

ON-ORCHARD BEST PRACTICE FOR FRUIT ROT MANAGEMENT



New Zealand Avocado
NZ Avocado Growers' Association Inc.
NZ Avocado Industry Ltd

Fruit rot pathway

In contrast to other pests on-orchard, fruit rot infection cannot be monitored as fruit rarely show symptoms pre-harvest. Reducing inoculum, manipulating the environment and improving tree/fruit health are the most effective way to prevent fruit rot infection.

On-orchard best practice guidelines for controlling fruit rots

A comprehensive and integrated approach to controlling fruit rot infection on orchards has been developed. As the fungi that infect avocado fruit remain active throughout the year, it is therefore vital to maintain best practice throughout the season.

These practices are complimentary and should be applied together on orchards for maximum benefit.

Copper application

Apply copper every four weeks with a minimum of 10 applications per year to maintain an adequate cover.

- Copper is a protectant fungicide, which must be applied before infection occurs.
- Fungal spores will only be killed if they come into contact with the copper on the leaf or fruit.
- The spray will only be as effective as the coverage you achieve.

Tree health

Maintain fruit quality through optimal tree health.

- Ensure soil and leaf analysis is done to support decisions on nutrition.
- Research links calcium and fruit quality. Ensure adequate levels of calcium in the early stages of fruit growth (first six to eight weeks).
- Use the natural leaf litter under trees as this will promote slow release of nutrients into the soil and help maintain soil water content necessary for nutrient uptake.
- Ensure you have a healthy root system to maximise the uptake of nutrients.

Harvest management

Avoid harvesting if more than 5mm of rain has fallen in the last 24 hours to reduce the risk of lenticel damage.

- Wet and turgid fruit are more susceptible to developing fruit rots.
- The roll test determines fruit susceptibility to lenticel damage.

Fruit rot history

Access library tray data for a comparison of your fruit quality against industry trends from season to season.

- The guide to interpreting library tray results is available on the industry website.

Orchard Hygiene

Remove potential inoculum sources to minimise the inoculum load on orchards.

- Remove mummified fruit, dead wood and dead leaves.
- Trim shelter belts.
- Prune to increase airflow through the orchard.

