

Ethephon Sprays for Degreening Fuji

Over the past few years, markets for Fuji have become quite particular for fruit color and shape. Fuji has always been a variety that due to its nature has been difficult to obtain a good background color change. Markets today are no longer accepting green background on Fuji. If they do, the price discount is substantial. One way to help reduce the greening and the number of picks is to apply light doses of Ethephon prior to harvest. This program has been tried for the past two seasons with success. Fruit quality, fruit maturity, and fruit ripening were not changed by this application.

When using Ethephon always maintain an acidic condition in the spray tank. One quart of Tech Spray MG put in the tank prior to adding the Ethrel/Ethephon will be enough unless you have very highly buffered alkaline water. The Ethephon is also quite acidic and will increase the acid level of the spray mixture. Use 13 ounces of Ethephon to 400 gallons of water. This is the proper parts per million (60-ppm) concentration to spray the trees to wet, not to drip. Depending on tree size and shape, the gallons per acre required can vary. Most high-density orchards will be well wetted with 80 to 100 gallons per acre. The first application is made approximately six weeks before harvest. Apply two more at seven-day intervals for a total of three sprays.

Make the applications at temperatures above 60 degrees, or when the temperature is expected to rise to 60 degrees or more within a few hours.

As with all new programs, try this first on limited acreage until you have some experience with it under your growing practices and location.

Program to accelerate sugar development.

- Ethephon 1 – 1 ½ pts per 100 gal.
- Regulaid 1/2pt to 1 pt per 100 gal.
- Tech Spray Mg ½ pt. per 100 gal.
- K Salt 200 20 oz. /acre.

Gallons per acre is determined by tree size, spray to an easy drip, wetting the foliage thoroughly.

Results are most reliable when the application is delayed until natural sugar development has reached 9.5%. On Red Delicious that are not fully colored, the fruit may ripen without further coloration if the weather is not conducive to normal color development or overhead cooling is not used.

Allow 10 to 14 days for the sugar levels to reach 10.5%

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