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EXPERIENCE WITH CONTINUOUS USE OF PROHEXADIONE-CA OVER SEVERAL YEARS IN APPLES AND PEARS

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Prohexadione-Ca (ProCa) has been continuously used over four seasons on apples (cvs. Elstar and Summerred - both on M.9) and pears (cv. Conference on Quince C) grown at different locations in The Netherlands. Using the product REGALIS[®] (10% ProCa), dosages of 120 g/ha of active ingredient have been applied twice per season: at the beginning of shoot growth and approximately four weeks later. Significant reductions in shoot elongation resulted in average labor savings for dormant pruning of approximately 35% in both apple varieties. There were no indications for negative impacts on tree performance or fruit yield and fruit quality. As an average of the four seasons, dormant pruning in pears could be reduced by about 15%. This resulted from 10% less shoots and a reduction in shoot length by 30%. The effect of ProCa on return bloom varied between -20% and +25%. Reductions in flower intensity had no negative impact on fruit set. Over the years, fruit production per tree was rather increased by approximately 7%.