



CITRUS GROWERS Managing Heat Stress & Sun Damage

Alan Whyte grows citrus at his property “Jamesville” on the Darling River in NSW. He has been using a **combination of Screen DUO and Photon 500SG** to mitigate stress and sun burn damage to trees and fruit for a number of years.

Screen DUO is Alan’s front line defense against sun and heat damage to fruit. He aims to get an **early application** applied **well before the first heat waves** of the summer occur and then will “top up” with other applications when he sees hot weather approaching. Alan prefers Screen DUO to other Kaolin products as it is **easily mixed into the spray unit** as a dry powder through the chemical injector and is not easily washed off the leaf and fruit by rain.



Screen Duo treated citrus

He finds that the most susceptible citrus varieties are **Cara Cara red fleshed navels** and **Star Ruby red grapefruit**. Some of the newer mandarin varieties such as **Afourer** also **need protection** in hot weather.

The end result of timely applications is a substantial **reduction in sun damaged fruit**. Cara Cara navels as an example, would have sunburn on all exposed fruit without protection. **Treated trees show a major reduction in damage** when protected by Screen DUO with affected fruit being reduced to less than 5%.





Alan Whyte (citrus grower NSW) and Jim Lyons (Sipcam)

“Star Ruby grapefruit are ‘sensitive’ trees. They don’t like hot weather and struggle with nutrient uptake through the root system. The key issue is not direct sunburn - it is the ability of the trees to tolerate hot weather. So Screen DUO is a tool to reduce the stress on the trees and Photon 500SG is an additional benefit. There is also need for an aggressive foliar spray program as root nutrient uptake is poor. Combine all of this and the results are outstanding”.

In Alan’s low key manner he commented “I think I would have to say after 3 years that Photon works”.

The use of **Photon 500SG** is also an important **management tool** for Alan. He targets those varieties or blocks that might be struggling with **general tree vigor or nutrient uptake**. A timely application of Photon 500SG triggers the trees defense system making it more **resilient** and therefore productive.

This is particularly the case with Alan’s Star Ruby Red grape fruit. Until he started using Photon in his program the trees always struggled for growth and production. The take home message is that **Alan has never seen his Ruby Red grapefruit in better shape**.