

# Field mice search for food in orchards

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If you find that the bark around the root collar of the fruit trees has been gnawed, and on some the cambium has also been gnawed, these are damages caused by mice. Their invasion last year was massive in fruit orchards that were heavily weed-infested (overgrown with weeds).

In fruit orchards, mice feed on the abundant grassy vegetation or on the numerous fallen worm-infested fruits until the onset of winter frosts, even after the snow has fallen. They begin to feed on the bark of the root collar and the roots after the winter frosts have passed, when the grassy vegetation is dry and the fallen fruits have already rotted. They cause the greatest damage to fruit plants during the period from January to the end of March.

You must carefully inspect your orchards. If you discover colonies of mice, immediately remove the mulch – the dry leaves and grasses in the row, by hoeing or ploughing. Place poisoned baits in the holes. Prepare them with corn or wheat grains boiled until soft and mix them with zinc

phosphide (30 g zinc phosphide per 1 kg corn or wheat). Place the baits around the trunks and at the openings of the holes. It is mandatory to cover them so that birds are not poisoned.