

Matrix Crop report – Week# 25
Belgium, June 16th, 2003

Most interplantings are now completed. Aim for about 15 leaves per plant when the plants arrive. Have enough space between the wires so that there is deep light penetration. Sometimes we can already see that the first truss will have only two fruits so the second truss. Usually it is best to prune Geronimo to four fruit but in these situations pruning to five may be better in order to establish plant balance.

For those who grow on hanging gutters it is important that the flowering truss is not at the same level as the ripening cluster. This way the new planting is partially shaded by the old crop. In addition, a ripening cluster emits some ethylene, which may contribute to flower drop and thus incomplete setting.

Geronimo is quite long. If the previous planting had a very short growth habit (for instance Centiro) the new plants will quickly grow above the old one. To prevent that the two plantings become intertwined it is important to remove some leaves from the old crop in time.

With the persistent high temperatures it is important to move the drippers immediately to the new plants.

Use the minimum pipe only when necessary. They can be used when there is a risk of condensation. Condensation can only occur when the crop itself increases the humidity through transpiration. Transpiration is the only way to increase the moisture content of the air. The chance of condensation therefore is especially in the morning and during the day. There is virtually no transpiration at night and therefore little risk of condensation. So, at night there is no need for a minimum pipe. This will also lead to a lower temperature and that is just what we want.

There is only one way to get rid of humid air and that is trough venting. The minimum pipe can help to eliminate temperature differences and create air circulation lower in the crop.

Now that light sums are going down again we have to pay more attention to irrigation again. When slabs get too wet, the health of the crop will suffer. A strong root system contributes to good setting on warm days, so spare the root system.