

ALL ABOUT ALMONDS

FOOD SAFETY OF ALMONDS



ADVERSE WEATHER AT HARVEST: RESOURCES

Untimely rain is one of the biggest challenges during almond harvest. Every season is likely to have a period of adverse weather and therefore it is important growers have a strategy in place to maintain product quality from harvest through to processing.

The following are some resources to help achieve a quality harvest in a wet season.

Ensure your crop has a home

It is critical that you speak to your processor or potential processor as soon as possible to ensure they have capacity to receive your crop and if any delays are predicted. Given the recent expansion of the industry, processing schedules need to be planned, and wet weather may cause delays due to additional processing of crop that is delivered at a high moisture level.

What previous experiences tell us

Knowing what has been observed in previous adverse weather events through harvest, provides a base for knowing what has worked in the past and what hasn't.

The following link provides access to a meeting held by the Almond Board of Australia's Production Committee discussing just this as well as potential strategies to be aware of.

Adverse weather experiences and strategies	
Adverse weather at Harvest ABA Production Committee	Video: Click Here Podcast: Click Here

Knowing and promoting food safety

In a wet year it is important to know what causes food safety concerns and what environment makes them worse. For the wet years biological contamination can be caused by aflatoxins and salmonella.

The key criteria to protect the crop from biological contamination is to maintain a kernel moisture level of under 6% and in hull moisture of less than 9%. The following resources provides information on food safety cause with practical management strategies on how to minimise the risk.

Food Safety and Quality Resources	
What threatens the Safety of Almonds Prue McMichael, Scholefield Robinson Horticultural Services	Fact Sheet
Managing food safety risks in Almonds Dr. Chin Gouk - Agriculture Victoria	Fact Sheet
2020, Food Safety and Quality Webinar	Recorded Webinar
Market Perspective - Tim Jackson (Almondco)	Recording
Research & Practical tips - Chin Gouk (Agriculture Victoria)	Recording

Potential pests and disease during adverse weather

While the rain can cause issues with food safety, it is also important to consider the effect that it can have within the canopy. Higher humidity, works in the favour of a lot of diseases and the following resources will help to identify the potential issues.

Integrated Pest & Disease Management Resources	
Integrated Disease Management Resources Hosted on the ABA Website	Website
Integrated Pest Management Resources Hosted on the ABA Website	Website
2020, Integrated Disease Management Webinar	Recorded Webinar
<i>Anthracnose</i> - Suzanne McKay (SARDI)	Recording
<i>Rust model</i> - Peter Magarey	Recording Fact Sheet

Focusing on moisture management

The following resources help to manage moisture levels in harvested crop if they are higher than desired.

Managing moisture in almonds	
The dehydration model Michael Coates & John Fielke, University of South Australia	Fact Sheet
2020, Food Safety and Quality Webinar Moisture management - Michael Coates (Plant & Food Research)	Recording

Canopy Coverage - Sustainable chemical use

Chemical application is critical every year, but with adverse weather conditions raising the chance of disease incidence, our chemical protectants becomes even more important. Good spray coverage of our products is critical in achieving the desired effect.

Canopy Coverage Resources	
2020, Sustainable Chemical Use webinar Revisiting spray efficacy, Brett Rosenzweig	Recording
Sprayers 101* Jason Deveau	Airblast 101 Manual

***NOTE! NEW Airblast 101 update was released in January 2021!**



Dedicated drying areas can reduce drying times from 10 days in the orchard to four days on the drying area depending on weather conditions.

What information does California have?

While almond growing in Australia is quite different to that of California, we deal with a lot of the same issues. Being aware of practices in California provide some useful tools and tips in preparing strategies in Australia where relevant.

Resources from California	
UC Davis Food Safety Database Directory hosted by the University of California - Davis, information from various sources.	Website
Food Safety & GAP Tools Almond Board of California	Website
Employee Training	Quick start guide
Orchard Floor Management	Quick start guide
Field Sanitation & Worker Hygiene	Quick start guide
Pest Control	Quick start guide
Stockpile Management	Quick start guide Best practice guide
ABC Conference 2020 Aflatoxin Testing: A Negative Here May Not be a Negative There, Tom Whitaker	Recording

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PROJECT CODE

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Adverse weather at harvest

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