Avocado Scouting Tips

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CAL POLY

Map the orchard
➤ Keep track of infestations for each species using mapping apps, spreadsheets or pen/paper

Sampling for discovery – upwind sides, south/west facing sides, along dirt roads. Why?
➤ Mites and thrips will be carried by the wind
➤ Mites do better on leaves with a little dust

Sampling for population trends – once discovered continue to revisit infested trees to determine if populations are growing, stable or declining and to follow up to document the efficacy of a particular treatment

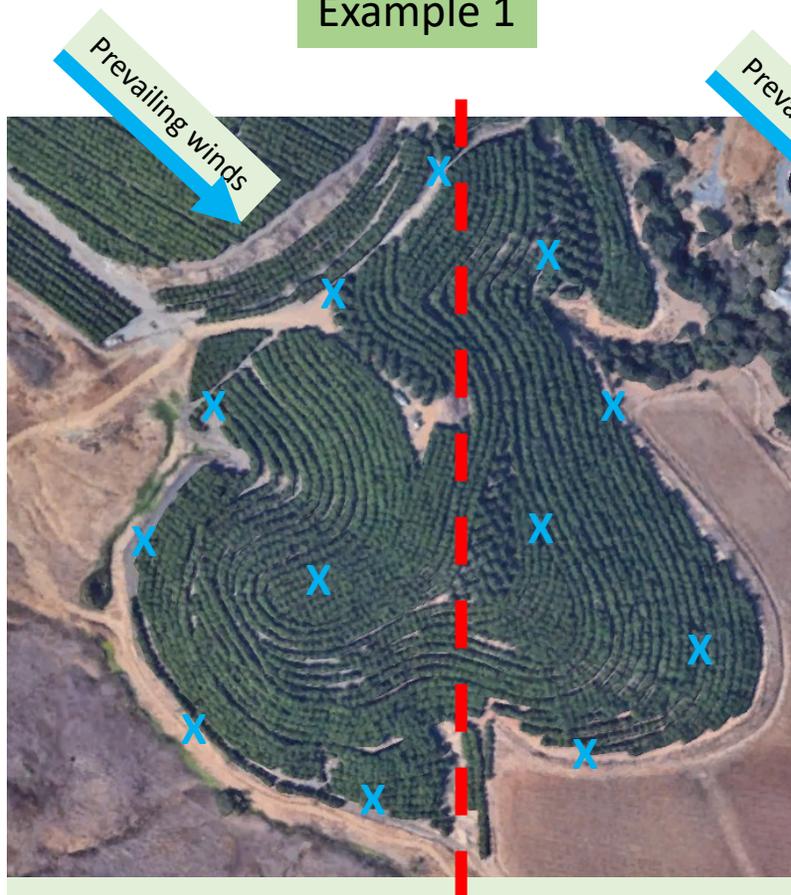Know the pest habitats – where will mites or thrips occur on leaves?
➤ Persea mite – undersides
➤ Avocado brown mite – topsides
➤ Avocado thrips – undersides

And know their seasonality to make sampling per tree more efficient, look for multiple pests per tree

Thresholds – unfortunately, there are no research-based economic thresholds for avocado pests, therefore growers use "nominal" thresholds: population levels that trigger a response based on what has worked in the past. Keep detailed records to know what works to avoid unnecessary applications in future
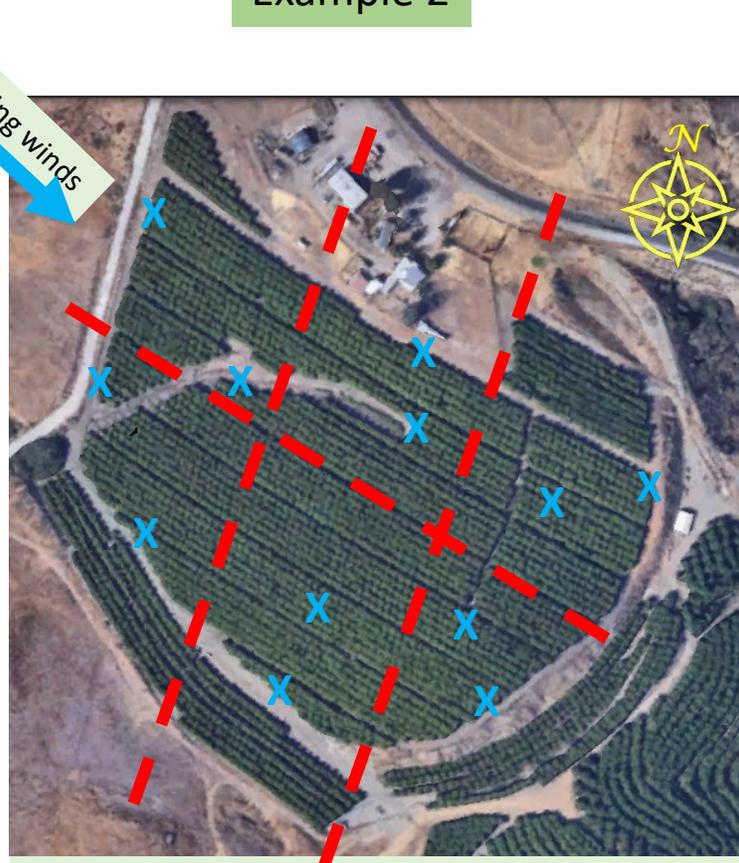
Example 1

Example 2
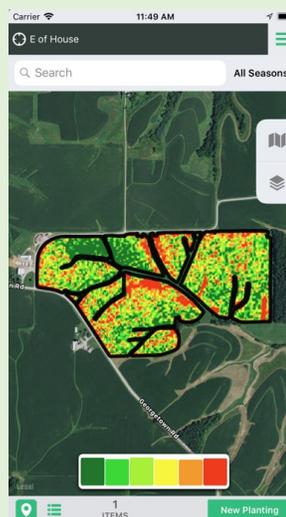
Prevailing winds

Prevailing winds

Hilly: follows contours
Divide this orchard in half
At a minimum, sample 12 trees; 5 min per tree = 1 hr
Allow another hr for transit
2 hrs total sampling time

Flat: linear rows and even spacing; divide orchard into 6 fairly equal blocks
At a minimum, sample 12 trees; 5 min per tree = 1 hr
Allow for another hr for transit
2 hrs total sampling time

At a minimum, sample at least once a week and inspect different trees each time. When you have a tree with a pest infestation continue to sample that same tree to determine population trends and for follow up management efficacy. Keep scouting records with an app or spreadsheet or paper. Note positive finds and return to sampling those trees first the following season.

Example of a phone-based scouting app from Agrian®