

New Skin-Puncture Marking Device

On account of the difficulty of positive identification of stolen avocados brought into court as evidence, a number of different marking devices have been tried out. In the fall of 1933 a committee of the Board of Directors of Calavo Growers developed and perfected a method of puncturing the skin of immature fruits on the trees. The punctures are very small, being made by short pin points arranged in registered designs for identification purposes. The punctures heal very quickly and leave a non-removable mark, but so slight as not to disfigure the fruit or reduce its grade. The points are arranged on thumb-stalls of either leather or metal. This device is now under trial and is not yet ready for general use by all who may wish to adopt it.

A grower wishing to mark some of his fruits, applies to Calavo Growers which assigns him a registered mark (all marks are kept confidential but furnished to sheriff's offices) and two markers, a right and a left. The operator, using both hands, walks among his trees and rapidly marks a number of fruit on each tree in the parts of the orchard where thievery is feared. If any stolen fruit is recovered which shows these marks, it is thereby immediately identified. The person in possession of the fruit is at once placed on the defensive and is deprived of the usual alibis. It is hoped that as this system comes into general use, it will have a deterrent effect on professional thievery which has been such a handicap to avocado growing, as well as aid in recovery of fruit and the conviction of thieves.