

Good Citrus Harvesting Practices Checklist

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Oleocellosis is rind injury damage resulting from rough picking and handling of fruit. The damage appears a few days after injury and can significantly reduce the value of your fruit. Many of the suggestions outlined in this checklist are also presented pictorially in the 'Harvest the Rewards' booklet.

- Grade orchard tracks to a smooth surface, lower tyre pressures on bin trailers to reduce fruit abrasion and bruising in transit.
- Inspect all bins, repair and abrasive services and sweep out all sand and foreign material.
- Ensure adequate supplies of picking bags and gloves are available and don't use plastic buckets for harvesting.
- Do not harvest if fruit are wet, wait until fruit have dried.
- Check that the difference between the wet bulb temperature (whirling hygrometer) and the fruit rind temperature is more than 3°C.
- Check the rind oil release pressure of 20 fruit sampled from the southern side of 10 or more trees. If two or more fruit have a reading less than 3 kg, harvesting should be avoided.
- Harvest in the warmest part of the day and picking from the northern side of the tree first. As a rough guide, the ambient air temperatures should be above 12°C, however a wet bulb temperature and rind oil release pressure test should be conducted to provide a more reliable guide.
- Ensure adequate supervision of pickers is maintained at all stages of harvest.
- Use gloves, keep fingernails short and smooth and empty picking bags carefully into bins.
- Do not pick up fruit from the ground.
- Do not drop fruit into bags or overfill picking bags or bins.
- Harvest fruit carefully using the SNAP method without applying excessive pressure.
- Transport fruit carefully to the packinghouse within 24 hours of harvest.
- Store bins in an area free from ground vegetation to reduce the risk of snail contamination.
- Install temperature recording devices to monitor the incidences of frost.
- Induct all pickers using literature such as the 'Harvest the Rewards' booklet and the 'Harvest Induction Manual', to advise pickers of your rules, expectations and picking standards.

Further reading:

Harvest the Rewards

Harvest Induction Manual sample only

Oleocellosis