

Over-The-Row Mechanical Harvesting of Hazelnuts

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A self-propelled, over-the-row (OTR) hazelnut combine is currently under development by the presenter with support of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and various component suppliers. In addition to removing clusters from plants, this harvester will also contain a threshing mechanism (a.k.a. a green cluster husker) for freeing nuts from their husks, as well as a system for separating out the nuts (from husks and other debris) and transporting them to a storage bin on the machine. This presentation focuses on unique features of the machine under development, advantages that OTR harvesting has over other harvest methods, and changes in (1) plant genetics, and (2) plant growth and management practices that will likely be needed to fully optimize OTR harvesting and reduce overall labor in hazelnut farming.