Orchard Tech
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Harvest quality assurance and supervision on an almond farm

What to expect before you start

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This sheet describes typical harvest quality assurance and supervision 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 supervise other workers, drive a farm vehicle, operate machinery 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.

Who you report to. Your host will name the person you report to, such as a farm manager or harvest supervisor. In this sheet, "your supervisor" means that person.

Your working hours

Your confirmed roster sets your days, hours and breaks. During harvest, some shifts may be at night. Ask your supervisor if you are unsure.

The work you may do

Harvest quality assurance (QA). QA means checking that the harvest work is done well. At harvest, shakers shake the nuts off the trees. Other machines then sweep the nuts into rows and pick them up. You may check this work in the blocks, as your host shows you. For example, you may look for nuts left on the trees after shaking, or nuts left on the ground after the machines have swept and picked up. Your host will tell you what to check, where and when, and what good work looks like.

Report what you find. Tell your supervisor what you find, in the way your host shows you. If you think a machine needs adjusting, tell your supervisor. Do not adjust a machine yourself. Adjusting and repairing machines are separate tasks.

Your decisions. Your host and Orchard Tech will tell you which decisions you may make. If you are not sure whether a decision is yours, ask your host before you act. Orchard Tech remains your employer. It also remains the employer of the Orchard Tech workers in your crew. Send questions about pay or employment to Orchard Tech.

Harvest supervision (only if it is your confirmed job). You help your host coordinate harvest crews. As your host directs, you may:

- pass on your host's instructions to your crew, such as which blocks and rows to work in;
- watch the quality and safety of your crew's work;
- help your host make sure each crew member does only the tasks they are trained and authorised to do. If you are not sure, ask your host before the work starts;

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- pass on to your host straight away any fault, breakdown, injury or unsafe situation that a crew member reports to you.

This sheet covers checking work and helping to coordinate crews. It does not cover driving, operating harvest machines, adjusting or repairing machines, using power tools, handling chemicals, electrical work, working at heights or entering confined spaces, dams, tanks or channels. Other harvest jobs, such as conditioning, water cart work and harvest irrigation, are also separate tasks with their own sheets. All these tasks need their own instructions, training and authorisation.

Safety when you supervise a crew

If you supervise a crew, you also help to keep your crew safe.

- **Stop unsafe work.** If you see work that is unsafe, stop it if you can do so safely, and tell your host straight away. Do not walk up to a working machine to stop it. Contact the operator in the way your host shows you, for example by radio.
- **Know where your crew is.** Know where each crew member is working. Keep your crew away from working machines, as your host directs.
- **Incidents in your crew.** If someone is hurt, get help straight away and follow the farm's first aid and emergency plan. Report every injury, near miss or unsafe situation in your crew to your host and Orchard Tech as soon as possible.
- **Language help.** If a crew member does not understand an instruction, ask your host or Orchard Tech for language help.

Working near harvest machines

Shakers, sweepers, pick-up machines, tractors and other vehicles may be working in or near your block. Checking work and supervising crews can bring you close to these machines.

- **Keep separate from machines.** Before you start, ask your host to show you where to work and how workers are kept away from machinery. If a machine comes into your work area, stop work, keep clear and tell your supervisor. Keep well away from trees being shaken: branches and nuts can fall.
- **Never approach a working machine** until the operator has stopped and clearly signalled you to come closer. Eye contact alone is not enough.
- **Check only when it is safe.** Your host will show you when and where you can check the work. Never go near a working machine to check its work.
- **Operators cannot see everywhere.** There are places around a machine that the operator cannot see. These are called blind spots. Dust and darkness make it harder for an operator to see you. Never assume that an operator has seen you.
- **Keep well away from blowers** on sweepers and other machines.
- **Be seen:** wear the high-visibility clothing your host provides, and watch for vehicles coming out of rows and turning at the headlands (the turning areas at the ends of the rows). If you work at night, follow your host's instructions on lighting. If you cannot see your work area clearly, stop work, move to a safe place and tell your supervisor.

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- **If a machine touches a power line,** or you think electricity has jumped from the line to the machine, keep well away. Stay away from the machine, the power line and anything touching them. Warn others to keep away. Call 000 or ask someone to call.

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.

- **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.
- **Fire:** at harvest, dry grass, leaves and dust near hot machines can catch fire. Follow your host's fire rules. Know where the fire extinguishers are. If you see smoke or fire, move away, warn others and tell your supervisor straight away. In a fire, follow the farm emergency plan and go to the meeting point (muster point).

Movement, dust and tiredness

Expect long walks on uneven ground, between trees and along rows. You may need to bend or kneel to look at nuts on the ground. Nuts and sticks on the ground can make you slip or trip. Dust and twigs can get in your eyes. Wear the eye protection your host provides. Tell your supervisor early if you feel pain or discomfort.

- **Dust:** follow your host's instructions for dust. If dust makes it hard to breathe or to see clearly, stop work, move to a safe place and tell your supervisor.
- **Noise:** harvest machines can be loud. Wear the hearing protection your host provides, as you are instructed.
- **Tiredness:** harvest shifts and night work can make you tired. If you feel too tired or unwell to work safely, stop in a safe place and tell your supervisor. Never work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Moving around the farm safely

Mule or similar farm vehicle

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.

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Farm traffic rules

- **Follow the farm traffic plan:** use set routes, obey signs and speed limits, and keep away from steep slopes, banks and water.
- **On foot:** use walking routes and keep clear of moving machinery. Stop in a safe place before using a phone.

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, gloves, eye or hearing protection, sun protection, a dust mask and a vehicle helmet. 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 harvest quality assurance and supervision 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.**