

Title Postharvest quality of highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum* L.) cultivars in relation to storage methods

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Citation ISHS Acta Horticulturae 715: 545-552. 2006.

Keywords ozone; blueberry

Abstract

The consumer's demand for high quality fruit requires a proper post-harvest chain in order to limit loss of berry quality characteristics from harvest to shelf. Therefore, in order to guarantee a top quality product and to lengthen its shelf-life, it is of primary importance to develop suitable storage techniques. The aim of this study was to evaluate berry quality from harvest through storage under two conditions. Three different cultivars of highbush blueberry were studied: 'Bluecrop', 'Coville' and 'Brigitta'. Samples of berries were collected weekly, weighed and stored for 60 days under two different conditions: traditional (3°C, 85% R.H.), or innovative (adding ozone to the normal atmosphere). Fruit weight, flesh firmness, total soluble solids content and titratable acidity were determined both at harvest and weekly during the storage period.