NIAB Plant Science into Practice

NOVEL CONTROL OF APPLE CANKER

This Growing Kent & Medway funded project is exploring novel approaches to controlling apple canker (Figure 1) including biocontrol options, alternative spray programmes and soil amendments to improve tree health.

NIAB is experimenting with newly planted Gala orchards (Figure 2) on sites at greater risk of canker development. Microbial soil amendments including Trichoderma and mycorrhiza based products are being used at planting time, to assess the impact on disease development, tree growth and productivity.

Natural populations of mycorrhizal fungi have been shown to improve soil drainage and nutrient uptake by the tree. We are seeking ways of increasing these natural fungi in the root zone of apple trees using both wildflowers (Figure 3) and a novel dispenser developed by Agrovista.

NIAB is assessing alternative ways of controlling canker (Figure 4). The list includes products that are authorised in the UK, but not currently approved on apples. The control agents selected have antimicrobial properties, and other novel substances providing protection to pruning and other tree wounds.

This research is being funded by

GROWING KENT & MEDWAY

In collaboration with

agrovista fruit

AVALON FRESH™

Figure 1. Apple canker research is a high priority for apple growers

Figure 2. Trials are being done in newly planted orchards

Figure 3. Wildflowers may help to increase natural populations of mycorrhizal fungi

Figure 4. Novel control products are being assessed

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