

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WINDBREAKS IN CALIFORNIA

The citrus groves of California occasionally suffer much damage from dry winds, which extract moisture from the foliage faster than the roots can supply it. The wilting of the leaves from this cause is called "burning." Sometimes as much as half the foliage and much of the fruit may drop after exposure to these winds, and fruit remaining on the trees may be scarred and thus become unmarketable.

Windbreaks are extensively planted as a means of protection. Experiments show that in this region a windbreak is effective in protecting orchard crops for a distance of from five to six times the height of the windbreak trees. A favorite tree for windbreaks is the blue gum eucalyptus.

In one case recently reported some windbreaks were cut down several years ago. Subsequently there were three windy periods, during which the records of a single packing house in the locality showed a loss of 902 carloads of fruit on account of "wind burn." The growers are now replanting the protective trees.

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