

June 2008

ORCHARDISTS attending the recent AFFCO/IHD Expo at Shepparton saw first-hand the ease and effectiveness of applying Parasol liquid sunscreen to an orchard by helicopter.

Organised by IK Caldwell, the helicopter drop over Integrity Orchards at Moroopna was a highlight of the grower's tour program.

Following the helicopter pass, growers inspected the excellent leaf and fruit coverage provided by the food-grade calcium carbonate liquid.

Crop Care National Horticulture Business Manager Kerrie Mackay said aerial delivery was now often chosen by growers for the most effective cover - because the spray is delivered to where the crop most needs the sunburn protection.

"Growers who have already used Parasol on their apples have found significant economic benefit from the protection provided against sun damage, heat stress and water loss.

"Many apple growers estimate they lose 20 to 40% of their crop due to sunburn.

"Parasol has helped growers to reduce yield loss and fruit damage, and to improve the proportion of higher quality fruit coming out of the packing shed.

"The protective Parasol coating also improves the crop water stress index – meaning the crop uses water much more efficiently."

Applied throughout the growing season, the product builds a protective SPF 42 coating that reflects both the UV and IR (heat) rays, but allows penetration of the necessary light wavelengths for fruit colouring and photosynthesis.

Growers have experienced no problems removing Parasol from apples using their standard packaging lines, and the small particle size does not abrade fruit during the washing off process. Retailers have also commented about the high quality of Parasol-treated apples – describing one shipment of treated Granny Smith apples from Shepparton as the best they had ever seen. At the application end, Parasol has proved to be easily applied by either ground equipment or from the air. No mixing with spreaders or stickers is needed, the product does not settle in tanks, and the small particle size means it does no damage to spray equipment.



County Helicopter's Robinson making a pass with Parasol liquid sunscreen over Integrity Orchards, Moroopna – demonstrating the effectiveness of aerial application to growers at the recent Australian Fresh Fruit Company/IHD Expo at Shepparton.



Effective coverage of apple leaf obtained from a helicopter application Parasol liquid sunscreen.

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