



# How Fine Farms cultivated a record-breaking harvest

## Customer

Fine Farms

## Challenge

Fine Farms wanted to see if AgroFresh pre-harvest technology could give them more flexibility to widen their picking window, improve yield and help streamline their harvest process.

## Solution

Fine Farms treated sample crops across 20 hectares of land and several apple varieties with Harvista pre-harvest 1-MCP technology to see if our solution could outperform the product they formerly used to manage picking window duration, fruit color, yield size and quality.

## Bottom line

With Harvista treatment, Fine Farms was able to keep their fruit on the tree longer across all varieties tested, resulting in better coloration, quality and harvest-time efficiency. Used together with SmartFresh post-harvest treatment in storage, this Smarter Freshness system solution also led to reduced internal browning and optimal quality at packout, yielding even better profits.

With **Harvista™** from **AgroFresh**, **Fine Farms** gained a more efficient and effective way to grow their business results.

Purchased by the Cunningham family in 2009, Fine Farms grows apples, pears and wine grapes on a sprawling, 160-hectare operation nestled in the rolling hills near Cape Town, South Africa. In 2018, its apple production reached 330,000 bushels of Gala, Golden Delicious, Pink Ladies, Fuji and more—breaking all previous records despite uncooperative weather surrounding harvest and a persistent regional drought.

The secret behind this success is no secret at all. According to Ian Cunningham, Fine Farm's head of production, it's the result of a lot of ongoing effort—with an assist from Harvista, a proven AgroFresh solution.



### *The search for a wider window*

For apple growers, few things are more influential to their results than being able to control how and when their fruit ripens, so that they can gain more flexibility with the harvest window.

To accomplish this, Fine Farms had been using a pre-harvest treatment for years, but recurring issues including stunted maturation, less-than-ideal coloration and internal browning were constant challenges that cut into profit margins. Ian wanted to see if Harvista pre-harvest technology would lead to bigger returns.

### *A flexible, fruitful harvest*

It was time for a test run. Ian dedicated 20 hectares to testing Harvista across apple varieties, including Fuji, Pink Ladies and a 20-year-old Brookfield Royal Gala.

Royal Gala is typically harvested early in the year, but Fine Farms was able to push the picking window back much further than expected. "I actually kept 20 trees back until

*"An orchard of Golden Delicious was at 45% starch decay. We sprayed it and **it held up for an extra 10 days** with very little change in starch breakdown."*

— Ian Cunningham, Head of Production, Fine Farms | Western Cape, South Africa



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pretty much Easter," he reports, "and the fruit color was fantastic." Ian's team was also able to harvest more efficiently, requiring only one attempt instead of the usual three or four.

The test crop of Pink Ladies also benefited from the Harvista treatment. "Where usually 60% of bushels would be at or above color threshold, this year over 85% were at peak coloration. **That's an increased return of almost 75% per bin in some cases.** It was a phenomenal year for us."

Fine Farms also reaped similar successes with their Fuji crop, with a few unexpected bonuses. Post-harvest browning? Nil. Negative feedback from sellers? None. Returned product unfit for international shipping? Zero—thanks to the combined effect of using Harvista in tandem with our SmartFresh™ storage solution, which Fine Farms had already been using regularly for years.

### Growing confidently

By switching to Harvista, Fine Farms was able to prolong the harvest window across all sample crops, leading to improved fruit quality, coloration, and more. And that's left the team at Fine Farms in great spirits with better profit margins and no shortage of excitement for next season.

"I'm very confident in Harvista. Actually, I think it needs to become a staple in any farmer's farming practices," says Ian. "I'd almost like to not tell anyone how good it was ... just so we can be the only beneficiaries!"

## Make next year the year to beat.

To learn how Harvista and our portfolio of Smarter Freshness solutions can benefit your operation, please contact your nearest AgroFresh representative.

### North America

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### Eastern USA

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### Western USA

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## High quality harvests across the board

From vibrant Pink Ladies to greater grosses of Golden Delicious, Harvista helped Fine Farms get more out of their harvest.



**10–14**

extra days on the tree across varieties



**85%** peak coloration and up to **75%** increase in return per bin for Pink Lady



Superior post-harvest results for Fujis in synergy with SmartFresh

## More about Smarter Freshness solutions

Developed in close collaboration between customers and our teams of service professionals, technologists, scientists and physiologists, our Smarter Freshness solutions build on our unique expertise and knowledge to provide more and better ways for growers, packers and retailers to optimize the quality and value of their produce.

