

11. Packaging

Packaging is aimed to provide a means of transport and protection of the fruit during transport, but also as a value adding factor in which produce is presented to the consumer. Approved packaging material should be used. Cartons should have adequate stacking strength and have good ventilation properties. Polyethylene bags are used in some instances to prevent moisture loss, and also for modified atmosphere packaging purposes to prevent yellowing.

Palletising

- 📖 Use approved packaging material and effective methods to ensure strong pallet loads that can withstand the entire handling chain. This should also ensure that the fruit arrives on overseas markets in a good condition and has good appearance.
- 📖 Be especially alert to the appearance of bark and fungal growth on pallets, as this can lead to rejection.
- 📖 Ensure that the pallet height is no more than 2.1m, to avoid the pallet being damaged during shipping. Pallets that are too high also retard air-flow, with resultant negative effects on cooling. (So-called “Hi-cube” pallets, that are shipped in high integral containers, may be higher than 2.1m.) Ensure that the pallet is not above the ‘red line’ in the container.
- 📖 Complete stacking of packed cartons on pallets as they become available, and place pallets under cool conditions awaiting inspection. Ensure that the thermocouple wires are positioned in the pallet according to prescription, to be able to measure pulp temperature in the center of the pallet. Note that little cooling will take place unless pallets are under forced air-cooling.
- 📖 Due to continued respiration post-harvest (associated with increased respiration, formation of ethylene and therefore also an increase in temperature of fruit after harvest) the pulp temperature of fruit will increase if the fruit in the center of the pallet is not adequately cooled.
- 📖 Attach the necessary pallet stickers to the pallet to reflect the content of the load correctly and clearly. Each pallet must be identified with a unique bar-code sticker to ensure that the pallet load can be traced throughout the handling chain.
- 📖 Ensure that straps are always bound firmly, especially prior to handling and sending.