Olive sucker management – Tre-Hold paint report

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Materials and Methods:

Three trials were established olive orchards in Tehama and Glenn Counties. These included an approximately 50-year-old *Sevilliano* olive orchard, a first-year *Arbequina* orchard, and a 13-year-old *Arbequina* orchard. The two *Arbequina* orchards were planted at 6 foot spacing for high density olive oil production and the *Sevilliano* orchard was planted at 15 foot spacing for table olive production. Suckers were cut in April 2025, and trunks were painted one day later with or without Tre-Hold Sprout Inhibitor A-112 (AMVAC). All trials included an untreated control and 0%, 0.5%, and 1% Tre-Hold mixed with either interior white latex paint (PPG Multi-Pro Interior Paint [flat white]) or exterior white latex paint (Ace Barn and Fence Latex Paint [flat white]). Paint covered up to 10% of the trunk surface, an area ranging from 6 inches to 12 inches above ground-level depending on the size of the tree. Paint was applied with a roller. The first-year *Arbequina* trees were very small and so only the bottom 6 inches of the trees could be painted, so these trees included paint-only treatments that covered 6 and 12 inches of the trunk. Treatments are listed in tables 1, 2, and 3.

Sucker height and % control ratings were taken throughout the summer, and sucker biomass harvest is planned for February or March 2026.

Results:

Neither *Arbequina* orchard had consistent sucker pressure and what suckers did grow were not obviously affected by treatments (Table 1). These trials show slightly greater sucker pressure in plants treated with 1% Tre-Hold, but it is possible that this is not an effect of the Tre-Hold treatment. No confident assertion can be made due to the sparseness of sucker growth.

Table 1: Sucker height at 120 days after treatment in two oil olive orchards.

		1st year *Arbequina*		**13th year *Arbequina***	
Paint treatment	Tre-Hold rate	Sucker height (in)		Sucker height (in)	
Untreated		0	a	1.5	a
Interior paint	0%	0	a	0	a
Exterior paint	0%	0.2	a	0	a
Interior paint	0.5%	0.1	a	0	a
Exterior paint	0.5%	2	a	0	a
Interior paint	1%	2.2	a	0.9	a
Exterior paint	1%	1.9	a	1.9	a
Interior paint 12 in*	0%	0.2	a	-	
Exterior paint 12 in*	0%	0	a	-	

**Tre-Hold treatments are limited to 10% of the trunk surface. In the young trees this was only the lower 6 inches of the trunk, so an additional paint-only treatment was included that covered the lower 12 inches of the trunk.*

The *Sevilliano* orchard provided a much more interesting case than the two *Arbequina* orchards. Suckers were not emerging from the ground in this orchard, but rather from an extensive sucker-producing area above the soil level, at the base of the trunk. This area was painted by treatments and Tre-Hold seemed to be much more effective in this use pattern. Sucker height was consistently affected, and good control was observed from the addition of 1% Tre-Hold at least 136 days after treatment. Though the pairwise comparisons do not show separation of means for the sucker height data the trend in the data is apparent, showing a slight reduction in height that was persistent. Exterior paints consistently outperformed interior paints, possibly because they are designed to persist in harsh conditions and adhere to rough surfaces. Tables 2 and 3 show pairwise statistical comparisons and Figures 1 and 2 show the change in treatment means over time.

Discussion:

The strength of Tre-Hold for control of sucker growth is through painting of cut stumps, ideally with exterior formulations of white latex paint mixed with 1% Tre-Hold. There is no suggestion that painting the trunk of a tree with Tre-Hold will suppress sucker growth originating from below-ground. Sucker heights are slightly affected by Tre-Hold, but more importantly the overall number of suckers was reduced because Tre-Hold prevented their resprouting. It would be interesting to reapply year after year and observe if there is a compounding effect on sucker suppression from these treatments. Also, it is not ideal to apply paint using rollers if the treatment surface is highly fragmented and irregular, as was the case with the *Sevilliano* trees. Ideally a paint sprayer would be used to apply treatments uniformly, as this would be the practical option allowing growers to treat suckers more efficiently.

Table 3: Sucker height in treated *Sevilliano* olive trees is shown here up to 136 days after treatment (DAT), in mid-August. The combined effect on sucker height was highly significant, though pairwise comparisons at each evaluation date shown here do not show separation of means.

		Sucker Height (in)											
Paint treatment	Tre-Hold rate	60 DAT		74 DAT		90 DAT		104 DAT		136 DAT		Combined	
Untreated		13	a	20	a	22	a	24	a	41	a	24	c
Interior paint	0%	10	a	17	a	20	a	24	a	33	a	21	bc
Exterior paint	0%	10	a	13	a	18	a	19	a	31	a	18	ab
Interior paint	0.5%	8	a	10	a	13	a	13	a	22	a	13	a
Exterior paint	0.5%	7	a	11	a	11	a	15	a	26	a	14	a
Interior paint	1%	9	a	12	a	15	a	16	a	24	a	15	ab
Exterior paint	1%	7	a	9	a	13	a	19	a	24	a	14	a

Table 3: Sucker control in treated *Sevilliano* olive trees, as defined as a % reduction in total sucker growth, relative to the control, is shown here through 136 days after treatment (DAT), in mid-August.

		Sucker Control (%)									
Paint treatment	Tre-Hold rate	60 DAT		74 DAT		90 DAT		104 DAT		136 DAT	
Untreated		0	a	0	a	0	a	0	a	0	a
Interior paint	0%	3	a	10	ab	5	a	3	a	5	a
Exterior paint	0%	30	ab	34	abc	23	ab	23	ab	21	ab
Interior paint	0.5%	53	ab	58	abc	40	ab	40	ab	35	ab
Exterior paint	0.5%	53	ab	51	bc	40	ab	35	ab	29	ab
Interior paint	1%	60	ab	61	bc	35	ab	28	ab	36	ab
Exterior paint	1%	70	b	78	c	65	b	65	b	59	b

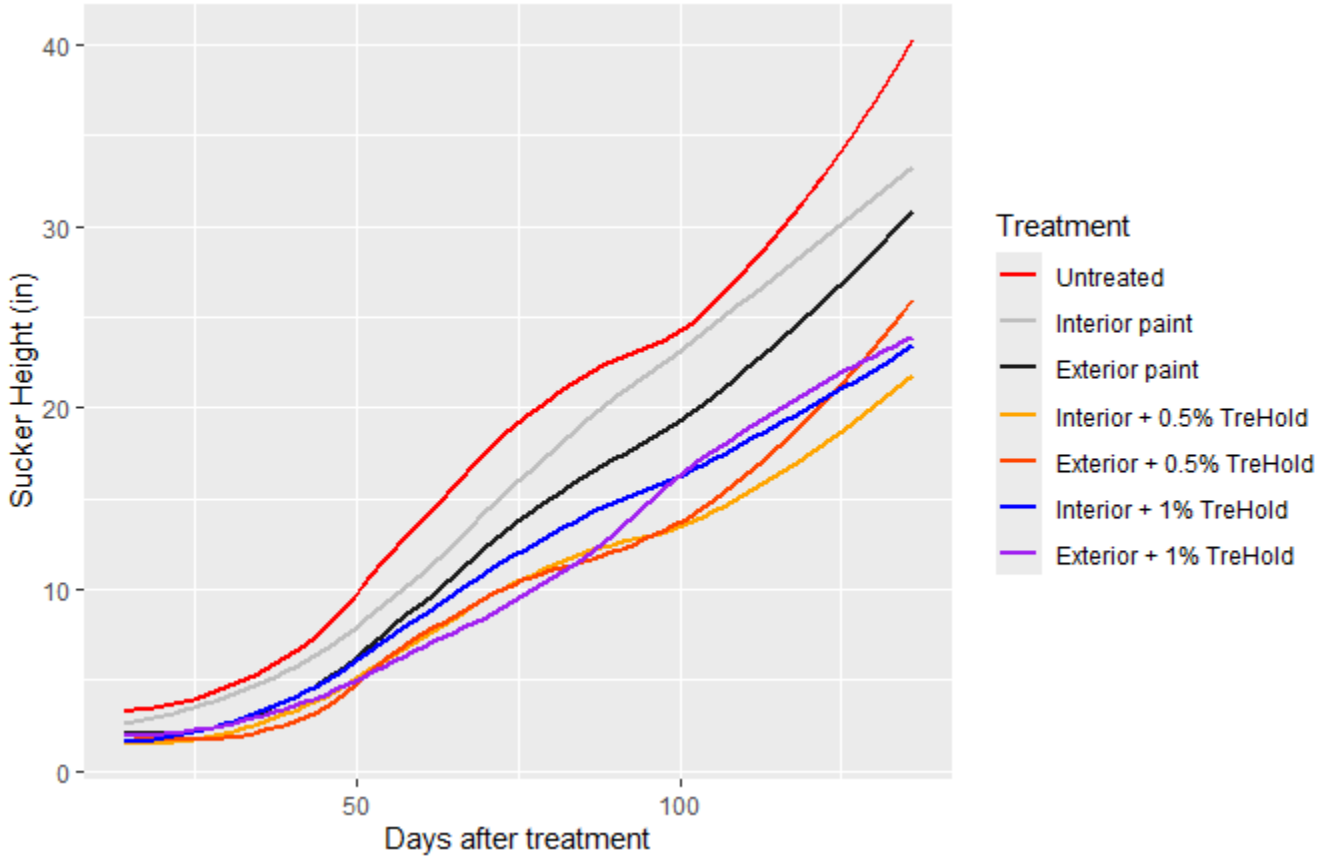

Figure 1: The slight reduction in sucker height associated with Tre-Hold mixtures with paint applied to cut sucker stumps is shown graphically here. This data is derived from the old *Sevilliano* olive trees treated in this study.

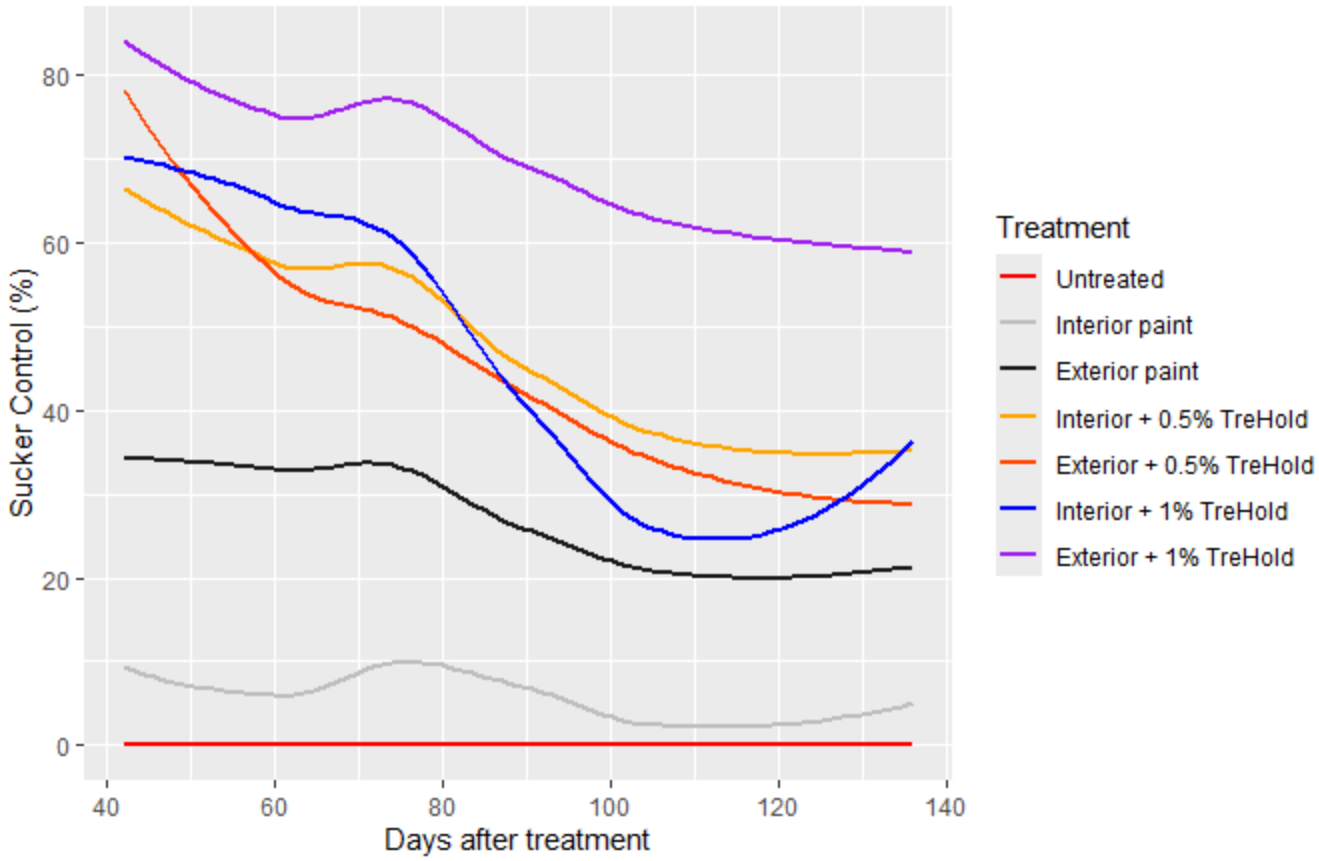

Figure 2: Good, long-term sucker control was observed from Tre-Hold mixtures with paint applied to cut sucker stumps. This data is derived from the old *Sevilliano* olive trees treated in this study.

Untreated control

Exterior paint alone

0.5% Tre-Hold with Exterior paint

1% Tre-Hold with Exterior paint