



PEST TRAPS

One way to eliminate pest damage is to place a physical barrier between the pest and your plant. *Floating row covers* protect against insects while letting sunlight, water and air pass through. A floating row cover placed over seedlings before they emerge prevents pests like aphids, loopers, beetles, root maggots, cabbage worms, cabbage maggots, leafhoppers, leafminers and whiteflies from reaching tender seedlings. For more information see C187 ROW COVERS.

Fabric weed barrier is a landscape fabric that may be used as a mulch. The barrier is permeable to air and water but controls weed germination by restricting light. Fewer weeds mean healthier crops. However, the mesh on the weed barrier is generally not small enough to prevent grasses from growing through it.

Sticky tapes can be wrapped around tree and shrub trunks to stop ants, caterpillars, root weevils and beetles from climbing up to feed on plant foliage. Fill in the crevices around the edges with a sticky barrier like Tangle Foot® to prevent insects from crawling underneath the tape. Reapply these frequently and don't let pets or kids near them.

Spreading a coating of sticky stuff like Tangle-Trap® on a bright reflective surface attracts insects away from plants and traps them when they land. Sticky traps come in different colors to attract different insects. *Yellow sticky traps* work well in greenhouses for controlling aphids, whiteflies, leafhoppers, black flies, moths and gnats. *Blue sticky cards* work for greenhouse thrips and *red sticky spheres* work for the apple maggot and cherry fruit fly.

Pheromone traps also attract insects. Pheromones are chemicals secreted by one organism that elicit a response in another member of the same species. There are many types of pheromones: sexual attractants, alarms, food attractants, etc. Pheromone traps are also good indicators of when pest species emerge. The use of traps is effective for monitoring pest populations, but has not been shown to actually control infestations outside a closed environment like a greenhouse. Roach traps such as the ones shown on TV where "roaches check in, but they don't check out" have not been shown to be useful in the control of roaches. Traps are useful for determining what direction to take in pest management. They tell you where the pest population is concentrated and what pests you have. They are also useful to test if pest management strategies are working.

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Many traps also contain a bait. *Baits* are poison mixed with food or other attractants. Some examples are most rodenticides and ant baits such as boric acid in mint jelly for control of pharaoh ants.
