

Project: TREE CROP INTERN PROGRAM (12 CPB 2)**Project Leader:**

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Objectives:

With Dried Plum Board of California support, hire a Junior Specialist I with graduate school experience and an expressed interest in a career with Cooperative Extension as a farm advisor to work with project leader Franz Niederholzer on a range of Dried Plum Board-funded topics/projects. These include, but are not limited to:

- Field evaluation of prune rootstocks (09 CPB 2)
- Investigating incidence and type of wood decay fungi in stone fruit (15 CPB 2)
- Development of nutrient management tools for prunes (14 CPB 2)
- Managing heat at bloom (08 CPB 2)
 - Prune spray thinning trial
- Spray efficacy and drift Reduction

In addition, the intern will be engaged with UCCE outreach and extension activities under the guidance of project leader Franz Niederholzer.

Interpretive Summary:

Luke Milliron, (UC Davis MS in Horticulture and Agronomy, 2015) was hired in January of 2015. He worked 50% time until his course work was completed in June, and then shifted to 100% time. Milliron has provided excellent support in the field and lab, while contributing to newsletters and presenting at grower meetings.

Luke Milliron has made several contributions to Dried Plum Board-funded topics and projects. Research efforts have included measuring tree anchorage, rating rootstock suckering and harvesting the prune rootstock trial. Milliron has also provided field sampling and laboratory plating for the wood decay fungi investigation. Milliron assisted with trial setup and harvest for the nutrient management trial. Other trials that the intern was involved with included the prune spray thinning trial, the heat at bloom investigation and a spray efficacy and drift reduction study.

In his outreach efforts, Luke Milliron has assisted Franz Niederholzer on grower farm calls. Milliron has also contributed several articles to the Sacramento Valley Prune Newsletter, including season specific grower checklists and the article *Rain and Pruning Don't Mix*. Milliron

collected harvest maturity data leading into harvest which was communicated to growers via @prunedoc (Twitter and Facebook).

Luke Milliron plans to apply for the Area Sustainable Orchard Systems Advisor for Butte, Glenn, and Tehama counties during the summer of 2016, a position which will include prune production research.