

# THRIPS SCARRING

## WHAT IS IT?

Brown scars with scabby or leathery appearance are caused by avocado thrips, small flying insects that feed directly on immature fruit. Internal fruit quality is not affected, but obvious feeding scars can cause downgrading or culling of affected fruit.



## WHAT CAUSES IT?

As fruit grows, this early feeding by thrips becomes apparent as scars expand across the skin. Thrips scarring is sometimes called “alligator skin.” Scarred fruit can continue to grow in size, although they are often smaller than normal, while the flesh remains healthy and green. Scarring from limb rub also causes fruit scarring that can be confused with injury from avocado thrips.

Thrips move to young fruit when leaves harden. Almost all damage occurs when the avocado is 0.2 to 0.6 inches (5–15 mm) long. Although Hass avocados are susceptible to feeding until they reach about 2 inches, thrips feeding rarely causes scars on fruit larger than about 0.75 inches. This scarring on young fruit may not become obvious until fruit enlarges. It is important to recognize that this is only an external defect that does not cause any internal fruit damage.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Proper field management can help reduce the presence of pests throughout the season. Mission growers implement integrated pest management systems to consistently monitor pest activity.



**Does not cause internal damage**



**Fruit will ripen and taste normal**