

**Title** Reduction of nectarine decay caused by *Rhizopus stolonifer*, *Botrytis cinerea* and *Penicillium digitatum* with *Aloe vera* gel alone or with the addition of thymol

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### **Abstract**

Two nectarine cultivars ('Flavela' and 'Flanoba') were treated with *Aloe vera* gel alone, or with the addition of thymol, and then inoculated with *Rhizopus stolonifer*, *Botrytis cinerea* and *Penicillium digitatum*. Both treatments were effective in reducing the decay incidence caused by the 3 fungi species, although the addition of thymol did not generally improve the efficacy of *Aloe vera* gel on reducing the infection damage. The coatings were clearly effective in reducing the postharvest ripening process of both nectarine cultivars manifested by a delay in ethylene production and respiration rate, weight loss and softening. Interestingly, these coatings showed effectiveness on reducing decay development in inoculated fruits and thus *Aloe vera* could be considered as natural antifungal compound and might serve as alternative of synthetic fungicides.