Dixieland Cherries LLC,
East Wenatchee, Washington Fall semester, 2020

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Responsibilities:
- Pruning
- Tree Training
- Fertilizer applications
- Water Management
- Managing Cherry Test Block

Dixieland Cherries Orchard, is a family run orchard in East Wenatchee. My responsibilities were to manage one hundred black pearl cherry trees on mahzard rootstock. These trees were interplanted amongst the cultivar sweetheart. The black pearl trees were planted as a test block, due to the cultivar being relatively new to the cherry industry. Trees were planted 6 ft x 18 ft interplanted in a already established orchard. The goal was the train these trees to grow central leader system. This demands more training and upkeep when the trees are younger. Opposed to branched leader systems that the rest of the orchard was trained under. The benefit to training the trees in this fashion is it allow growers to plant more trees per acre that can increase yield. But is less stressful for the trees, having more trees, allowing each tree fruitless fruit. This limits over cropping and allows growers to have a good handle on fruit development.

What was done in the internship….Trees were planted, pruned and trained to grow to the growers desired liking. Irrigation was manipulated since the younger trees required more water the the others planted around it. Fertilizer was applied to just the younger trees to allow branch growth before pruning and training began. Allowing for more branch options when pruning.

W clips are inserted in the ground, anchoring the twin. Twin is used to achieve desired branch angel.

Training tap and bamboo sticks force tree to grow central leader.

Summary

This internship showed me real field experience in how to train and prune a young orchard, as well as how to manage one. Teaching the importance of water management, and how it differs from older established orchards. Along with how crucial tree training is at a young age. And the importance of fertilizer programs for interplanted systems.

Fertilizer used 16-16-16, hand applied to young trees.

Grey and Blue R-10T sprinkler heads were used for younger trees. Applying water at 2.1 GPM. Opposed to standard R-10 Ivory white and black sprinklers heads for the older trees applying at 0.7 GPM.