

## New fabric could test fruit freshness at the farm

Researchers have confirmed that a coated piece of fabric developed at Florida International University can detect the freshness of oranges.

Scientists at the university have found a quick and reliable way to test the freshness of fruit on supermarket shelves through the use of a coated fabric strip.

The research, published recently in the Journal of Chromatography A, showed the coated fabric can soak up the chemical compounds in the juice of an orange that show the ripeness – or freshness – of the fruit.

The coating used on the fabric was invented by Florida International University Provost and executive vice-president Kenneth G. Furton and chemistry researcher Abuzar Kabir who are co-authors of the study.

“Growers may also use this method to decide how quickly they need to get their crop to market or to use packaging that might slow the ripening process in order to keep fruits from reaching their peak before you buy them,” Kabir said.

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