

AVOCADO TOP WORKING: BARK GRAFTING METHOD

Al de Villiers & O Wallach

A. Tree preparation for grafting:

1. Stop all stem injections or treatments with phosphoric acid for Phytophthora rootrot control at least 6 months before cutting down the trees.
2. Cutting of limbs and main branches for grafting should start 2-3 weeks before grafting.
3. Height of cut: 1.2 meter above the ground.
4. If possible, every tree should have a nursing branch that will have nice and efficient leaves on it. This branch will be removed few months after the grafts start to flush.
5. Paint / whiten all limbs and branches immediately after cutting the tree to avoid sun burn damage.
6. Reduce irrigation by 75-80%.
7. Stop fertilization.



B. Budwood selection:

Suitable budwood is taken from the lower part of mature branches; budwood should be completely round shaped without any straight edges, with vegetative buds that are fully developed.

(Budwood that is used for nursery grafts is not suitable for top working).

Diameter of budwood sticks: 10 mm and up.

It is recommended to use fresh budwood.

Budwood selection



- **C. Budwood Preparation:**

- 1. Immerse the budwood for 1 minute in a solution that contains:
 - Fungicide and anti-transparent
- 2. Let the budwood dry in a shady place for 15-30 minutes.
- 3. Cover the budwood from top to bottom with parafilm.
- 4. Store in refrigeration at 5-7 degrees Celsius.

WATERPROOF
STRETCHABLE

Parafilm[®] Nursery Grafting Tape

Self-sealing tape for grafting and budding of plants, flowers, trees and shrubs.

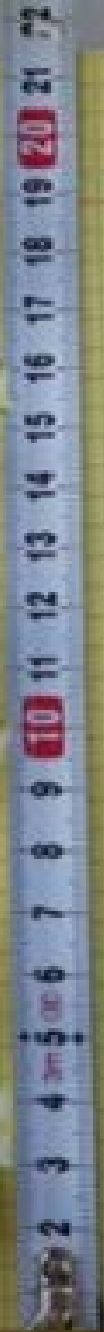
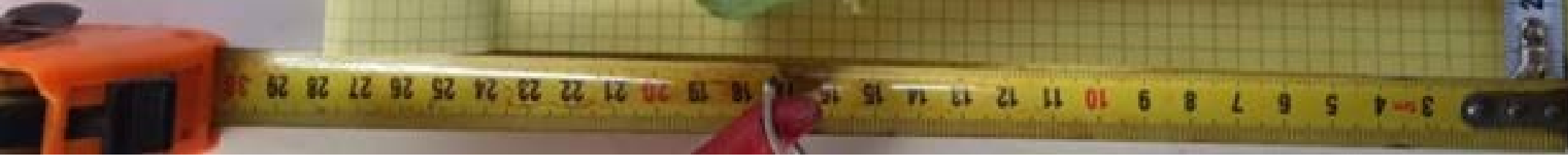
6 ROLLS EACH ROLL 1 IN. X 30 YDS. (1080 IN.)



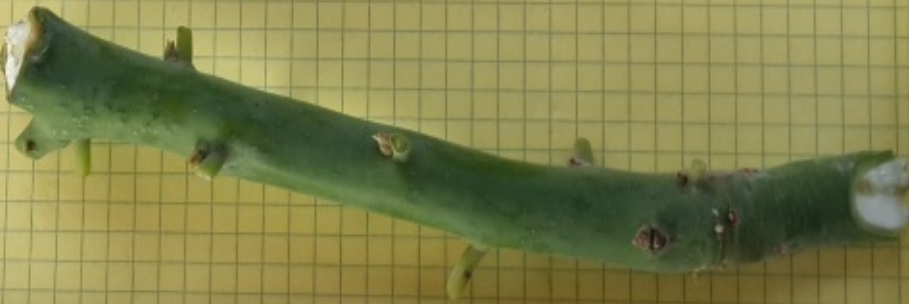


- **D. Grafting in the orchard:**

- 1. Just before grafting , recut the branches that are going to be grafted , 5-10 cm under the cut that was done 2-3 weeks before.
- 2. Disinfect top part of branch with 20 cm of it's sides with :
 - Captan 0.5 % and Carbendazim 0.1 %.
- 3. Cut the parafilm covered budwood for grafting : 4-5 cm long cut at one side and 0.5-1 cm long cut on the other side .









4. Insert the budwood between the Phloem and Xylem by making side cuts in the bark of the tree.





5. Wrap /tie tightly the grafted branch with strong with a stretching nylon tape.





6. Immediately after grafting paint the freshly cut branch and the whole budstick with white PVA (acrylic based) to prevent moisture loss and sunburn.



E. After Grafting Care:

1. Monitor the grafts every few days by checking few of them. Check for existance of ants etc. and apply granular pesticides if needed.
2. After about 3 – 4 weeks the grafts should start to develop and flush.



