

The cherry fruit fly is a serious pest for cherries. The tiny insect lays eggs on ripening cherries, causing the fruit to turn brown, shrivel up, and become rotten. For region-specific information, please contact your local Giving Grove partner.

Appearance

- Adult flies are mostly black with yellow to orange heads, and a large yellow dot is visible on their back.
- Larva: Cream-colored, legless maggot with a tapered head and rounded tail
- Pupae: light to dark brown and shaped like a large grain of wheat



(USDA)

Damage:

- Peak emergence of adults and infestation of fruit occurs from mid-June to mid-July.
- Damage occurs from the larva developing inside fruit and feeding on the flesh. The result is “wormy” fruit that is unusable.
- Fruit will develop dark spots and may appear wilted or shriveled.
- As the mature larvae emerge from the fruit, they may leave behind visible exit holes in the cherries.



(C. Daniel & J. Grinder)

Control & Treatment:

- Hang sticky sphere traps and/or yellow card sticky traps in tree.
- Consider adding a “Feeding attractant” to the sticky sphere traps.
- Pick up early fruit drops biweekly to prevent larvae from entering the ground to pupate.
- Spraying the ground beneath an infected tree in fall with *Beauveria bassiana* – this fungus consumes the fly pupae.
- Use a trap tree such as a Dolgo Crabapple on the perimeter of the orchard.
- Apply beneficial nematodes under the tree in early fall, which seek out the fruit fly pupae.