

Review Form 3

Journal Name:	Journal of Experimental Agriculture International
Manuscript Number:	Ms_JEAI_129968
Title of the Manuscript:	POST-FLOWERING CHEMICAL THINNING OF 'FUJI SUPREMA' APPLE
Type of the Article	

PART 1: Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's Feedback <i>(Please correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i>
Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.	The study design is robust, including multiple treatments and their combinations over several years. This ensures that the data reflects a wide range of conditions and outcomes. The tables are well-organized and provide detailed comparative data for different treatments, covering critical parameters like fruit production, fruit drop, fruit weight, and effective fruiting. The findings are directly applicable to apple growers, offering clear recommendations based on the performance of chemical thinning agents.	
Is the title of the article suitable? (If not please suggest an alternative title)	The reader cannot determine the highlight of this manuscript at the first glance of the title. It is recommended to pinpoint the parameter to be studied. For eg: Impact of Post-Flowering Chemical Thinning on the Fruit Yield and Quality Metrics in 'Fuji Suprema' Apple Trees.	
Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here.	Please add details of the study design, for eg: randomized blocks (with how many replicates), source of the apple samples used, the study duration since four cycles already mentioned in the abstract, as well as the summarized methodology, before stating the result.	
Is the manuscript scientifically, correct? Please write here.	The manuscript appears scientifically sound overall, with a clear experimental design, appropriate methodologies, and robust data analysis. However, detailed review is required in a few areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The control treatment (manual thinning) showed higher production but lower average fruit weight. The manuscript would benefit from a more thorough discussion of how this finding aligns with or diverges from previous studies. 2. Results from 2017–2020 show variability attributed to climatic conditions. However, there is limited discussion on how these variations were controlled or accounted for in the study. 3. Please check the letter annotations used for each data in the Table 1, 3 and 4. The use of the same letter in the table (e.g., "a" or "b") typically indicates that the differences between the treatments are not statistically significant according to the Scott-Knott test. So, writing "ns" (not significant) in addition to the letter annotations can be confusing and redundant. 	
Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.	Overall acceptable.	

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<p>Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?</p>	<p>The language and English quality of the article is largely suitable for scholarly communication, but there are some areas where clarity, consistency, and precision could be improved to align better with scholarly standards. Here are some suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the location of Caçador, SC, Brazil, the use of the state abbreviation "SC" can be expanded for clarity. Consider: "Caçador, Santa Catarina, Brazil." • Can rephrase the footnote of each table, from "Means followed by the same letter do not differ from each other by the Scott-Knott test at 5% probability level. ns: not significant (p>0.05)." to "Means followed by the same letter are not significantly different, as determined by the Scott-Knott test at the 5% probability level." • The phrase of "ns: not significant (p>0.05)" is generally fine, but it will be better to ensure it doesn't interrupt the flow of the text by placing it in a footnote or table legend (at different line) for clarity. • "Benzyladenine 400 ml/100 L + Ethepon 200 ml/100 L – Fruits 15-20 mm" The related phrases could be revised to something clearer and more consistent with other chemical names and measurements. Example: "Benzyladenine (400 mL/100 L) + Ethepon (200 mL/100 L) – Fruits 15-20 mm." • A section dedicated to Materials and Methods would help clarify how the experiments were conducted, the doses used, and any other specifics. 	
<p>Optional/General comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some units and formats are inconsistent (e.g., "15–20 mm" versus "8 to 12 mm") Use consistent formatting throughout. • The term of 'Malus domestica Borkh' only appear once in the keywords section. It will be better if the term is included in the body content. If not, it is recommended to remove this keyword. • While the manuscript mentions the impact of high temperatures on thinning efficiency, the specific conditions during the experiments (temperature, humidity, etc.) should be reported in more detail for reproducibility and contextual understanding. • For the methodology section, the authors mentioned "Treatments consisted of post-flowering chemical thinning agents, arranged as follows: ..." Can consider to show the type of treatment that used in a table. In the sentence: "For the experiments, the commercial product Maxcel® with 2% BA was used as a source of BA; the commercial product Promalin® with 1.8% GA 4+7 and 1.8% BA was used as source of GA 4+7 + BA; and the commercial ...", check if there is any typo or not and what does GA stands for? • The discussion could elaborate on any observed or potential side effects of using these chemical thinning agents, such as long-term impacts on tree health, fruit appearance, or residual effects on the environment. • It might be helpful to specify in the introduction or methods about the specific fruit size ranges are chosen. Example: Chemical thinning agents applied to apples of different size categories (8-12 mm and 15-20 mm). If possible, state why choosing these ranges of size. • Expand on the practical implications of the results. For example, discuss how the findings could influence management practices or cost-effectiveness for apple growers. • Address any limitations or challenges faced during the study, such as specific climatic variations or potential side effects of the treatments. • While the conclusions are informative, they could briefly summarize the study's broader impact, such as its contribution to sustainable agriculture or its potential for adoption in regions with similar climatic conditions. 	

PART 2:

	<p>Reviewer's comment</p>	<p>Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</p>
<p>Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?</p>	<p><i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i></p>	

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