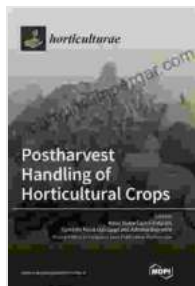


Postharvest Handling of Horticultural Crops: The Complete Guide



Postharvest Handling of Horticultural Crops

by Raju L. Bhardwaj

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

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Screen Reader : Supported

Print length : 556 pages



Postharvest handling is the key to maintaining the quality and safety of horticultural crops after they have been harvested. Proper postharvest handling can extend the shelf life of fruits, vegetables, and flowers, reduce spoilage, and ensure that consumers have access to fresh, nutritious produce.

Harvesting

The first step in postharvest handling is harvesting. Crops should be harvested at the proper maturity stage to ensure that they have the best possible quality and shelf life. Fruits and vegetables should be harvested when they are fully ripe, but not overripe. Flowers should be harvested when they are in full bloom.

Storage

After harvesting, crops should be stored in a cool, dark, and humid environment. The ideal temperature for storing fruits and vegetables is

between 32°F and 40°F. The ideal humidity level is between 90% and 95%. Flowers should be stored in a cool, dark environment with a humidity level of around 80%.

Transportation

When transporting horticultural crops, it is important to maintain the proper temperature and humidity levels. Crops should be transported in refrigerated trucks or vans. The temperature inside the truck should be kept between 32°F and 40°F. The humidity level should be kept between 90% and 95%.

Cooling

Cooling is an important part of postharvest handling. Cooling can help to slow down the ripening process and reduce spoilage. Crops can be cooled using a variety of methods, including hydrocooling, forced-air cooling, and vacuum cooling.

Packaging

Packaging is also an important part of postharvest handling. Packaging can help to protect crops from damage and dehydration. Crops can be packaged in a variety of materials, including plastic wrap, paper bags, and cardboard boxes.

Quality Control

Quality control is an essential part of postharvest handling. Quality control measures can help to ensure that crops meet the highest quality standards. Quality control measures include inspecting crops for defects, measuring their weight and size, and testing their maturity.

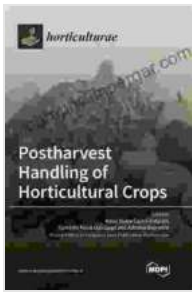
Postharvest Handling of Specific Crops

The postharvest handling of specific crops can vary depending on the type of crop. Here are some general guidelines for postharvest handling of some common horticultural crops:

- **Fruits:** Fruits should be harvested when they are fully ripe, but not overripe. They should be stored in a cool, dark, and humid environment. Fruits can be cooled using a variety of methods, including hydrocooling, forced-air cooling, and vacuum cooling.
- **Vegetables:** Vegetables should be harvested when they are mature, but not overripe. They should be stored in a cool, dark, and humid environment. Vegetables can be cooled using a variety of methods, including hydrocooling, forced-air cooling, and vacuum cooling.
- **Flowers:** Flowers should be harvested when they are in full bloom. They should be stored in a cool, dark environment with a humidity level of around 80%. Flowers can be cooled using a variety of methods, including hydrocooling, forced-air cooling, and vacuum cooling.

Postharvest handling is a critical part of the horticultural industry. Proper postharvest handling can extend the shelf life of fruits, vegetables, and flowers, reduce spoilage, and ensure that consumers have access to fresh, nutritious produce.

If you are involved in the horticultural industry, it is important to understand the principles of postharvest handling. By following the guidelines outlined in this article, you can help to ensure that your crops reach the market in the best possible condition.



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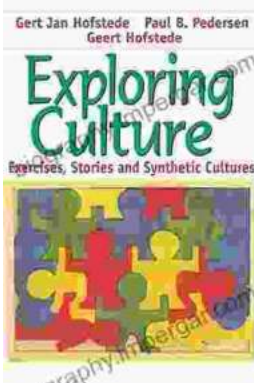
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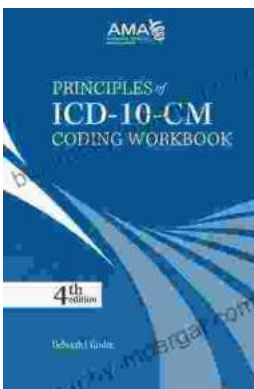
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