

CHAPTER 2

Recommended support procedures and handling protocols

4. PACKAGING

- The packaging of stone fruit must be done in a clean and hygienic pack house that is safe for both workers and products. Refer to the PPECB recommended guidelines for pack house hygiene (Graham Campbell – see List of Contacts) or alternatively, to EUREPGAP.
- The ideal is to pack and cool fruit on the same day as it is harvested.
- Pack the fruit within an hour after the pre-cooler is removed. No fruit must be on the packing line over the mid-day break. The reason for this is to minimise the unnecessary warming and drying out of the fruit.
- Use approved packing material. This will lead to a good product in the market place. Cartons must have the same stacking strength and be moisture-resistant, to resist conditions of high humidity. Ventilation must be adequate, to cool the fruit to -0.5°C within 24h - 36h. If use is made of an inner packing material, such as the shrivel sheets, then it must be done according to specifications.
- Ensure neat stamping by placing the stamp at the correct position, ensure there is enough ink in the stamp and avoid smearing the ink.
- If use is made of an 'open top display' as packaging then it must be remembered that the fruit cools quickly, but also warms up again just as quickly.