

Ontario Tree Fruit Innovation and Technology Roadmap

Hand Operated Blossom Thinners

Evaluating New Technologies

	Feasibility and cost	Implement	Labour Reduced	Changes in production	Training for staff	Impact on risk of COVID-19 Transmission
Identified Technology	low, medium, high	easy, medium, challenging	% estimate	easy, medium, hard	none, medium, high	none, low, medium, high
Hand operated blossom thinners	low	easy	20-30	easy	low	low-medium

Current Status - This technology (nicknamed the “Cinch”) has strings attached to a battery-operated drill and is used for thinning by one person and is a very simple tool to operate. It comes in three sizes and can be used in many tree systems since the worker is on the ground and can move around the tree.

Feasibility of Implementing – The speed of using this product would be faster than hand thinning but the results could be less uniform than using the machine.

Impact on Labour – It is estimated that there is some increase in labour productivity using this technology, but it has not been tested in Ontario orchards.

COVID-19 Mitigation Risk – Using a hand-operated blossom thinner may increase labour productivity and would have a low to medium impact on lowering the risk of exposure or transmission among workers.

Need for Change, Research and Training – Implementation of the “Cinch” would require minimal training to learn to operate.