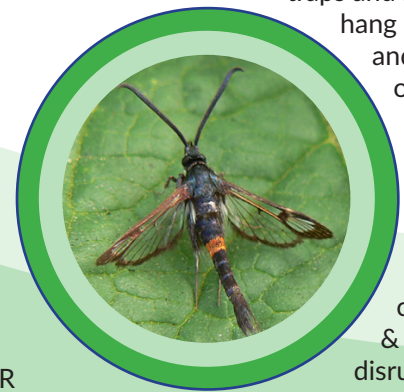
SIR staff are prepared for another warmer than average summer. Along with our regular services, SIR is partnering with other agencies to provide action on apple clearwing moth and apple maggot. All costs are paid by the project partners, and SIR has been contracted to deliver the actions.

The CFIA apple maggot surveillance program will be expanded.

The increased number of traps will provide more complete coverage of the valleys. The BC M. of Ag. and the BCFGA have partnered to fund additional traps and monitoring. SIR will hang and monitor 221 traps in orchards and buffer zone properties that are part of SIR's existing management area.



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BCFGA providing leadership on apple clearwing moth.

SIR will be doing some clearwing work on behalf of the BCFGA: continuing the surveys done in 2012 & 2014, and hanging clearwing mating disruption in selected areas.

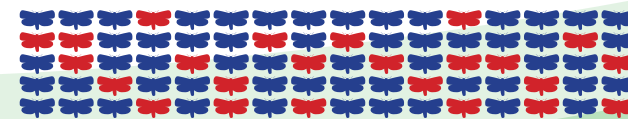
Why do some growers still have to spray AND pay?

Many growers already have nearly complete control of codling moth through SIR, and some growers report that they haven't required a codling moth spray in many years. A small number of growers, however, are still struggling to get control and having to apply multiple sprays. To understand why some growers are having to spray despite SIR, it is important to remember how sterile insect technique works:

When sterile moths (♂) far outnumber the wild moths (♀) in your orchard, the odds of two wild moths finding each other are very low, and codling moth sprays are not needed:



If there are too many wild moths in your orchard, the odds of two wild moths finding each other are much higher:



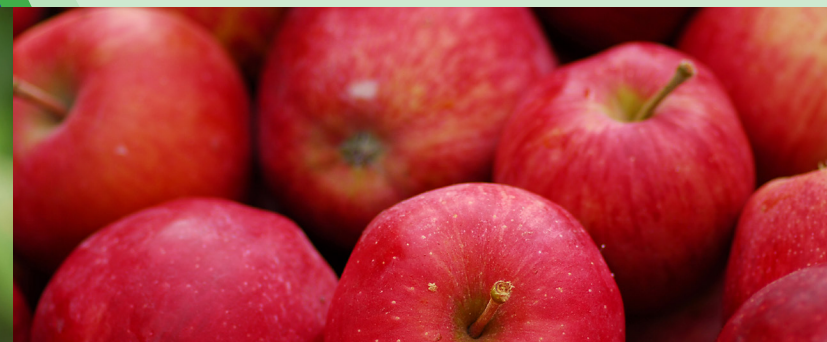
If you are concerned about the number of wild moths or damage you are seeing in your orchard, please contact SIR: 1-800-363-6684.

Complete control of codling moth with little or no spraying requires cooperation between growers and SIR.

Please help us control codling moth by keeping your wilds in check. It only takes one or two infested trees to keep the wild population alive and well. Often these are trees on fence lines, by the orchard's residence, on slopes, or where other obstacles prevent proper spray application. See the insert for more information on spray timing.

Are you leasing your orchard this year?

We need to know who we should be sharing trap counts, spray recommendations, and other program information with. If you are leasing your orchard, please share this Grower Update with them and encourage them to update us with their contact information. Along with providing trap results on the bottom of each trap and on our website, we can also email weekly trap counts to growers and keep in touch with their field service representative or IPM consultant.



New Zealand apple growers are buying our moths in the winter.

What can we do with sterile moths in December, when our trees are bare? It turns out we might be able to sell them. The Hawke's Bay area of New Zealand has just finished their second year of a sterile insect release trial using SIR's moths. SIR must produce moths over the winter to keep the colony alive and healthy, but the program has no other use for them. Moths are packed in cooler boxes at the Osoyoos facility each Wednesday, put on a plane in Penticton, and 36 hours later they are ready for release in Hawke's Bay.

Selling our off-season moths is just one of many avenues that SIR is exploring to find new revenue streams to support the services we provide to our growers. New Zealand isn't the only country that wants to have a program like ours—Italy has asked for trial shipments this summer, and regions in France and Germany are also interested.

We are investigating ways that we could produce and sell moths commercially, with the profits used to support pest management for our growers at home. Finding these alternative revenue streams could allow the program to continue providing IPM services without increasing taxes.

*1 By Joseph Berger, Bugwood.org [CC BY 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons. *2 By Neil Phillips - originally posted to Flickr as Red-belted Clearwing *Synanthedon myopaeformis*, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3923892>

SIR wins International Award, thanks to growers and industry partnerships.

Your SIR program is getting some international attention, and for all the right reasons. SIR was awarded the prestigious IPM Award of Excellence, given out by the 8th International IPM Symposium held in Salt Lake City in March, 2015. The program was nominated by the national Pesticide Risk Reduction Program of Agriculture and Agri-food Canada in Ottawa.

The achievements recognized by the award would not have been possible without the efforts of you, the growers, and all of the program's collaborators. A special thanks to Summerland Research and Development Center, BC's Ministry of Agriculture, the BC Fruit Growers Association, the partnering Regional Districts, and BC Tree Fruits.

