BirdShield™ *Bird Repellent*

Usage & Testing Information

Bird Control in Cherries

One grower, near Moses Lake, Washington, reported that his pack-out increased from an average of 72% over the last several years to 92% this season. The remaining 8% were culled for bruises and harvest damage. Another grower, near Wenatchee, Washington, only used one application just as the cherries were beginning to turn straw color. His reason? The repellent drove all of the birds out of the 10-acre orchard and never returned. These, as well as other reports received from growers during the year at various conferences and shows, indicate that the early applications of the repellent, when the birds first begin to appear, were more effective than applications begun one or two weeks prior to harvest.

What Field Research Showed

A crop survey, conducted on thirty-four orchards throughout the Pacific Northwest, supported these comments. In thirty-two of the orchards, bird damage to the crop immediately before harvest was limited to less than 1%, primarily along the edges and near roost trees along the perimeter. Field inspections and pack-out comparisons showed a production increase of slightly more than double that of 1996 in the Okanogan region The only exceptions were a 3/4 acre orchard in the middle of a bird sanctuary and a dozen trees around a house where the birds had been fed all winter. Most of the comments made by the growers centered around the lack of birds they were seeing after applying the repellent.

Most growers using *Bird Shield*™ tried it on orchards which had a history of significant damage over the last five years.

Cautions about using anti-transparents

Anti-transparents were reportedly used by several growers prior to and after the repellent was applied to their crops. Those that used an anti-transparent prior to the application of the repellent found no adverse effect. Those that used the anti-transparent after the repellent was applied found that it sealed the repellent to the fruit and adversely affected both the taste and odor of the crop. Therefore it is strongly recommended that if anti-transparents are used, they only be applied prior to the repellent application. Anti-transparents, however, may not be required, as up to 40% reductions in rain cracking have been achieved in controlled field trials.

Packing house results

Three major packing houses that were concerned about taste and odor problems, reported that the repellent did not adversely effect the pack-outs of fruit that had been treated with *Bird Shield*™. They cautioned, however, that each grower must be aware of the potential problem, to be sure that no odor or taste remain on the crop before it is picked, and to use anti-transparents wisely.