

# Nipping frost in the bud

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Weather in high-elevation terrain makes northern New Mexico a challenging place to grow an orchard with apples, apricots, cherries or peaches for market. Such a landscape creates significant daily temperature swings with frosts occurring late into the spring, resulting in challenging conditions for fruit growing.

Local fruit growers, such as Chris Bassett of Freshies of New Mexico in Velarde and Tim Seaman of Manzanar Los Silvestres in Abiquiu, watch weather reports and take steps to nurse their orchards through those cold spring nights after the plants have started budding. Using software developed at Los Alamos National Laboratory, work is being done to measure and predict frost events to help farmers such as Bassett and Seaman protect against frost damage, and improve crop health and yield.

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