GIRDLING OF HASS AVOCADO TREES TO INCREASE FRUIT YIELD AND INCOME IN "OFF" YEARS IN A CALIFORNIA COASTAL VALLEY

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Sixteen trees each of mature Hass avocado trees were treated with three 2 cm (.5 in) girdling treatments prior to two light bloom springs resulting in "off" year crops: 1. A December girdle, 2. A February girdle, 3. An ungirdled control. One-third of the limbs were girdled on each tree, changing limbs each treatment year. December girdles were performed in 1995 and 1997. February girdles were performed in 1996 and 1998. Fruit number data was taken for three seasons, two "off" years (1997 and 1999) after girdling and one "on" year (1998) without girdling.

The December girdling time averaged 111 more fruit per tree than the control trees for the three years of the study. The February girdling time averaged 80 more fruit per tree than the control trees for the three years. Fruit size was slightly smaller for both December and February girdled trees for the 1999 crop.