

The Relationship of Flowering Time to Harvest Time

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Abstract. In order to more efficiently determine the time of maturation for avocados under commercial cultivation, a study was done to determine the relationship between flowering time, fruit maturity, and harvest time. Elapsed time was measured in weeks and heat unit accumulation recorded. Phenological observations were recorded from blossoming to the fruit set stage (fruit diameter up to 2.86 cm) at branches on the northeast (NE), southeast (SE), southwest (SW), and northwest (NW) sides of the tree. Flowers appeared first on the southeast side and lastly on the southwest side nine weeks later. The northeast side flowered before the northwest side. Thus, the eastern hemisphere of the tree was earlier than the western hemisphere. When the fruit reached maturity nine months later, four fruit from each quadrant were picked and tested for mean fruit weight and dry matter percentage (% d.m.). The results were as follows: SE, 214 g and 21.27% d.m.; NE, 197.5 g and 20.73% d.m.; NW, 180.5 g and 20.48% d.m.; and SW, 171 g and 23.43% d.m. The direct correlation between flowering time and fruit weight was as expected, but the high percent dry matter of the fruit from the SW quadrant was a surprise.