

# In the orchard in December

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At the beginning of December, a significant decrease in temperatures is forecast. Exceptions will be observed along the Black Sea coast, where higher temperatures are expected.

By the end of the first and during most days of the second and third ten-day periods, the forecast temperatures will be close to the climatic norms. Minimum temperatures down to minus 10°C are expected during the month.

The expected precipitation in December, around the monthly norm, will increase soil moisture reserves in the 50 and 100 cm soil layers. During the third ten-day period of November, the level of soil moisture reserves in most parts of the country was unusually low for the season. In places in the Thracian Lowland (Plovdiv, Pazardzhik,

Chirpan), where November precipitation was scarce, productive moisture was absent throughout the entire one-meter soil layer.

## ***Agrotechnical measures***

### *In orchards*

Work on planting new trees and filling the gaps of failed ones in young orchards may continue until the first more persistent soil freezing.

Work on fencing the orchards with netting continues.

Wire trellis structures are erected in newly established orchards, using concrete posts with a length of 2.5 m and a cross-section of 8/8 cm. They are driven to a depth of 50 cm. The end posts are reinforced with supports, and the distance between the posts in the row is 15–20 m.

Work on pruning apple and pear orchards continues.

In fruit storage facilities, adherence to the storage regime is monitored.

Seeds are stratified.

### *In strawberry plantations*

When there is a risk of heaving of newly planted and young plants, the soil around them is compacted.



Strawberry plants are planted in heated greenhouses.

The condition of strawberry planting material stored in cold rooms for spring-summer planting is checked.

*In raspberry plantations*



In case of heaving, the plants are compacted in due time. To prevent stagnant water from freezing, drainage is carried out. New wire trellis structures are installed and old ones are repaired. Packaging materials and equipment are repaired.

### ***Plant protection measures***

#### *In orchards*

With a view to the need for winter spraying, all orchards are surveyed to determine the population density of economically important diseases and pests. To determine the density of mites, 40 shoots with a length of 8–10 cm, collected from 10 trees, and 5 pieces of old bark with a size of  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm<sup>2</sup> for each 10 decares of orchard are examined. The collected shoots are examined under a binocular magnifier. In the same way, the overwintering stock of other pests (overwintering eggs of aphids, larvae of plum and San José scale, etc.) is determined.

Eradication of alternate hosts of diseases and pests continues, as well as of trees heavily infested with bark beetles or infected with viruses (sharka of plum, rubbery wood of apple) and fungal diseases (silver leaf).



*Winter spraying of cherry, peach, apricot and almond orchards with 2% Bordeaux mixture for control of shot-hole disease continues.*

Plant protection products, spare parts, sprayers and dusters, netting, corrugated cardboard, timber and other materials necessary for plant protection measures are purchased.