

Mechanical Hedging of Walnuts: L. Hendricks, F. Perry, G. S. Sibbett, D. E. Ramos

Replicated trials involving about 100 acres of Payne-type walnuts are being conducted in Butte, Stanislaus, and Tulare Counties to compare 3 hedging systems with hand pruning and no pruning. The hedging treatments are: (1) 2 sides in the same direction every year, (2) 2 sides but in alternate directions each year, and (3) all 4 sides every year. The plots will be harvested mechanically and data obtained on yield, nut quality, and tree response.

Importance of Topping and/or Hedging Walnuts: F. Perry

During the past year a topping and hedging trial was conducted on six-year-old Vinas, Gustines, and Lompocs. Our purpose was to promote vigorous shoot growth and increase tree size by mechanical pruning. With all possible combinations considered, it appeared as though the plots that were pruned to the form of a Christmas tree looked most promising. Shoot growth in most areas of the tree was excellent with the exception of the top center which was not cut. However, enough shoots near the top of the tree were cut so that sufficient top growth occurred in most plots. At this stage there was no need for additional hand pruning. In most cases plenty of light penetrated tree centers regardless of treatment. Excess crowding of limbs as a result of new growth near the cuts may not be as severe a problem as we expected earlier. By the end of the 1971 growing season, trees which were topped and hedged were the largest in the plot. Those which were left unpruned were the smallest.