

New biofungicide

In the United States, the Agricultural Research Service has entered into an agreement with Micro-Flo Company to complete development of a new type of biofungicide for fruit packing houses. The new coating combines two bioactive substances, chitosan and a synthetic sugar used as a glucose substitute, with the yeast *Candida saitoana*. Chitosan acts as a natural fungicide and stimulates defensive enzymes in the fruit itself. Also, it increases the fruit's shelf-life by forming a film on the fruit thereby preventing the release of carbon dioxide. The synthetic sugar attracts fungi towards itself. Trials in commercial packing houses have proved the new biofungicide to be effective against rot-causing fungi. *Contact: Mr. Charles Wilson, USDA Agricultural Research Service, the United States. Tel: +1 (304) 7253 451, extn. 330; Fax: +1 (304) 7282 340; E-mail: CWilson@afrs.ars.usda.gov.* (AgBiotech Reporter, January 2000)