



VISION ROBOTICS  
Corporation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **VISION ROBOTICS CORPORATION RECEIVES GRANT FROM CALIFORNIA CITRUS RESEARCH BOARD**

**SAN DIEGO**, NOVEMBER 6, 2006 – Vision Robotics Corporation (VRC) today announced that the California Citrus Research Board (CRB) has extended its funding of the robotic harvester for fresh citrus, which is being developed by VRC.

Three years ago, VRC and CRB began collaborating on a novel approach for harvesting fresh citrus by using two robots to increase the speed and efficiency of mechanically picking fruit. VRC's concept is to have one robot, the Scout, map the grove determining the tree locations, the number and size of the oranges, and their approximate positions on each tree. Once a tree and its oranges are mapped, the Scout determines a picking-plan for that tree, which it transmits to the Picker robot. This proprietary two-robot approach enables a multi-armed picking robot to cost effectively harvest fresh citrus because its motions are pre-planned.

In addition to harvesting, VRC's system will provide crop estimation, data for precision farming, and actuators for tasks such as pruning and thinning. The first generation robot, the Scout, scans fruit trees to determine the total crop yield, and the size, location and color of each piece of fruit. Even before the Picker robot is built, the Scout will increase overall productivity for growers by using data to better match harvest yields with consumer demand.

“When initially considering the task of working with fresh fruit, VRC quickly realized that it is not feasible to approach the job like a human,” said Derek Morikawa, chief executive officer, Vision Robotics Corporation. “Effective robotics requires different and clever approaches to performing the same tasks. Any robot operating in an orchard requires multiple arms to operate cost effectively, but coordinating a multi-arm picker is not straightforward.”

VRC's previous work has determined economic viability and technical feasibility by coupling field work with a virtual reality simulation of the Scout and Picker robots. In 2007, VRC and CRB will, for the first time, field a first-generation prototype of the Scout robot.

In addition to its project with the CRB, Vision Robotics also works with the Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission in developing a robotic system for the harvesting and care of tree fruit, such as apples and pears.

**ABOUT VISION ROBOTICS CORPORATION**

Since 1999, Vision Robotics Corporation (VRC) has developed advanced vision-based navigation and object recognition systems for autonomous robots. VRC currently is working with military, agriculture and consumer electronics partners to produce robots ranging from an advanced consumer-floor care product to a tree-fruit harvester to military robots. Vision Robotics, based in San Diego, is privately held. For more information on VRC's robotic systems, visit [www.visionrobotics.com](http://www.visionrobotics.com).

# # #

**CONTACT:**

Derek Morikawa

CEO

Vision Robotics Corporation

858-724-0484

[dmorikawa@visionrobotics.com](mailto:dmorikawa@visionrobotics.com)