

Nut Harvest care

- Growing & supplying
quality nut kernel



Preharvest orchard floor :-

- Clear ground of last season nuts, long grass, and debris so the hazelnuts have a clean carpet to fall on.
- Animals are not permitted in the orchard from beginning January before harvest till the end of harvest

What to do with the carpet of nuts

Moist, fresh kernel sitting in a tight shell will eventually sweat and turn mouldy

Collect and prepare nuts for drying as soon as possible, especially in the case of rain or damp weather

Nuts need to be dried in a spot that has good air flow and out of damp weather

A shelving system with small mesh is ideal

Partly filled onion sacks laid on the mesh shelves if the nuts are too small.

Don't overfill the bags or stack nuts too thickly on shelves so as to prevent even air flow

Hang nuts in an airy situation in half filled onion sacks, don't overfill the bag and jostle regularly to ensure air flow

Ensure no ground debris is included with the nuts when drying

Turn the nuts regularly to ensure good air circulation

What can cause nut deterioration

- Collecting nuts too late in season after they have been lying in leaves, long grass or dewy mornings
- Drying in bags on a verandah is not ideal if the weather is damp as the kernel will re-absorb the dampness
- Bags sitting in a room with no airflow –nuts are lying on top of each other and will result in mouldy kernel
- Leaving nuts covered under tarpaulins will make the nuts sweat
- Mixing ground debris and bad nuts in sacks of sorted good nuts will give poor kernel quality.
- Filing sacks with too many undried nuts, not jostling/moving them daily– the middle kernels will not dry as well as the outside kernels and all nuts in the bag will eventually turn mouldy from the middle outwards

Different Varieties of nuts require different drying conditions

- Thicker shelled hazelnuts are difficult to dry naturally and get good kernel, especially with autumn temperatures
 - e.g. ... Ennis, Barcelona, Tondo varieties, Merville, Alexandra
 - Air driers are a good solution for these nuts
 - Climatic conditions can vary but they can need over 48 hours of warm air to reach a stage where they are dry enough for storage
- Thinner shelled whiteheart require less stringent air drying- approx. 24 hours in air driers as a comparison but can be dried successfully on racks
 - if not treated properly they will be no different to thicker shelled hazels and develop mould

Air drying hazelnuts

- Air must circulate evenly through the nuts.
- Silo air driers have an auger that will continually move the nuts through airflow
- Hanging in ½ filled onion sacks or on mesh shelving in an airy position requires regular movement of the nuts (in the bags) for up to 6 weeks
- Onion sacks used in bin driers need to be only half full. This helps the bags to spread completely flat beside each other in the driers and the air can circulate evenly through them
- Full sacks will mean air escapes around the edges of bags and restricts a good flow between the nuts in the bag
- Nuts may lose up to 30% moisture, depending on weather conditions. Kernel will re-absorb moisture while drying in damp conditions.
- Simple test is to monitor a bag with 1Kg nuts, it will stop losing weight when the kernel is dry enough.
- Various moisture meters to test moisture level

