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# Indian export market ripe for Queensland avocados



By [Kelly Mason](#)

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■ Avocado exports are increasing and Queensland avocado growers are packed and ready to go.

It is not a food you would usually associate with India, but a trial sending Australian hass avocados there has proved fruitful for the industry.

Annaleise and Lachlan Donovan run Donovan Family Investments along with their two sons, Miles and Clayton. They grow, process and export avocados and macadamias for distribution to the domestic and overseas market.

Their farms are located in the wide bay area, across the regions of Bundaberg, Childers and Gin Gin, with 650 hectares dedicated to avocados and 100 hectares to macadamias.

DFI director Lachlan Donovan said they had been part of a trial organised by Avocados Australia, in 2023, that sent 10 shipments of Australian hass avocados to India.

The successful shipment trial met India's strict biosecurity and food import requirements and gave Australia market access.



📍 DFI director Lachlan Donovan at their packhouse, located in Isis Central, north west of Childers. Picture: Kelly Mason

The 10 loads were shipped in July 2023, protocols were approved by December the same year, and commercial shipments are now underway.

"India is a protocol market, which means all the orchards have to be audited by biosecurity and sheds have to pass biosecurity regulations, for us to be able to send the fruit through, which is probably a good thing.

"When a country is not a protocol market, like the Asian markets, it means that in Brisbane, Sydney or Melbourne the agents can suck all the fruit up off the market floor and put it on a plane and send it out ...we are trying to develop a market over there, and all of a sudden all this cheap fruit turns up.



📷 Fort manager, Darren Enslin and DFI director Lachlan Donovan. Picture: Kelly Mason

"The markets that we sell to, find all this cheap fruit, still from Australia, because they've dumped it on there."

He said with India, the biggest challenge was that other countries like Tanzania, Kenya and South Africa, were supplying fruit at the same time.

"While their (other supplying countries) fruit is a lot cheaper to produce, the quality is nowhere near as good as ours, so it's a trade off," he said.

Mr Donovan said there was a lot of potential with selling to India, given their population size and opportunity to sell the fruit through multiple means.

"If it is only ten per cent of the population buying avocados, that is 140 million people," he said.

"They have smaller markets, street vendors selling fruit and there is a lot of e-commerce where they deliver anything you like within seven minutes, which just blows your mind, because we can't get anywhere in those cities in seven minutes."



📷 Mr Donovan explained that the spectrum machine, takes 300 photos, with a high definition camera, of every piece of fruit and determines their grade and quality. Picture: Kelly Mason

Avocado Australia CEO John Tyas said was early days with the Indian export market and although around 15 per cent of the crop was currently being exported, there was opportunity to further grow the export market.

He said they went through a process of registering growers and packers and got access to the Indian market late last year, and in January and February Western Australia supplied into that market..

"We had a bit of a pause until the Queensland hass season cranked up a couple of months ago, and Queensland has been the dominant supplier in recent weeks," he said.

"The timing is really good, with the trade agreement we have a declining tariff, we were at a 30 per cent tariff a few years ago, it is currently at about 17 per cent and it will be zero by 2028.

"The key difference compared to our competitors is our quality and our exporters really need to stay on track with that and make sure we deliver the best quality product, week in and week out."

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