

Re-harvest shaking, sweeping, pickup and elevator work on an almond farm

What to expect before you start

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This sheet describes typical re-harvest shaking, sweeping, pickup and elevator 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 a tree shaker, a sweeper, a tractor, a pickup, an elevator or any other machine, or to 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. Re-harvest work may include night shifts.

The work you may do

What a re-harvest is. After the main harvest, some nuts can be left in a block. In a re-harvest, the crew goes back through the block to collect them. The machine work is the same as in the main harvest. You may do one or more of these jobs. Your host will tell you which machine to use and which blocks and rows to work in.

- **Shaking:** driving a tree shaker (shaker), which shakes each tree so the nuts fall to the ground. Main sheet: A018 Almond Tree Shaking.
- **Sweeping:** driving a sweeper that sweeps the fallen nuts into windrows (long lines of nuts along the tree row). This may include back sweeping. You may also drive a tractor fitted with a V-sweeper attachment. Your host will explain each type. Main sheets: A019 Sweeping Almonds in Tree Rows and A020 V Sweeping with Tractor and Attachment.
- **Pickup:** driving a tractor that tows and powers a pickup. The pickup lifts the nuts from the windrows into a pickup trailer. Main sheet: A022 Harvest Pickup.
- **Elevator:** operating the elevator de-sticker (elevator). A bankout (a machine that carries the nuts from the pickup trailers) or a front-end loader unloads the nuts into the elevator's hopper (a large bin). The elevator takes out sticks and carries the nuts up a conveyor belt into a truck or onto a stack. Main sheet: A026 Elevator and De-sticker Operation.

Each machine needs its own training and authorisation. Operate a machine only after your host has trained and assessed you on it and authorised you to operate it. Being authorised for one machine does not authorise you for another. Get training for each new model. Your host will confirm whether the work needs a licence. A licence alone does not show you can operate a machine safely.

Read the main sheet for each machine too. Before you start, read the main sheet for every machine you will use. This short sheet does not replace it. The main sheet explains the checks, dangers and safe ways of working, and the same rules apply in a re-harvest. If you do not have the main sheet for a machine, or do not understand it, do not start that work. Ask your supervisor or Orchard Tech.

This sheet covers re-harvest work with a shaker, a sweeper, a tractor and pickup, or an elevator. Do only the checks, cleaning and routine care your host trains and authorises you to do. Adjustments, maintenance and repairs are jobs for maintenance staff. Only maintenance staff may grease the pickup. Bankout work (such as emptying the pickup trailer into the bankout, sheet A023), cleaning with compressed air, jump-starting, other machines (such as a telehandler), power tools, chemicals, electrical work, working at heights and entering confined spaces, dams, tanks or channels are separate tasks. They need their own instructions, training and authorisation.

Safe work on every machine

- **Pre-start meeting:** at the pre-start meeting (the safety meeting before work), learn which blocks are being re-harvested, who is working there, which routes to use and any known obstacles, such as holes, boggy ground and irrigation equipment.
- **Pre-start checks:** do the checks you were trained in, with the machine shut down and isolated (made safe so it cannot start or move). Check the radio. Never use a machine with a missing or damaged guard, or a fault that could make it unsafe. Tag it out as your host shows you and tell your supervisor.
- **Getting on and starting:** use three points of contact (two hands and one foot, or one hand and two feet). Never get on or off a moving machine. Start a machine only from the operator's seat.
- **Seat belt and roll-overs:** shakers, sweepers and tractors can tip or roll over, especially on slopes and banks, on rough or wet ground, and near dams and channels. Wear your seat belt every time. On a tractor, the roll-over frame (ROPS) protects you only if you wear your seat belt. A folded frame cannot protect you. Fold it down only as your host shows you. Put it back up as soon as there is enough room.
- **Passengers:** carry a passenger only if your host allows it and the machine has a passenger seat and seat belt approved by its maker. The passenger must wear the seat belt. Never let anyone ride on the outside of a machine, an attachment, a trailer or the elevator.
- **Moving parts:** shaker heads, sweeping heads, blowers, pickup heads, conveyors, belts, chains and PTO (power take-off) shafts can catch clothing, hair or a hand and pull a person in. This can cause very serious injury or death. Do not wear loose clothing, cords or jewellery, and tie back long hair. Keep everyone clear while anything is moving.
- **Blockages:** if a machine is blocked, stop. Before anyone goes near, shut down and isolate it using your host's procedure. Wait until all parts stop moving. At the elevator, turn off the engine and remove the key before removing caught sticks. Clear a blockage only if you are trained and authorised, and wear gloves. If not, tell your supervisor. Never restart with a loose or missing guard.
- **Leaving the seat:** your host will teach you the safe-stop procedure for each machine. Follow it every time before you leave the seat. Tell nearby workers when you get off.
- **Public roads:** never drive on or across a public road unless your host has confirmed that the machine, your licence and the route are approved.

Working at the elevator

- **Set-up and guards:** during the pre-start checks, remove the starter key and keep it with you until the elevator is ready to start. Check that the elevator is on stable ground, all wheels are chocked and pinned (blocked and locked so they cannot roll), and all guards, belt covers and safety rails are firmly fitted. Your host will show you where the emergency stops are. Check them regularly as trained.
- **Stick chute:** sticks and dust come out of the stick chute. Keep yourself and others out of the barricaded area around it. Wear the eye protection your host provides.
- **Unloading:** start the belts only when all workers are well clear. Use the signals your host teaches you with the bankout or loader driver. Watch for sticks jamming the conveyors or the de-sticker, and check that the nuts land in the truck or stack. If there is a problem, stop the elevator and tell your supervisor.

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.

People, other machines and power lines

- **People on foot:** other workers, such as polers (workers who knock nuts down with poles), may work in or near your block. Keep people away from moving machines, trees being shaken, the sweeper's blower and the elevator's stick chute. If someone comes close, stop and wait until they are clear. Stop the machine before you signal anyone to come closer.
- **Blind spots and traffic:** each machine has blind spots (places the operator cannot see). Look in all directions and use your mirrors before you move. If you cannot see that the way is clear, stop and ask for help. Follow the farm traffic plan, use set routes, obey signs and speed limits, and give way to working machines. Watch for machines on the headlands (the turning areas at the ends of the rows). Use the radio calls your host teaches you.
- **Power lines:** shakers, elevators and raised or tipping equipment can hit overhead power lines. 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. Look up for power lines before you move a shaker or any tall or wide equipment, and before you raise any part of a machine. If your machine touches a power line, or electricity jumps to it, stay in the machine. Call 000 or ask someone to call, and warn others to keep away. Get out only if fire or another life-threatening danger forces you to. Your host will show you how to get out safely in an emergency.
- **Fire:** dust and leaves on a machine, especially near the engine and exhaust, can catch fire. Follow your host's fire rules and learn where the fire extinguisher is. If you see smoke or fire, move away, warn others, follow the emergency plan and go to the muster point (the emergency meeting place). If your machine touches a power line, or electricity jumps to it, follow the power-line instructions above.

- **When you are on foot:** wear the high-visibility clothing your host provides. Use walking routes and keep clear of moving machinery. Never approach a working machine until the operator has stopped and clearly signalled you to come closer. Eye contact alone is not enough.

Noise, dust, night work and long shifts

You may sit for long periods, and the machine may jolt and shake you. Use your breaks and report pain or discomfort early.

- **Fit to operate:** never operate a machine under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If you feel too tired or unwell to operate it safely, or a medicine makes you sleepy, stop in a safe place and tell your supervisor.
- **Noise:** harvest machines and the elevator can be loud. Wear the hearing protection your host provides, as you are instructed.
- **Dust:** re-harvest work can be dusty. Wear the eye protection and dust mask your host provides. If dust makes it hard to breathe or to see clearly, stop in a safe place and tell your supervisor.
- **Night work:** darkness makes people, machines and power lines harder to see. Your host will show you the lights, routes and how to stay in contact. If you cannot see clearly, stop in a safe place.

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, long sleeves and long trousers, 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 re-harvest shaking, sweeping, pickup and elevator 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.**