

## REMARKS ON PICKING AVOCADOS

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Injury of fruit by carelessness or ignorance in handling during picking and assembling is far too common.

The healthy unbroken or unscratched skin of an avocado is naturally resistant to decay. However, it is very easy to scratch the turgid skin of fresh fruit, and thus inoculate the fruit with the germs of decay. Fruit should never be piled on the ground. Boxes should always be distributed ahead of the pickers. If enough boxes are not available, the extra fruit may be temporarily piled on grain sacks. When fruit touches the soil, tiny particles of grit adhere to the skin. Such particles may be so small as not to be noticed, yet when the fruit touches the box or other fruit in the box, the grit particles are embedded in the skin and with them go the germs of decay. No matter how carefully scratched fruit may be handled and packed in the packing-house, it is almost sure to decay before it is consumed. Before filling, each box should be raised, inverted, and tapped to dislodge any sand, splinters, or other foreign material. On placing fruit in field boxes no force should be used. It should be laid in j very gently and not forced down into place.

The boxes should never be filled quite full. When stacked up in field or truck, the bottom of the box should never touch a single fruit in the box below. Even a gentle touch is sufficient to force a grain of grit into the skin of the fruit. Picking bags should not be filled too full and no twigs, leaves, or trash should be allowed to fall into the bag. The stems should be cut short, using only an approved form of clipper.