Orchard Tech
ABN 16 102 266 894
PO Box 755 ROBINVALE VIC 3549
e: hari@orchardtech.com.au m: 0439 32 32 32 o: 03 9332 3232

Elevator and de-sticker operation on an almond farm

What to expect before you start

Version 1.1 | Date of review: 18 October 2026 | Date of next review: 18 October 2028

This sheet describes typical elevator and de-sticker operation work and conditions. Your actual duties depend on the farm and what you are trained and authorised to do. Reading this sheet does not authorise you to operate an elevator or any other machine, drive a vehicle or repair equipment.

Who you work for

Orchard Tech is your employer. Your host farm (your host) directs your daily work. Both are responsible for your health and safety. Raise questions or safety concerns with your supervisor or Orchard Tech: Hari Yellina, 0439 32 32 32, or Soana Fanua, 0400 174 471.

Your working hours

Your confirmed roster sets your days, hours and breaks. Ask your supervisor if you are unsure. Elevator work at harvest may include night shifts.

The work you may do

What the elevator does. At harvest, a bankout (a harvest machine that carries almonds from the field) or a front-end loader unloads almonds into the elevator's hopper (a large open bin). Conveyor belts carry the almonds from the hopper into a truck or onto a stack. The de-sticker is part of the elevator. It removes sticks, which come out at the stick chute. The elevator has its own engine. Your host will show you the parts of its machine.

Operating the elevator is the job, but only when you are authorised. Do it only after your host has trained you, checked that you can operate it safely (for example with a competency checklist) and authorised you on that elevator. Get training for each new model. Your host will train you in its own procedure. The work may include:

- **Before you start:** doing the daily pre-start checks and checklist your host trains you in, with the engine off, the key removed and the elevator made safe as your host shows you. Keep the key in your pocket until you are ready to start. Report faults. If a fault could make the elevator unsafe, do not use it, and tell your supervisor.
- **Greasing:** grease only the points your host trains and authorises you to grease. First shut down the engine, remove the key and follow your host's procedure to make the elevator and de-sticker safe so they cannot start or move. Wait until all moving parts have stopped. Wear gloves, and wash well after using oil and grease.
- **Setting up:** checking that the elevator is in position on stable ground, with the wheels chocked (blocked so they cannot roll), as your host shows you. Putting up the barricade your host uses to keep people out of the area around the stick chute.

Orchard Tech
ABN 16 102 266 894
PO Box 755 ROBINVALE VIC 3549
e: hari@orchardtech.com.au m: 0439 32 32 32 o: 03 9332 3232

- **Guards and emergency stops:** checking that all guards, belt covers and fall protection rails (safety rails that stop falls) are in place and secure. Learning where the emergency stops are, and checking that they work, as your host trains you.
- **Starting:** adjusting the seat and controls, and keeping the standing area clear and clean. Making sure the belt drives are off (in neutral) and everyone is well clear before you start the engine, and again before you start the drives.
- **Unloading:** signalling the bankout or front-end loader operator to unload into the hopper, using the signals your host teaches you. Keep eye contact with the driver the whole time.
- **Watching the work:** watching the almond flow, the conveyor belts, the de-sticker, and the controls and gauges all the time. Check that almonds land in the right place in the truck or on the stack. If they do not, stop the elevator first. Then the truck, or the elevator and hopper, are moved as your host directs.
- **Finishing:** when the hopper is empty or the truck is loaded, stopping the drives and shutting down the engine as your host trains you.

This sheet covers operating the elevator and de-sticker. Driving or operating a truck, bankout, front-end loader or any other vehicle, and moving or lifting the elevator, are separate tasks. So are adjustments, other maintenance and repairs, blowing down machines with compressed air, jump-starting, electrical work, working at heights, and entering confined spaces, dams, tanks or channels. Each needs its own instructions, training and authorisation. Your host's maintenance staff do adjustments, other maintenance and repairs.

Elevator dangers to watch for

- **Moving parts:** conveyor belts, belt drives, the de-sticker and other moving parts can catch clothing, hair or a hand and pull a person in. This can cause very serious injury or death. Never reach into a working machine. Do not wear loose clothing, cords or jewellery, and tie back long hair. Never use the elevator with a missing or damaged guard, belt cover or rail: report it.
- **Emergency stops:** if someone is in danger, use the nearest emergency stop straight away. Then tell your supervisor.
- **Sticks and blockages:** sticks can jam the conveyors or the de-sticker. If something jams, stop the elevator. Before anyone goes near, shut down the engine, remove the key and make the elevator safe so it cannot start or move, using your host's procedure. Wait until all moving parts have stopped. Remove caught sticks or clear a blockage only if you are trained and authorised, and wear eye protection and gloves. If not, tell your supervisor. Never restart with a loose or missing guard.
- **Stick chute:** sticks and other material come out at the stick chute. Keep everyone out of the barricaded area around it. Wear eye protection.
- **Climbing and heights:** get on and off the elevator only where and how your host shows you, using three points of contact (two hands and one foot, or one hand and two feet). Never climb onto the hopper, the conveyors or other high parts of the machine. Working at heights is a separate task.
- **Hot parts:** the engine and exhaust get hot and can stay hot after the machine stops. Do not touch hot parts. Never use the elevator if a guard over a hot part is missing.

Orchard Tech
ABN 16 102 266 894
PO Box 755 ROBINVALE VIC 3549
e: hari@orchardtech.com.au m: 0439 32 32 32 o: 03 9332 3232

- **Fire:** follow your host's fire rules, including during the Fire Danger Period and on Total Fire Ban days. Know where the fire extinguisher is. Report smoke or fire straight away. In a fire, follow the farm emergency plan and go to the meeting point (muster point).

Trucks, bankouts and people around the elevator

Bankouts, loaders and trucks move around the elevator. They can hit or crush you. Drivers may not see you.

- **Keep people clear:** before you start the elevator, and while it runs, check that all workers are well clear of the elevator and the hopper. If someone comes close, stop the elevator and wait until they are clear.
- **When you are on foot:** wear the high-visibility clothing your host provides. Use walking routes and keep clear of moving machinery. Never stand between a vehicle and the elevator or hopper. Never approach a working machine until the operator has stopped and clearly signalled you to come closer. Eye contact alone is not enough.
- **No passengers:** never carry passengers on the elevator or let anyone ride in the hopper. Never carry people on attachments, trailers, bins or loads.
- **Power lines:** the elevator, trucks and bankouts can come close to power lines. Look up for overhead power lines before the elevator is set up or moved, and when vehicles come in. Electricity can jump to a machine that comes close to a line, even if it does not touch it. Ask your host where the power lines are. If you are not sure, stop and ask your supervisor.
- **If a machine touches a power line,** or electricity jumps to it: if you are on the elevator, stay on it. If you are on the ground, keep away and do not touch any machine. Call 000 or ask someone to call, and warn others to keep away. Get off only if fire or another life-threatening danger forces you to. Your host will show you how to get off safely in an emergency.

Moving around the farm safely

Some farms use a side-by-side vehicle, such as a Kawasaki MULE, to carry workers and materials.

- **Driving is not covered by this sheet.** If driving is part of your confirmed job, get the safe work instructions, training and authorisation for that vehicle first. A licence alone does not show you can drive it safely.
- **Driver and passengers:** wear your seat belt every time, and the helmet and eye protection your host provides (your host will tell you what to wear). Keep doors or nets closed and arms and legs inside. Sit only in a seat with a seat belt. Never ride in the tray or bypass a safety device.
- **Follow the farm traffic plan:** use set routes, obey signs and speed limits, and keep away from steep slopes, banks and water.

Weather and the outdoors

Most work is outdoors in heat, cold, wind, rain and dust. Watch for holes, pipes, slippery ground and snakes. Work may change or stop in heat, storms or smoke: follow your host's instructions. Use sun protection all year (broad-brim hat, long sleeves, sunglasses, sunscreen), drink water often, take shade breaks and dress for the weather. Tell your supervisor straight away if you or a co-worker feel sick, dizzy or very hot.

Orchard Tech
ABN 16 102 266 894
PO Box 755 ROBINVALE VIC 3549
e: hari@orchardtech.com.au m: 0439 32 32 32 o: 03 9332 3232

- **Do not enter a block that is being sprayed or has a no-entry sign. Do not drink irrigation water:** it may contain fertiliser or chemicals.

Noise, dust, night work and long hours

You may sit or stand at the controls for long periods. Use your breaks and report pain or discomfort early. If you feel too tired or unwell to operate the elevator safely, stop it and tell your supervisor.

- **Noise:** the elevator engine and the machines around it can be loud. Wear the hearing protection your host provides.
- **Dust:** unloading and elevating almonds makes dust. Wear the dust mask and eye protection your host provides, and keep your eye protection clean. If dust makes it hard to breathe or to see clearly, stop the elevator and tell your supervisor.
- **Night work:** darkness makes people, vehicles, power lines and obstacles harder to see. Your host will tell you how the work area is lit. If you cannot see clearly, stop the elevator and tell your supervisor.

PPE and help on the farm

Your host will provide the personal protective equipment (PPE) for your tasks and show you how to wear, check and look after it. This may include safety boots, high-visibility clothing, long sleeves and long trousers, gloves, eye or hearing protection, sun protection and a dust mask. Report missing, damaged or poorly fitting PPE before you start. PPE does not replace training, instructions or other safety controls.

At induction, learn who your supervisor is, where water, toilets and first aid are, the emergency plan, how to get help where there is no phone coverage, and the check-in arrangements when you work alone.

- In a life-threatening emergency, call Triple Zero (000), then tell your supervisor. If you see a snake, keep clear and never try to catch or kill it. If a snake bites you, or you think you have been bitten, keep as still as possible and call 000 or ask someone to call.
- Report every injury, near miss or unsafe situation to your supervisor and Orchard Tech as soon as possible, even if it seems small.
- Ask for a demonstration, an explanation or language help whenever you do not understand.

Important note before starting any job

This sheet describes typical elevator and de-sticker operation work. Before you start, your host will give you the job description and safe work instructions for your actual duties, the PPE you need, a farm induction and training for your tasks. Follow those instructions. Do not do any work without the required PPE, training and authorisation. Complete the induction at every new farm, and get the instructions and training for every new task. **If anything is missing, unsafe or unclear, stop and ask your supervisor. You can also contact Orchard Tech.**