By Fred Searle

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New automated measurement tool for fruit growers

Handheld sensor from Spanish AI specialist will reduce production costs and make data collection on fruit size faster and more accurate

David Francés Peñuelas with the new measurement tool at Fruit Attraction

Fruit orchard AI specialist Agerpix has developed a system to automate fruit size measurement in real time in a bid to reduce production costs and optimise data collection.

The patented technology called Dendrofruit is a handheld plastic sensor that adapts to the contours of the fruit and wirelessly sends data on fruit size to a receiving antenna. This data is then transmitted to Agerpix's servers, where it is processed and made available to the producer.

The grower receives daily updates on the fruit's size, plotting fruit growth curves and analysing the data by species, variety and plot.

With reusable sensors for different seasons and varieties, the tool has so far been trialled by 13 companies across France and Spain on apples, table grapes, peaches, avocado, citrus and mango.

Next season, additional trials will be carried out by companies in Peru, Chile, Brazil and Portugal on a range of products.

According to Agerpix chief executive David Francés Peñuelas, the main benefits of the technology are its potential for cost reduction compared to manual fruit measurement; the accuracy and automation of the data; the ability to estimate fruit sizes based on existing data; and its low installation cost.

Dendrofruit was listed as a finalist product in this year's Fruit Attraction Innovation Hub in Madrid.