



June 2000

**Orchard Tour –  
June 20, 2000**

At our Variety Display and Research Update Meeting on June 20, 2000 (see page 3 for more information) we will be touring the block described below, and discussing the research findings and their potential applications to grower situations.

**Tree Height and Volume  
Studies for Fresh–Shipping  
Stone Fruits**

*Kevin R. Day, R. Scott Johnson, Ted M. DeJong,  
and Carlos H. Crisosto*

The relationship between tree conformation and height, yield productivity, fruit quality, and labor costs

is being investigated in this study. The four following training/pruning systems described below are being investigated:

1. Limited height trees (8-9 feet tall) planted at 403 trees per acre and trained to two scaffolds.
2. Limited height trees (8-9 feet tall) planted at 269 trees per acre and trained to four scaffolds.
3. Standard height trees (12-13 feet tall) planted at 403 trees per acre and trained to two scaffolds.
4. Standard height trees (12-13 feet tall) planted at 269 trees per acre and trained to four scaffolds.

The scaffolds of the limited height trees are tied to a flatter, more horizontal orientation than normal (about 50 degrees), while the scaffolds on the tall trees are allowed to develop at a more upright angle (about 60 degrees). The variety used is ‘Summer Bright’ nectarine.

This orchard first cropped in 1999. Yields between treatments ranged from 990 to 1100 boxes per acre, and there were no significant yield differences between the four treatments. In general, hand labor operations were less expensive on the shorter trees. Total per box cost of production (with respect to pruning, thinning and harvest costs only) was significantly lower on short, limited-size two-leader KAC-V trees.

**In This Issue**

Tree Height and Volume Studies for Fresh-Shipping Stone Fruits

Summer Pruning of Young Cherry Trees

New Sample Cost Studies Available

Meeting Notice

The University of California prohibits discrimination against or harassment of any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or status as a covered veteran (special disabled veteran, Vietnam-era veteran or any other veteran who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized). University Policy is intended to be consistent with the provision of applicable State and Federal laws. Inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the Affirmative Action/Staff Personnel Services Director, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 1111 Franklin, 6th Floor, Oakland, CA 94607-5200 (510) 987-0096.



For special assistance regarding our programs, please contact us.

## Summer Pruning of Young Cherry Trees

*Kevin R. Day*

The rapidly growing shoots of young cherry trees exhibit a great degree of apical dominance. For this reason, those shoots often fail to branch and develop spurs to an adequate degree. Selective summer pruning can be used to overcome these tendencies and bring the trees into production more quickly.

The strategy involved here is making heading cuts in the summer, rather than waiting until winter to make the same type of cut. Heading cuts at this time will be much more effective in inducing branching, reducing tree vigor, and aiding in spur development and flower formation for the following year.

In general, any shoot that has insufficient branching may be headed – these can be upright shoots or those that are laying out to the side of the tree. In order to get the best response about one-quarter to one-third of the shoot must be removed. The rough rule of thumb that I use is that when a branch has grown 2 to 3 feet, remove one-third of it. Timing of this operation is anytime that this much growth has occurred, and while the trees are still actively growing.

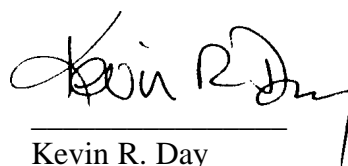
Additionally, other spur bearing fruit trees – most specifically to our area certain varieties of plums – which exhibit a great degree of apical dominance, can benefit from this practice also. For questions on application of this practice to your specific location please call me at the office.

## New Sample Cost Studies Available

We have just finished updating the sample costs of production for 'Friar Plums' and 'July/August Ripening Peaches and Nectarines' for the year 2000. These are available for approximately \$2.00 each to cover the cost of duplication. If you would like copies of these, please stop by our office or call (559) 733-6363.

## Orchard Checklist

- ✓ **Leaf Samples** – June and July are the best months in which to take leaf samples. Most orchards should be sampled every 2 to 4 years to make sure that fertilization programs are working as intended. For peaches and nectarines, sample leaves from mid-shoot position. For plums and other spur bearing species the samples should come from non-fruiting spurs. In all instances be sure that the leaves come from portions of the tree that are receiving adequate sunlight.
  
- ✓ **Postharvest Irrigation** – After harvest irrigation can safely be reduced to about 50-75% of ET without harming trees. In fact, this can even be beneficial in helping to reduce vigor in orchards that have too much shading. If you choose to use this practice, remember that it is essential to fully irrigate the orchard in mid to late August to reduce the potential for fruit doubling next year.



Kevin R. Day  
Farm Advisor  
(559) 733-6485



