

Workshop and machinery maintenance on an almond farm

What to expect before you start

Version 1.0 | Date of review: 18 October 2026 | Date of next review: 18 October 2028

This sheet describes typical workshop and machinery maintenance 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 service or repair machinery, drive a farm vehicle or operate machinery.

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.

The work you may do

Workshop and machinery maintenance. You may help look after farm machinery, vehicles and equipment. Work may be indoors in the workshop or outdoors on the farm. Your tasks may include basic servicing (simple regular care, such as greasing), cleaning, checking machines with a service checklist, and keeping the workshop clean and tidy. Do only the tasks your host has trained and authorised you to do.

- **Your instructions.** Your supervisor or the workshop manager will tell you which machine to work on and what to do. If you are new to the work, a qualified worker will train you. Make sure you understand the job before you start.
- **Checks and faults.** Your host will train you to check machines and fill in the service checklist or worksheet. If you find damage, a leak, a worn or loose part, or a missing guard, tell your supervisor. Repairs are a separate task.
- **When you finish,** put tools and equipment away and clean up your work area. Hand in your checklist or worksheet as your host shows you. The workshop manager checks the work. A machine goes back to work only after its guards and safety signs are back in place and the work has been checked and signed off.

This sheet covers basic servicing, cleaning and checks only. Repairs, taking machines apart, hydraulic hose repairs, welding, cutting and grinding, electrical work, tyre work and using lifting equipment (such as jacks, hoists or cranes) are separate tasks. So are driving or moving machines, operating machinery, using power tools, compressed air or a pressure washer, other chemical work, working at heights, and entering confined spaces, dams, tanks or channels. They all need their own instructions, training and authorisation.

Making the machine safe before you start

A machine can start, move or drop a part while you are working on it. This can crush or cut you, or even kill you. Your host will train you in its procedure for making machines safe. Follow that procedure every time you work on a machine.

- **Shut down and lock out.** Work on a machine only after it has been shut down, its key removed, and it has been isolated and locked out as your host trains you. Isolating cuts the machine off from its power or energy. Locks stop the power or energy being turned back on. Tags warn people not to use the machine. Your host will show you how to check the machine is safe before you start. If you are not sure, do not start: ask your supervisor.
- **Locks and tags.** Never start, or try to start, a machine that has a lock or a tag on it. Never remove a lock or tag that someone else put on.
- **Stop it rolling or moving.** Your host will show you how to secure the machine or part, for example with wheel chocks (blocks that stop the wheels rolling) and the correct work stands.
- **Stored energy.** Some parts can still move after the engine is off. Hydraulic parts (parts moved by oil under pressure), springs and raised parts can hold energy and move suddenly. Your host will show you how to make them safe. Never work under a raised part unless it is properly supported as your host shows you. Do not rely on the hydraulics alone to hold it up.
- **Oil or grease under pressure can go through your skin.** Never feel for a hydraulic leak with your hand. If oil or grease under pressure hits your skin, get medical help straight away, even if the injury looks small. Tell your supervisor, and tell the doctor or nurse what caused it.
- **Guards** cover moving parts such as belts, chains and shafts. Never bypass a guard. Removing or replacing a guard needs separate instructions, training and authorisation, and the machine must be made safe first. Tell your supervisor about any missing or damaged guard.
- **Hot parts:** engines, exhausts, oil and other parts can stay hot after a machine stops. Do not touch hot parts. Follow your host's instructions on letting the machine cool down.

Working safely in the workshop

- **Keep the workshop tidy.** Keep walkways, safety areas and doorways clear. Remove leads, tools and other items you do not need from the work area.
- **Spills** make the floor slippery. Tell your supervisor about a spill straight away, keep clear and warn others. Clean up a spill only if your host has trained and authorised you to do it safely.
- **Barriers and signs.** Your host may mark off work areas with cones, signs, chains or barriers, and may ask you to set them up. Enter a marked-off area only if you are authorised.
- **Tools and leads.** Use only the tools your host trains you to use. Check each tool before you use it. Electrical tools and leads must have a current test tag (a label that shows when they were tested). Do not use a damaged tool or lead, or an electrical tool or lead without a current test tag. Put a 'do not use' tag on it as your host shows you, and tell your supervisor.
- **Fresh air.** Engine exhaust fumes and dust can build up inside a workshop. Your host will show you how to keep fresh air moving, for example by opening doors or using a fan.

- **Oil and grease for basic servicing.** Use them only for the servicing task your host has trained and authorised you to do. Your host will show you the safety data sheet (SDS) and the PPE you need. If a fluid gets on your skin or in your eyes, get first aid straight away, follow the label and SDS, and tell your supervisor. Other chemical work is a separate task.
- **Fire.** Learn where the fire extinguishers and hose reels are. Tell your supervisor if one is empty, missing or damaged. If you see smoke or fire, move away, warn others and follow your host's emergency plan.
- **Pits and raised floors.** Some workshops have a service pit (a hole in the floor for working under machines). Keep its covers on when no machine is being serviced from it. Keep clear of an open pit unless you are trained and authorised to work there. If a mezzanine (a raised floor) has a gate at the steps, keep the gate closed.
- **Eyes, ears and light.** Dirt and small pieces can fly into your eyes, and workshops can be noisy. Wear the eye and hearing protection your host provides. Tell your supervisor if the light is too poor to see your work clearly.

Working near machinery

Tractors, harvest machines and other vehicles may come into the workshop or move near where you work.

- **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.
- **Never approach a working machine** until the operator has stopped and clearly signalled you to come closer. Eye contact alone is not enough.
- **Be seen:** wear the high-visibility clothing your host provides, and watch for vehicles and machines moving near you.

Weather and the outdoors

Some of your work may be 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.

Movement and lifting

You may need to bend, kneel, reach into machines or work in awkward positions. Parts and tools can be heavy, sharp or awkward to carry. Wear the gloves your host provides. If a lift feels unsafe, ask for help with a team lift. Lifting equipment is a separate task. Report pain or discomfort early.

- **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.

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.

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, long sleeves and long trousers, gloves, eye protection (such as safety glasses or a face shield), hearing protection, a dust mask, sun protection 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 workshop and machinery maintenance 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.**