

TALKING AVOCADOS

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Marketing Update

OHMA - Gaining Market Access

**Assessing reduced cold treatments
for Shepard**

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We all make mistakes: If we make a mistake please let us know so a correction may be made in the next issue.

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Cover: Fresh avocado on sour dough. The new avocado marketing campaign targets consumers' breakfast time consumption.

Chairman's Perspective

It is a point of great satisfaction that I hear and read about the success of the Qualicado extension events that have been held around the country so far. I hear that attendances have been very good, the speakers have been informative and the social interaction between all participants has been excellent.

It is a wonderful thing to see growers meeting and discussing ideas in such a forum where there are technical and marketing experts who can add value to the conversations. The high level of participation is the true measure of the value of such events and that will only spur Avocados Australia to advise the Avocado Industry Advisory Committee to continue with this programme in the future.

The Qualicado programme has also extended beyond growers to include those in other parts of the supply chain. Transporters, wholesalers and ripeners all have attended events in the terminal markets to discuss aspects of avocado handling. Not only did those in attendance rate the usefulness of the workshops highly but all felt that the information imparted is of value to their respective businesses. A large majority agreed that they would apply this information in their businesses so the Qualicado workshops as a means to encourage best practice are already beginning to have an impact on the industry. I note also that as of April this year Avocados Australia's Best Practice Resource online is attracting increased usage from members of the supply chain in all eight growing regions.

This spirit of networking and cooperation between all parties in the supply chain is what was and is the backbone of those industry leaders who have been honoured with awards from Avocados Australia. Henry Kwaczynski was recently awarded Avocados Australia Life Membership in recognition of his services to our industry which he did at great personal expense in time and effort for the advancement of the opportunities of fellow avocado growers in the field and in marketing here and overseas. There have been others before Henry, as our awards list shows, and there are many more potential candidates to come.

I see growers in every region who like to share and compare in small groups or at large meetings like Qualicado and this shared knowledge adds to the levels of expertise for our industry. We have all benefited and will continue to benefit. However - and there usually is a "however" to a feel good story - as this industry, and other horticultural industries, have businesses that get larger there starts to develop a mood of self-interest rather than what I have described above. There are people in horticulture, and avocado land, who think that their

contribution to levies would be better utilised in their own business for their own benefit. There are people lobbying, as you read this, to put the point to change the levy systems in place now to be more flexible for the good of all horticulture and particularly for the good of themselves.

Please think carefully about this system of levies we have because someone might be trying to explain to you why a change might be better. Better for whom? Where would you fit in this better world? Consider the last field day you attended where you openly discussed what you think or do on your orchard when right behind you could be someone interested in your comments but may not be interested in giving you theirs. Consider also that if the levy system is changed to accommodate "own use of levies" then these people may employ the limited source of scientists or other experts for their own use exclusively, with confidentiality agreements, thus denying access to that expert for the rest of the industry. Our industry has prospered because we all participate. We all share information and we use the best information we can get locally, from around Australia, and from the world wide avocado community. We should not be reduced to competing with each other for science or market.

It is more productive to grow the domestic and world market for avocado by sharing and adopting the best information available.

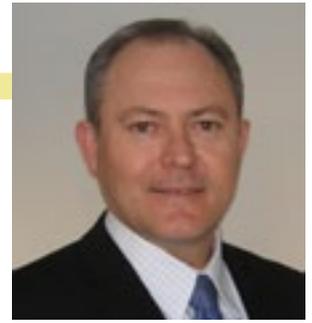
Right now every commercial avocado grower in Australia is eligible to access information about avocado production and supply chain best practice. Access to this information is available from the Avocados Australia website. Up-dated on an on-going basis, it includes the findings of R&D projects and other useful information that is of value to your business. If you are a commercial avocado grower and you have not applied to access the Best Practice Resource I encourage you to do it now. Enter this address in your web browser: <http://bestpractice.avocado.org.au> then click on "Apply for Access" and complete the online form. For assistance call the Avocados Australia office on 07 3846 6566 or email co@avocado.org.au.

Jim Kochi

Jim Kochi, Chairman, Avocados Australia



CEO's Report



Season overview

Strong demand and lower supply has seen very high prices across the summer period. This has resulted in some buyer resistance and some media commentary which Avocados Australia responded to across the summer. When prices are high, it is important that consumers get the best value from each piece of fruit and that means minimising waste. Prices will ease as supply increases.

The Shepard season went well this year with fruit maturity an improvement over last year. The latest Infocado Quarterly report shows a big year ahead, with about 65000t forecast from April 2014 to March 2015, plus another 16,500t forecast to come from New Zealand. However, this will be monitored across the year.

New Marketing Campaign

As part of the new marketing campaign, a new TV Commercial has been produced that commenced on air on 27 April. This TV commercial is an important part of the new campaign to position avocados as an 'everyday gourmet'. In this issue you will see a full update on the marketing program. A brochure has also been developed as a snapshot of the campaign, provided as an insert with this issue.

Qualicado program

We are continuing the roll out of the Qualicado program and are pleased to be receiving positive feedback from attendees rating highly their usefulness and value of the information presented. To date we have run grower/packer workshops in North Queensland, Tri State and

the Sunshine Coast and wholesaler/ripeners/transporter workshops in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney. See page 10-15 for an update on the program.

Thailand market access

Avocados Australia has continued to work with the Australian Department of Agriculture to achieve a suitable export protocol for avocados to Thailand after a new (unworkable) protocol was introduced in July 2013. Avocados Australia has provided a submission to the Thailand Department of Agriculture with research data which supports a revised protocol. Despite regular requests for feedback there has been no response. Avocados Australia facilitated a trade and market access mission to Thailand in the first week of May including a meeting with the Thailand Department of Agriculture. This was a very positive meeting with general agreement on a way forward for a revised protocol.

Avocados Australia Board Update

A new director has been appointed by the board to fill the casual vacancy in Western Australia. Neil Shenton is the new director who will hold this position until the 2014 director election. We welcome Neil on the board and because he now joins David Duncan both WA directors can provide increased representation from Western Australia.

At the February board meeting, the board agreed to award AAL Life Membership to Mr Henry Kwaczynski in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the industry

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over many years. The award was presented at the Sunshine Coast Qualicado workshop (see page 21 in this issue).

The Board meets again in June, so members are encouraged to contact your regional representative if you have any issues you would like to raise.

HAL Review Update

The avocado R&D and marketing levy managed through HAL provides a mechanism for the industry to collectively invest in its future development. The avocado projects delivered through HAL over the past 12 years have delivered significant benefits to levy payers and the wider community. The system has assisted the industry to grow demand at an extraordinary rate, ahead of increased production growth; improve production practices and sustainability, and improve quality of fresh avocados available to consumers by about 40% over the past four years. The industry has many opportunities and faces many challenges over the coming years. An efficient and effective mechanism for industry and government to invest collectively for the common good is essential.

ACIL Allen Consulting's independent review of HAL and the levy system is now complete and the final report was submitted to the Minister the Honourable Barnaby Joyce and the HAL Board on 3 May 2014. During late May Avocados Australia will, along with other HAL members, consider the review findings and its recommendations.

As part of the review a series of regional consultation forums took place around Australia and submissions were made from various stakeholders including Avocados Australia.

The Avocados Australia submission can be viewed at http://www.acilallen.com.au/cms_files/45_Avocados%20Australia%20Submission.pdf

Some of the key points in the Avocados Australia submission were:

- The avocado industry has achieved significant outcomes through the levy system that are delivering demonstrable benefits to levy payers
- The Peak Industry Bodies have a key role to play given their relationships and networks throughout the industry
- The diversity of horticulture needs to be understood, accepted and properly considered
- Cost reduction in levy management should not be pursued at the expense of effectiveness and better outcomes
- Any changes must demonstrate the benefits to the levy payers (above other stakeholders), as better

outcomes for levy payers will lead to better outcomes for all stakeholders.

The final report from the independent review of HAL was released to industry on 9 May. A copy of the final report can be viewed online at the HAL website: www.horticulture.com.au. Move your cursor over the menu to "news & events" and in the list that appears click on "HAL Review". Then on that page click on "Final Report". The Final Report makes 9 key recommendations for change. AAL, along with other Members of HAL, received a briefing in Sydney on 9 May and further consultation with HAL Members will be undertaken to develop a response to the review. The recommendations call for significant change although the details for implementation are yet to be developed.

AAL will continue to work on behalf of industry to seek the best outcome for all levy payers. The avocado industry is in great shape, and the levy investment in R&D and marketing has played a major role in this success. We need to ensure that any changes to levies management doesn't result in the proverbial 'baby being thrown out with the bath water'.

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Around Australia

Central Queensland Report

By Lachlan Donovan and John Walsh, Avocados Australia Directors for the Central Queensland Growing Area



Around March the weather conditions in Central Queensland were hot and dry and growers were irrigating extensively.

The Shepard harvest season attracted good market conditions and these market conditions continued through April. Growers in Central Queensland have shown good discipline in starting only when their dry matters are correct. If we continue this with the Hass then we have played our part in continuing to deliver good quality fruit to the consumers.

Avocados Australia's Qualicado Program will reach Central Queensland on Thursday 11 September later this year. The Central Qld Qualicado Workshop is a free and informative event aimed at covering a range of topics to assist growers in our region with fruit quality and productivity. We recommend that you all mark this date on your calendars from now!

Further details about the Central Qld Qualicado Workshop will be sent out to growers once the program has been finalised. If you do not currently receive Avocados Australia event email updates then email co@avocado.org.au or call 07 3846 6566 to ensure you receive updates directly.

Tri State Report

By Barry Avery, Avocados Australia Director for the Tri State Growing Area



In the last edition of Talking Avocados I mentioned good fruit set through the Tri State area, big mistake. Since then mother nature paid a visit with the hottest heat wave on record, temperatures of 48°C were recorded for 3 days in a row it then cooled to a more comfortable 46°C with humidity of between 6 and 9. It made for the worst possible conditions to produce avocados.

The first blast of heat lasted for a week we were then given a respite for ten days before the heat returned not quite as bad as previous but temperatures still hovered around the 40°C to 44°C mark this time it seemed to last forever (10 days).

As a result of the above, growers without cooling systems and water monitoring systems reported fruit losses of up to 80%.

Interestingly a cooling system that we installed that had

water delivery of 75 litres/hour proved to be useless at temperatures of 44°C. We had to upgrade it to 125 which seemed to handle the extremes better.

Young trees that were adjacent to headlands with no grass were actually killed by the radiant heat. These trees had no cooling system as we normally have not installed cooling until the trees start to produce a practice. That will have to change with future plantings.

For all growers in our region there have been some lessons to be learnt from the experience. With cooler temperatures now happening toward end of Autumn trees will recover and those with fruit left will be able to be harvested without any more visits from mother nature.

One of the most disappointing events that occurred is the loss of growers' carryover water. This happened with no compensation to growers that had worked hard to build a little reserve after the crippling drought, basically millions of dollars of water flushed out to sea, one has to question the present policy of environmental flows at the cost of food production, I feel future generations will pay a heavy price for decisions that have been made in this era of compromised politics.

North Queensland Report

By Jim Kochi, Avocados Australia Director for the North Queensland Growing Area



As the Shepard crop starts to wind down (week 14, 31 April) I notice that the Infocado Report bar graph shows the North Queensland crop to be only 38% harvested and that is predominately Shepard fruit. This means that out of the possible subtotal of 1.39 million tray equivalents of Shepard (being 60 % of the total avocado crop) only 854, 000 trays of Shepard have been harvested, or 63% of the forecast total for Shepard. Quite simply North Queensland is down about 500,000 tray equivalents or about \$205, 000 down on budget for levy contributions.

This is a serious devaluation of the crop estimate and it has the potential to cause serious issues with levy funded projects in Research & Development as well as Marketing when the levy forecast does not support the budget. The crop forecasts come from you the grower through the Infocado Quarterly Forecast system so this devaluation of crop load should have been noticed in the field and reported back through Infocado.

We often criticise government for poor planning but as contributing growers we need to "cop this one on the chin" as well and strive to do better next year.

This level of forecasting and regular updates is what

makes our industry different from other horticulture industries and is vital to good planning decisions.

Inaccurate forecasting was a contributing factor to the market collapse in September-October 2011 and the AAL Board and the Avocado IAC are focussed on getting more accurate numbers from growers.

I do not wish to be critical but more to highlight the importance of good forecasting and the ramifications of inaccurate forecasting so that all of us can aim to do the task with more accuracy and with more regular updates.

South Queensland Report

By Daryl Boardman, Avocados Australia
Director for the South Queensland Growing Area



Avocados Australia's South Queensland Qualicado Workshop took place recently at Barry and Michelle Trousdell's orchard at Mt Binga. This event attracted around 86 people from our growing region. The day provided a good range of speakers on a variety of topics. Overall the feedback from those who attended was very positive and it was good to see growers coming together and networking. I understand that so far the Qualicado program of events have attracted a positive response from industry and given our own event I can see why.

During March Southern Queensland experienced an extremely dry period that I am sure tested everyone's irrigation systems. All reports are that yields are down on last season which may be a godsend to keep trees in reasonable health with the dryer weather.

Avocado prices continue to hold at very high levels and looking at the latest Infocado report this does not look like this will change for some time. In this edition I am going to write about my thoughts on the industry and my role as a director and IAC member.

We now have consumption at a level that will seem to handle large weekly volumes and it just seems to keep increasing not only in volume but in price as well. I think this just shows that while fruit moves quickly through the system the consumer has a good experience and continues to keep purchasing, even at the high retail price that we are all seeing. This may have something to do with some of the changes the industry is seeing with the supply base, advertising and awareness at farm level, better growing practices, or cool chain management. Whatever it is we are doing, it seems we are doing something right.

Sure there will be times that we will have a so called train wreck but with fantastic systems such as Infocado we can

reduce the likelihood of this to some degree. But there will be seasons and districts where the planets align and big yields will be achieved which will mean an oversupply in some periods of the year. The better these are controlled the better it will lead to more stable returns.

This year is my year for election for the southern Queensland region. I have been your representative since Rod Dalton retired in 2006 and I stood for his position. I would like to think I have done my best in serving Southern Queensland and even though I have been in this position for nearly eight years I feel I still have more that I can offer both this region and the industry as a whole.

My major interest has been marketing and export as these are what I believe are some of the most important things that the industry needs to focus on if it is to have future success with managing the increased production volumes predicted.

I am also currently the industry representative on the Office of Horticultural Market Access committee (OHMA) this group sits with Department of Agriculture (DOA) to work on export access for horticultural products. Our major challenge is to regain access to what was our best export market Thailand which was taken from us last season due to new access requirements that are unsuitable for good avocado outturn hence no avocados have been exported directly to this market since. We are working hard to regain access as soon as possible.

The avocado industry is forward thinking and this has come from most growers being from different industries prior to entering the avocado industry. This has led innovation and driven this industry which has created the foundation of one of the best horticultural industries in Australia today.

I am not writing this to ask for your vote in the upcoming election later in the year for Southern Queensland but just to give you my side of what I feel is a wonderful story for an agricultural industry in Australia.

We have much more to do to look at ways to improve our industry as we will only continue to be combated with higher wages and regulations, increasing supply and the threat of imports. All of this will be best addressed by ensuring that we maintain a strong and dynamic board of directors, skilled people in positions within the industry's IAC, and have the continued input from growers to support a viable and dynamic industry.

Sure there may be some small rewards for being involved to the level I am, however, with the small reward comes bigger losses most of these being time away from my family, friends and business.

Around Australia continued

As my father always says if you want a job done ask a busy person and I guess that's the category I put myself in. I will be standing again to represent the Southern Queensland region as I feel I still have a lot to offer but welcome anyone else who feels they have the fire in their belly to take this industry further than I can.

I think that we will have a fantastic season for pricing in our region with the limited fruit we have but keep an eye on the tools the industry has created for you and don't wait until Christmas to harvest as you may find you will miss your present.

Sunshine Coast Report

By Peter Annand, Avocados Australia Director for the Sunshine Coast Growing Area



In late March, many Sunshine Coast growers were looking anxiously for rain to replenish dams and aquifers. Some are reporting marketable dry matter levels earlier in the year than usual, which may result in an earlier harvest from this region.

The Sunshine Coast Qualicado Workshop held in March attracted a large crowd. The day was well organised and began at Birdwood Nursery at Woombye and included a visit to Norm and Ann Pringle's Glasshouse Mountains' orchard. The good attendance and well informed speakers made for lively discussion of nutrition, disease and pest control, propagation, varieties, canopy management and supply chain issues. I had the honour of presenting Henry Kwaczynski with Avocados Australia Life Membership recognition for his long and exceptional service to the avocado industry. It was great to be able to make this presentation in the presence of so many Sunshine Coast industry members.

Tamborine and Northern Rivers Report

By Tom Silver, Avocados Australia Director for the Tamborine and Northern Rivers Growing Area



It was good to see so many growers from our region taking time out to attend the Tamborine Northern Rivers Qualicado Workshop held at John and Chris Culross's property at Green Pigeon Road near Kyogle NSW. I understand that those who attended rated highly the speakers and the value of the information that was presented. I would like to thank John and Chris for their hospitality.

During March the Tambourine /Northern Rivers growing area was very dry. The crop continues to be reported as

patchy with growers estimating below average to average size crops. A few have bumpers but unfortunately some have none. Fruit quality still appears to be quite good, with sun burn being the main down grade.

Tree health remains our biggest issue. Some orchards have simply not recovered from the extreme wet of the previous three years this has possibly been exacerbated by the dry summer just gone that didn't allow trees to get a good start. When my parents bought this property twenty-seven years ago we would inject only sick trees using converted veterinary syringes once a year. We now inject every tree twice a year, plus foliar sprays for healthy trees plus cultural methods of mulching, gypsum, pruning to reduce canopy demand on the root system, improved drainage, etc. My point is that Phytophthora remains our biggest issue due to our high rainfall and often higher clay levels in our soil. We cannot be complacent even if conditions appear to be more favourable as tree health underpins everything we do. This is evident in the market which is dragged down by small and poor quality fruit that comes from sick trees.

I wish all growers the best for the coming harvest season.

Central New South Wales Report

By Ian Tolson, Avocados Australia Director for the Central New South Wales Growing Area



As farmers we look forward to February. Not for the heat and oppressive humidity, but the welcome relief the rains bring. Well February 2014 left us extremely disappointed. Only scattered showers or drizzle and eyes glued to the nightly weather maps. The heat has continued into March and if Autumn eventually gets here, the drop in temperature will be appreciated.

Fruit in the Stuarts Point area is starting to fill out nicely and growers have been kept busy monitoring and controlling Redshouldered leaf beetle (*Monolepta australis*) outbreaks, aiming to keep damage to a minimum.

As reported earlier, areas of Comboyne suffered damaging hail storms. Those orchards that were spared have good fruit set for the coming season. It would seem their 2013/2014 season has to come to an end, however - as always - when one area stops another starts. Local Fuerte growers have started testing their fruit.

A great innovation from AAL is the Qualicado program and its extension events. Growers are encouraged to attend the one set down for our region, the Central NSW Qualicado Workshop happening on Wednesday 11th of June. Information regarding the program and venue will be sent out in due course.

Western Australia Report

By David Duncan, Avocados Australia Director for the Western Australia Growing Area



My first job as a director of Avocados Australia is to welcome Neil Shenton of Capel Fruit Co as the second director from Western Australia. Neil will fill you in on his background in the last paragraph of this article.

Summer has dealt us a lot of hot weather, as is normal. Fortunately we have not had the extreme heat experienced in the Riverland. Some growers have experienced greater than normal fruit drop, converting a big crop to an average crop. But overall a big crop is expected. Winter storms have yet to wreak their havoc, but the expectation is that we are facing a crop at least as big as two years ago according to the Infocado April Quarterly report the figure is forecast at around 4.3 million trays for the full Western Australia season. Of course this year New Zealand has also had a big crop so the dreamtime prices of the past two years may be in jeopardy. Expect local growers to hit the market as soon as maturity permits. Fruit from Southern areas is expected to be on supermarket shelves by mid-August.

Avocados Australia is pleased to be able to welcome Neil Shenton as the second director representing the Western

Australia growing region. From here on Neil and David will be co-contributors to this regular article. For now here is some background information about Neil:

Neil Shenton, Avocados Australia Director for the Western Australia Growing Area

I was born and grew up in Zambia in central Africa and went to school in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and went to the Agricultural College there. I then went farming in Zambia, mostly hybrid maize seed crops, soybean, cotton, sorghum and irrigated winter wheat. We came to Australia in 1990 and bought a sand dune in 1995, and started avocados. We quickly learnt that avocados wouldn't sustain us and the kids for the near future so built a greenhouse with the objective of growing hydroponic tomatoes. We quickly learnt (again) that we now had no time for the avocados and so built another greenhouse twice the size to enable us to employ a few workers. We were now supplying tomatoes to the leading supermarket in Australia so, with three kids in school etcetera so time became short.

Now the kids are all their own people doing their own thing, and the greenhouses have been rented to another grower, time is no longer short and when Dave Duncan discovered this he summarily co-opted me to this vacant position on the board. I hope I can be of assistance to the industry which has done so much for me and my family.

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Industry Matters

Engaging with Growers:

Sunshine Coast Qualicado Workshop a success

Around fifty growers, packers and industry suppliers took time out to attend the Sunshine Coast Qualicado Workshop held on Thursday 20 March that started with presentations at Birdwood Nursery (Woombye) and then an orchard walk at Jahade Farms' orchard (Glass House Mountains). Avocados Australia would like to thank Peter Young and Denis Roe from Birdwood Nursery, and Norm and Ann Pringle from Jahade Farms for kindly offering to be our hosts on the day.

Researchers and Avocados Australia's John Tyas and Nathan Symonds provided presentations for the first half of the day at Birdwood Nursery and this was followed by an orchard visit to Jahade Farms at Glass House Mountains.

At the Sunshine Coast Qualicado Workshop growers and packers heard from a number of researchers and consultants on a range of topics including: nutrition for healthy avocados (Simon Newett, QDAFF), pest management (Ruth Huwer, New South Wales Department of Primary Industries), canopy management (John Leonardi, consultant), and avocado handling and ripening in the supply chain (Terry Campbell, QDAFF). Avocados Australia's John Tyas and Nathan Symonds provided overviews about the Qualicado program, the online Best Practice Resource, and the supply chain program.

During the event Peter Annand, AAL regional director for the Sunshine Coast region, presented Henry Kwaczynski with Avocados Australia Life Membership in honour of his significant and lengthy contribution to the avocado industry. This award is well deserved and more information about this recognition appears in an article on page 21 dedicated to acknowledging Henry's contribution.



Nathan Symonds provided an overview of the Qualicado program and the free online Best Practice Resource.

With its mountain backdrop the Jahade Farms orchard proved to be an excellent location for the workshop. Norm Pringle kindly toured the gathering around his orchard while providing an overview of their orchard management practices. Researchers then provided advice and insight with regard to the latest best orchard practices.

Here are photographs taken at the **Sunshine Coast Qualicado Workshop** during the presentations held at Birdwood Nursery and later during the orchard walk.



Birdwood Nursery was the venue for the first half of the day.



Simon Newett from QDAFF talks nutrition in avocados at AAL's Sunshine Coast Qualicado Workshop.



Peter Annand, AAL director for the Sunshine Coast region, joined by other members of the local avocado industry.



Sunshine Coast growers look on as John Leonardi points out features of the canopy at Jahade Farms, Glass House Mountains QLD.



Ruth Huwer from NSW DPI.

Kyogle Qualicado Workshop a hit with Growers

A strong turnout of growers, packers and other members of the avocado industry attended the Tamborine Northern Rivers Qualicado Workshop that was held on Thursday 3 April at Jon and Chris Culross’s avocado orchard near Kyogle NSW. As many of you are aware, this event is part of a series of events being delivered as part of Avocados Australia’s national roll-out of the Qualicado program targeting all eight growing regions plus the five wholesale markets across Australia.



Grower Norm Pringle (left) provides an overview of their orchard practices.

The Qualicado program is now nearly half way through its first series of events. The purpose of the program is to provide support and monitoring systems in order to empower industry members to implement changes and track their progress in improving quality. Qualicado represents a program of continuous improvement for avocado industry members. Growers, packers, wholesalers, ripeners and transporters are encouraged to participate in this program with the overarching goal being to improve quality for the end consumer. For more information about the Qualicado program please go to the Avocados Australia industry website (<http://industry.avocado.org.au>) once there move your cursor over the maroon menu bar to “Qualicado” then click on “Services”.

At the Tamborine Northern Rivers Qualicado Workshop growers, packers and other members of the avocado industry heard from a number of researchers and consultants on a range of topics including: avocado handling and ripening in the supply chain (Terry Campbell, Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (QDAFF)), integrated phytophthora management (Elizabeth Dann,

Industry Matters continued

Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation, University of Queensland (QAAFI UQ), nutrition for healthy avocados (Graeme Thomas, consultant) and canopy management (John Leonardi, consultant). Avocados Australia's John Tyas and Nathan Symonds provided overviews about the Qualicado program, the online Best Practice Resource, and the supply chain program. An orchard walk followed where those present could ask questions directly to the researchers and consultants.

One grower who travelled a considerable distance in order to attend this event said the information presented was both useful and of value to their business. Another grower provided this feedback: *"well conducted, worth travelling for, thoughtful of our needs, to be strongly recommended"*.

Avocados Australia would like to thank Jon and Chris Culross for kindly supporting the event, allowing the use of their shed for presentations and having the orchard walk.

Six more Qualicado Workshops are planned between now and the end of September. Please refer to our Qualicado Program Event Calendar. Event updates sent out by email will keep you posted with the details. If you have a new email address let us know by emailing co@avocado.org.au and we will make sure you are kept in the loop.

Here are some of the photographs taken at the **Tamborine Northern Rivers Qualicado Workshop** near Kyogle in April:



Qualicado Workshop hosts Jon and Chris Culross.



John Tyas address growers and other representatives from the local avocado industry at the Kyogle Qualicado Workshop in April.



Terry Campbell from QDAFF provided an overview of avocado handling and bruising in the supply chain.



Liz Dann (QAAFI) presents an integrated phytophthora management overview.



Tom Silver (left), AAL's director for Tamborine/Northern Rivers, joined around 45 other growers for the Kyogle Qualicado Workshop.



Jon Culross provides an overview of their orchard practices.



ABC's Rural reporter Miranda Saunders interviews John Tyas about the Qualicado program.



Many growers completed Grower Self-Assessments at the Kyogle Qualicado Workshop.



Industry Matters continued

South QLD Qualicado Workshop draws record crowd

The majority of avocado growers and packers based in South Queensland attended Avocados Australia's South Qld Qualicado Workshop that was held recently at Mt Binga (near Blackbutt). Overall 86 people attended the day that included presentations from leading researchers, an overview about the Qualicado program followed by an orchard walk.



Avocados Australia's Daryl Boardman (SQ regional director) and John Tyas AAL CEO addressed the gathering.

The presentations were followed by an orchard walk with host and local avocado grower Barry Trousdell.



Avocados Australia would like to thank the speakers who took part on the day. We would also like to thank Barry and Michelle Trousdell for hosting the day and supporting the event.

During the event Graeme Thomas was presented with an Avocados Australia Order of Merit award for making a significant contribution to the avocado industry. This award is well deserved and more information about this recognition will appear in the Winter issue of Talking Avocados magazine.

The orchard walk provided growers with the chance to compare canopy management practices.



Engaging with Wholesalers and Ripeners:

Sydney and Brisbane Qualicado Workshops tackle Bruising & Shelf Life

February's Brisbane Qualicado Workshop held at the Brisbane Markets, and the Sydney Qualicado Workshop held at the Sydney Markets in March, both provided wholesalers and ripeners in those areas with the chance to learn more about how bruising is occurring in the avocado supply chain and those who attended also found out ways to get the most shelf life from avocados using various ripening methods. These wholesaler workshops were designed to provide information relevant to wholesalers, ripeners and transporters. All of the wholesalers and ripeners that attended the event said that they gained value from taking part and keenly took up the chance to offer topics that could be considered for next time.

We would like to thank all of the speakers that took part at these events. Our particular thanks go to Daryl Joyce (School of Agriculture and Food Sciences - Faculty of Science, University of Queensland), Terry Campbell (QDAFF), and Denis Roe from Birdwood Nursery.



Nathan Symonds, AAL's Supply Chain manager, at the Brisbane Qualicado Workshop in February.



Daryl Joyce (School of Agriculture and Food Sciences - Faculty of Science, UQ) presented at the Brisbane Qualicado Workshop in February.

Attention Adelaide Wholesalers, Ripeners and Transporters!

On Thursday the 22 May Avocados Australia is holding a Qualicado Workshop tailored to meet the needs of Adelaide-based avocado wholesalers, ripeners and transporters. They can learn more about how avocado bruising occurs in the supply chain and find out ways to get the most shelf life from ripening practices at Avocados Australia's "**Adelaide Qualicado Workshop**". The half day workshop will be held from 8.30am to 11.30am at a function room in the Adelaide Central Markets (44-60 Gouger St). Further details will be emailed out soon.

Proposed Program:

- 8.30am Complimentary coffee and tea on arrival
- 9.00am Welcome and Program Overview
- John Tyas, CEO Avocados Australia
- 9.15am Overview of Qualicado Program
- Nathan Symonds, AAL Program Manager
- 9.40am Avocado Bruising Research Update
- Terry Campbell, School of Agriculture & Food Sciences - Faculty of Science, University of Queensland
- 10.10am Break
- 10.25am Handling and Ripening – What you can do to minimise risk - Terry Campbell, QDAFF
- 10.55am Infocado Program Update
- Nathan Symonds, AAL Program Manager
- 11.15am Avocado Varieties
- Denis Roe, Birdwood Nursery
- 11.30am Finish

The Adelaide Qualicado Workshop is the fourth event to be held tailored to meet the needs of the wholesaling sector. To view updates about the Adelaide Qualicado Workshop event go to the Avocados Australia website (<http://industry.avocado.org.au>) and click on "Events" on the menu bar and then on "What's On".

To RSVP to attend a Qualicado Workshop contact Nathan Symonds on 07 3846 6566 or supplychain@avocado.org.au.

Acknowledgement of our Qualicado Program Sponsors

Qualicado has been funded by Horticulture Australia Ltd using the national avocado levy and matched funds from

the Australian Government. Avocados Australia is also proud to acknowledge the support from the following Qualicado Program sponsor:



Message from Birdwood Nursery - Qualicado National Sponsor:

Seedling or Clonal Avocado Rootstocks?

By Denis Roe, Birdwood Nursery

There has been much debate about the choice of seedling avocado rootstocks, or more expensive clonal rootstocks. Research in Australia has not been convincing about the scientific advantages of clonal rootstocks, with no statistically proven yield benefits over seedling rootstocks.

Seedling rootstocks result from out-crossed seed producing genetically variable seedlings, often leading to non-uniform orchards; each tree behaving differently to root rot, nutritional inputs, irrigation, soil type, etc. and with variable yields. Clonal rootstocks are exact genetic copies of the selected mother tree. Positive characteristics such as productivity, vigour, tolerance to Phytophthora, cold and/or salinity, etc., are reproduced in every clone. Clonal orchards therefore have high uniformity and are more predictable to manage than seedling rootstock orchards. Seedling rootstocks have the advantage of a tap root which anchors better than the fibrous roots of clonals, and have easier establishment in virgin soils.

Although scientific advantages are difficult to prove, the uniformity and predictability of clonal rootstock response to environment and management make them easier and often cheaper to manage. Some growers of clonal orchards in Australia have experienced these benefits and have placed follow-up orders with Birdwood Nursery.



Industry Matters continued

QUALICADO Program Event Calendar

The Qualicado program will be presenting useful information and tips about fruit quality at events targeting growers in every growing region across Australia. The program is also aimed at reaching wholesalers, ripeners and transporters at events taking place in metropolitan regions. Those interested in attending any of these events can refer to this calendar and all enquiries can be emailed to supplychain@avocado.org.au or call toll free 1300 303 971. Check your email updates for the details closer to each event. To add your contact details to Avocados Australia's communications list email them to co@avocado.org.au.

QUALICADO Program Event Calendar – 2014

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS:

(Suitable for avocado growers, packers and other orchard staff.)

South Queensland:
8 May 2014

Central New South Wales: 11 June 2014

Western Australia:
24 July 2014

Central Queensland:
11 September 2014

METROPOLITAN WORKSHOPS:

(Suitable for avocado wholesalers, ripeners and transporters.)

Adelaide:
22 May 2014

Perth:
23 July 2014

Best Practice Resource Users - How To Transport Avocados

Did you know that the Best Practice Resource online (BPR) includes information about the best way to transport avocados through the supply chain? And if you are a member of the Australian avocado supply chain (grower/packer/riper/transporter/wholesaler/retailer) you are eligible to access this information for FREE.

According to the latest information contained in the BPR maintaining the cool chain is particularly important for avocados to uphold quality and prevent unwanted ripening. Avocados need to be handled and transported carefully. To find out more about how to prevent ripening during transport go to the "Transport" content on the BPR.

Once you have logged on to the BPR move your cursor over the "Transport" menu option on the maroon menu and then click on the different transport topics that relate to this section, this includes: An Overview, Temperature Recommendations, Importance Of Air Flow, Stacking And Securing The Load, and recommendations when Transporting Mixed Loads.

If you are a grower/packer/wholesaler/riper/transporter/exporter and you haven't applied to access the Best Practice Resource apply for access now! Enter this address in your web browser <http://bestpractice.avocado.org.au/Login.aspx> then click on "Apply for access" and complete the online form.

Retail Prices Report

The first 3 months of 2014 have been an interesting period for avocado prices. Of the 4 capital cities in which the retail prices are monitored, 3 of the cities have all shown a price trend in which the unit price of Hass avocado has peaked and is now receding (see figures 1, 2 & 3). Perth being the only city where this price trend hasn't appeared to this date, as can be seen (figure 4) the average retail price in Perth has trended to plateau out at approx. \$4.00 with some fruit peaking at \$5.00.

Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



The highest price recorded within the last 3 months was in Sydney and Melbourne. The Melbourne price peaked for a relatively short time while Sydney saw the high price peak sustain itself for around a month period (figure 1 & 3). This is comparative to the average retail prices that Sydney and Melbourne consumers were expecting to pay this time last year in 2013. Brisbane has been recording the lowest average price and holding a steady \$3.00 average over much of the last 3 months (figure 2). Though when looking at the last 12 months for the average retail price in Brisbane the \$3.00 low across the capital cities is at a height for the year for Brisbane consumers. Of the four

major domestic markets Perth has kept the most constant price at \$4.00 (figure 4).

Figure 4



The other variety dominant in the market at this time is Shepard. To give a clearer price comparison of Hass to Shepard avocados we have included the Shepard retail price graphs as well which illustrate prices over the last 12 months (figures 5, 6, 7 & 8). The only city being the exception is Perth with no retail prices as of yet to be recorded for 2014. Overall the prices of Shepard avocados have illustrated the same trend as Hass for this period of the year.

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Industry Matters continued

Figure 5



Figure 8



Figure 6



Since Shepard has started to emerge on the market floor throughout the month of February it has continued to exceed last year's retail price (figure 5, 6 & 7). Across Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne the prices for February has averaged at least 50c more than it was last year. The Brisbane markets appear to be having more throughput of Shepard avocados in February and March of 2014 (figure 6). The lower market prices could be related to this as well as the fact that a large portion of the Shepard avocado is grown in the state of Queensland making it easier to obtain if in the Brisbane marketplace.

Should you have any questions or concerns about Infocado please contact Nathan Symonds on supplychain@avocado.org.au or (07) 3846 6566.

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Infocado

Weather events continue to impact on production. Last year some regions were experiencing issues with water logging and associated problems with excessive rain while earlier this year dry and hot conditions arose in other regions. The Tristate area endured extreme highs of temperature which has left some growers with a decent proportion of fruit drop. While in other areas the lack of rain that hasn't been forthcoming over the past six months has led to difficult dry, hot conditions which could eventuate in a reduction of fruit volumes reaching the market. With these fluctuations in weather extremes a system like Infocado becomes more valuable to the savvy business planner.

The Infocado system was developed to assist with management and marketing decisions for avocado industry businesses. It has been developed as an internet based collection and reporting system that allows a range of data to be collected, aggregated and reported back to the avocado industry. So when all information is published in the weekly and quarterly reports, it is displayed anonymously as aggregated data, so individual grower data is not disclosed.

When growers contribute data to the Infocado system the information that is out putted in an aggregated form, enables the industry stakeholders to make educated decisions. Contributors see it as an independent source of information and offers the reader a more comprehensive set of information than other sources.

All growers who are starting their 2014 season are reminded to begin entering their four weekly forecast as they get closer to harvest.

For a list of weekly report contributors please see page four of the report or contact the Avocados Australia office for clarification. All past weekly and quarterly reports are posted on the AAL webpage for historical value and can be accessed by all visitors. It is important to note that Infocado contributors receive a copy of the Infocado reports by email as soon as they are published. Once reports are over six weeks old they are posted to the AAL website. For a weekly update of the Infocado report please contribute your weekly data on an ongoing basis. If you are contributing and don't seem to be receiving the report regularly please contact the AAL office directly on the details provided below.

Should you have any questions or concerns about Infocado please contact Nathan Symonds on supplychain@avocado.org.au or (07) 3846 6566.

Dry Matter Update

As avocado industry stakeholders may be aware AAL undertakes a random sample of avocados on a monthly basis through the Sydney markets. This practice has in the past created a bit of a stir within some groups in the avocado industry though it has gotten people in the industry talking about the need to monitor the dry matters of fruit that is being sent into market. As consumer research has indicated Shepard avocados below 21% dry matter and Hass avocados below 23% dry matter greatly disappoints a consumers experience and affects repeat purchases.

How is the sample fruit selected?

Fruit are purchased at random each month from Sydney Wholesale Markets by an independent contractor.

- Only Hass and Shepard varieties are purchased
- Fruit is sampled from a variety of wholesalers, growing regions and growers to ensure a good mix of product
- Fruit must be hard as softening fruit is more difficult and costly to test
- Fruit is sent via overnight courier to the Maroochy Research Station for testing
- Once the fruit is at the laboratory it is tested by industry experts using the Hofshi Coring method, to obtain the Dry Matter % results.

Note: For more details of the Hofshi Coring method visit the AAL webpage (<http://industry.avocado.org.au>) then select the industry tab, click services and chose Maturity Monitoring.



A core sample of avocado taken for Dry Matter testing

Industry Matters continued

The results of AAL’s random sampling and testing of dry matters are aggregated prior to publication. While the dry matter testing has been frustrating to some parties in the past it is important to remember that the dry matter testing process plays a key role in ensuring overall fruit quality as can be seen in the tables below (Table 1 & 2).

Table 1

Dry Matter Summary 2013 1st Quarter				
Test Date	Percentage of Immature Shepard	Lowest Reading	Highest Reading	Average Reading
13-Feb	70%	13.55%	27.12%	19.64%
27-Feb	48%	16.50%	27.10%	21.31%
13-Mar	33%	14.69%	28.60%	22.45%

Table 2

Dry Matter Summary 2014 1st Quarter				
Test Date	Percentage of Immature Shepard	Lowest Reading	Highest Reading	Average Reading
12-Feb	36%	16.71%	29.88%	22.24%
26-Feb	31%	13.22%	30.83%	22.88%
13-Mar	8%	16.54%	38.08%	25.44%

As it can be seen from the above tables there has been a vast improvement in the total volume of fruit that has been sent to market as immature from the first quarter of 2013 to 2014 of Shepard avocados. Overall dry matters results collected over the past year show that all averages have been above the industry standard of 21%. Growers across the industry are to be commended on this improvement, as this eventuality will aid in increasing consumer demand for avocados. However, results show that there is still some immature fruit reaching the market. We know that with adequate dry matter testing this can be avoided.

AAL encourages all avocado growers to monitor their own dry matters as this will improve the end quality of avocados. AAL is also implementing Qualicado, an education program, that aims to deliver information that contributes to improving the overall quality of avocados. AAL also encourages growers to apply to access the Best Practice Resource.

Should you have any questions or concerns about Infocado please contact Nathan Symonds on supplychain@avocado.org.au or (07) 3846 6566.

National Irrigation Conference and Trade Show

2-6 June



The National Irrigation Conference and Trade Show is to be held at the Gold Coast Convention Centre (2684 -2690 Gold Coast Highway, Broadbeach QLD) from 2nd - 6th June 2014.

This event brings the entire irrigation industry together and is regarded by some as the largest event of its kind in the Asia Pacific region. The conference and exhibition will bring irrigators, suppliers, equipment manufacturers, researchers, water supply organisations, advisors, government officials and policy makers from across the rural and urban irrigation industries.

To access information about the conference online go to the Irrigation Australia website at <http://irrigationaustralia.com.au> and click on the conference logo.

Farmoz - Methidathion Product Supply Notice

Farmoz has sent out a Product Supply Notice in regard to its product Suprathion (methidathion). According to the notice replacement stock of Suprathion will not be available for the foreseeable future due to the unexpected closure of a “technical manufacturing facility”. Apparently there is no alternative methidathion product manufactured or sold in Australia currently. To access the Product Supply Update and to view a copy of the Farmoz label go to the Avocados Australia website Grower Notices (<http://industry.avocado.org.au>) then glide your cursor over the word “Growers” on the maroon menu bar and click on “Notices”.

Henry Kwaczynski awarded Avocados Australia Life Membership

On Thursday 20 March Peter Annand, Avocados Australia Ltd (AAL) director for the Sunshine Coast region, awarded Henry Kwaczynski Avocados Australia Life Membership at a presentation held during the Sunshine Coast Qualicado Workshop. Avocados Australia Life Membership is the highest form of award that Avocados Australia can bestow to recognise exceptional and lengthy service to the avocado industry. On the day of the presentation Peter Annand provided a brief overview of the exceptional contribution Henry has made to the avocado industry to date.

This article provides an overview of Henry's contribution and also a little bit of background behind how Henry became involved with the Australian avocado industry.

Henry's parents originally came from Poland. "My family

came to Australia in 1961 and I was brought up in Canberra," he said. An interest in flying prompted Henry to pursue a career as a pilot in the Royal Australian Air Force. He served from 1967 to 1988 and travelled throughout Australia, Asia and the Middle East, flying fixed wing aircraft and helicopters.

After 21 years of service in the armed forces Henry and his wife Jocelyn decided to try a different lifestyle. After seeing a tiny advertisement for an avocado orchard in The Australian, they decided to buy it and have been growing avocados on this Woombye property in the Sunshine Coast ever since.



Costa Farms is the central market presence of the Costa Group where we market our own Avocados from our farm in Renmark (SA) alongside that of our closely aligned 3rd party grower base. We follow the principle of providing our aligned Avocado growers with quality service and strong financial returns because we understand the challenges of growing from the grower's standpoint due to our direct investment in the industry, from growing to ripening to marketing within our national footprint.

Costa Farms maintains a solid commitment to the grower base and we continually strive to provide our growers with the latest industry information. We support our growers from the standpoint of being a grower ourselves and work diligently to develop long-term, trusting and sustainable relationships that are mutually beneficial. Costa Farms strives to be known by our customer base for consistently the highest quality products in the marketplace.

Melbourne Wholesale Market	West Melbourne VIC
Brisbane Wholesale Market	Rocklea QLD
Adelaide Wholesale Market	Pooraka SA
Perth Wholesale Market	Canning Vale WA

Contact:

David Costa	0412 990 241
John O'Leary	0412 948 700

Industry Matters continued

From 1995 to 2003 Henry served as a Director for The Australian Avocado Growers Federation and then for a further nine years continued to serve as Director for Avocados Australia Limited. As a director Henry assisted with the transformation of the Australian Avocado Growers Federation into Avocados Australia Limited.

For three years Henry provided leadership as Chair of Avocados Australia. He championed two main themes in this role. The first theme was about what Henry called "Smarter marketing". That is, working toward joint marketing groups to allow for better marketing as an industry, rather than in silos. The second theme related to the importance of embracing change, to support growers and look for opportunities, whether these opportunities could be found through R&D, or marketing, both domestically and internationally.

According to Jim Kochi, AAL Chair and regional director for North Queensland, "Henry's award is much deserved as Henry gave much of his own time serving on both the first export committee and the varieties committee."

Henry valued the need to forge international networks and encouraged fellow AAL directors to take up the cause. And his efforts were met with success.

"Henry worked hard to foster international linkages, talking at trade meetings as a senior statesman, and was also keen to get groups together to grow export markets," said Lachlan Donovan, AAL director for the Central Queensland growing region.

In 2011 Henry's long held dream of Avocados Australia hosting the World Avocado Congress became a reality in Cairns, Queensland. This event succeeded in showcasing the Australian avocado industry as well as the expertise of Australia's scientists.

Henry continued to develop and maintain relationships with Australian government agencies, and overseas avocado industries, especially the peak bodies and their key representatives - one of his goals was to foster opportunities for overseas markets. His international linkages, constant presence at key trade meetings, efforts in getting groups to work together helped to grow international opportunities for trade.

Prior to taking up the position of Chair at AAL Henry served as a Board Member of SunFresh for many years. According to Judy Prosser from Sunfresh Marketing Co-op Limited, "both Henry and Jocelyn have been members

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of Sunfresh Marketing since 1999 and Henry served as a Board Member from 2002 until his resignation in 2009."

Avocados Australia would like to thank Henry and his wife Jocelyn for the years in which they generously volunteered their time in order to benefit the Australian avocado industry.

"This award is well deserved in recognition of Henry's tremendous contribution to the avocado industry, a contribution that continues to this day," said John Tyas CEO of Avocados Australia.

Permit 12450 for the use of Trichlorfon extended!

Permit12450 that allows for the use of the insecticide Trichlorfon (aka Dipterex 500 SL, Nufarm Lepidex 500, plus other registered products) for the control of Queensland Fruit Fly (*Bactrocera tryon*) and Mediterranean Fruit Fly (*Ceratitidis capitata*) has been extended by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) to 31 May 2016. Growcom is the permit holder of

PERMIT12450 which was issued on 6 October 2011. You can view the permit online by going to the Avocados Australia website (<http://industry.avocado.org.au>) to view the pertinent Grower Notice. Once at the website glide your cursor over the word "Growers" on the maroon menu bar and click on "Notices".



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Gaining Market Access



Development of new markets is an on-going priority for the Australian avocado industry. In the last issue of Talking Avocados magazine (Summer 2014) Avocados Australia (AAL) included a report on the outcome of the study tour to China in 2013. Other trade visits happening this year to other overseas markets will be covered in future issues of Talking Avocados magazine. Among the number of driving forces behind continuing efforts to maximise export market access opportunities for the Australian avocado industry involves the work of the Office of Horticultural Market Access (OHMA). This article provides an overview about OHMA, how they operate and what effort is currently underway to benefit the Australian avocado industry.

About OHMA

The Office of Horticultural Market Access (OHMA) is an advisory committee of Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) that exists to help maximise export market access opportunities for horticulture industries. OHMA was established in 2009, but was preceded by a very similar body called the Horticulture Market Access Committee (HMAC).

OHMA, or individual industries, cannot directly negotiate market access to another country – that is a role only for governments. Therefore the main function of OHMA is to provide industry advice and support to the government agencies involved in the official negotiation processes. The main agencies OHMA deals with are the Department of Agriculture and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The avocado industry has had a number of issues on the OHMA agenda in recent times. Avocados are on the current work programme for access to China, and the industry has also requested new access to Japan. For

China, OHMA organised a Horticulture Cooperation Forum with Chinese government and industry that was held in Beijing in November last year. The aim of the forum was to help develop relationships with key Chinese agencies to help facilitate the market access process. Representatives of the Avocado industry made a presentation at the forum, which prompted a lot of positive interest from the Chinese participants.

The access problems into Thailand have also been on the OHMA agenda. OHMA has recently communicated industry priorities to the Department of Agriculture to ensure that industries like avocados that have been hardest hit by the problems in Thailand are given highest priority in seeking improvements in access as soon as possible.

How OHMA operates

There are three components of OHMA:

- A Committee comprised of 10 industry-nominated, skills-based representatives.
- An Independent Chair
- A full time Market Access Manager.

The Committee meets at least three times per year and holds teleconferences to progress issues in between meetings. Also attending the committee meetings as observers are representatives from the Department of Agriculture (DoA), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), National Horticulture Research Network, HAL Across Industry Committee and Horticulture Australia.

The committee assesses industry requests for market access and communicates priorities to the government agencies working directly on market access. At each OHMA meeting the committee receives reports from DoA on progress in phytosanitary negotiations and from DFAT on progress in free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations.

OHMA also plays a role in developing industry-industry cooperation and commercial linkages that can support the official access process. For example, OHMA has been the main industry body that has developed the relationship with the China Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Association (CIQA). CIQA is an affiliate of the China General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) and acts as an important link between industry and government in the Chinese bureaucracy.

Current activity & Progress

Talking Avocados magazine recently had the opportunity to speak with Chris Langley OHMA's Market Access

Manager. As OHMA's Market Access Manager Chris is available to assist industries with any market access issue or enquiry. He coordinates joint horticulture industry input on certain issues. Recent examples of projects he has undertaken include an OHMA submission on the Agriculture Competitiveness White Paper, a presentation at a recent bilateral working group with Indonesia, and a bid for funding under the agriculture cooperation agreement with China. Chris also prepares a Quarterly Market Access Report which provides a brief summary of any market access happenings in that quarter that is sent out to all interested industries which is sent to AAL's management.

So what factors direct OHMA's resources/energies in progressing market access on behalf of horticulture industries?

"As an industry committee the priorities for OHMA's work come from its industry members," said Chris Langley Market Access Manager at OHMA.

There are a number of trade agreements currently in negotiation that are in play or managed by OHMA around the world that impact on the Australian avocado industry. The Australian government recently concluded FTA negotiations with Japan and Korea. Under the Korea FTA the 30% tariff on avocados will be eliminated over 15 years. Under the Japan FTA, the 3% tariff on avocados will be eliminated immediately.

The government is still negotiating bilateral FTAs with China, India and Indonesia and well as regional FTAs (the Trans Pacific Partnership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) involving a number of countries across the Asia Pacific region.

According to Chris Langley, FTAs deliver benefits in terms of reduced tariffs.

"However, for fresh produce industries such as avocados there still needs to be phytosanitary access to the country in question to be able to trade," he said.

Progressing access to China

Many Australian avocado growers are keen to see progress in the area of accessing China as a market for their fresh avocados. According to Chris Langley China is a priority for many horticulture industries.

"It is a market with enormous potential, but unfortunately current access is limited to only a few products that have protocols in place."

Avocados are currently in fourth place on the Australian priority list for access to China. The process of gaining new access is an incredibly slow one, with the Chinese import authorities dealing with one or two products at a time. The products in the queue ahead of avocados will need to be dealt with first before technical negotiations on avocados begin in earnest.

"China is particularly sensitive about fruit fly, so once those technical negotiations begin the key challenge will be to secure a protocol that satisfies the Chinese import authorities but does not impose a treatment schedule that is so onerous it is unworkable."

According to Chris Langley, in the import protocols already in place for other products, China has provided only cold treatment schedules and has not allowed any alternative treatments for fruit fly such as methyl bromide fumigation.

"Obviously it would be great if China recognised the conditional non-host status of avocados, and I'm sure that is something Australia will be pushing for once the technical negotiations begin," he said.

The industry will need to provide technical data to support its case once the negotiations begin.

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Assessing reduced cold treatments for Shepard Avocado

(AV12010)

Project Leader:

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Introduction

Currently the sale of Shepard avocados on the domestic market relies on the use of chemical dips and sprays, methyl bromide fumigation or an extended cold treatment for times ranging from 14 to 22 days depending on the temperature used (-0.5 to 2.2°C) and the requirements of the importing jurisdiction. This preliminary project was undertaken to determine if a short cold treatment combined with the poor host status of avocado could be developed for use on the domestic market in Australia.

Avocados (*Persea americana* Mill.) have been recorded as hosts for fruit flies in Australia (Hancock et al. 2000) however, at commercial harvest stage (hard mature) they are known to be poor hosts. Studies by De Lima (1995, 2000 and 2010) in Western Australia demonstrated non-host status for hard mature Hass, Fuerte, Sharwil and Reed avocado for Mediterranean fruit fly [*Ceratitidis capitata* (Wiedemann)]. These studies found that when hard mature fruit were exposed to gravid Mediterranean fruit fly for up to three days postharvest, the eggs were unable to complete development. A similar result has also been recorded for Queensland fruit fly for Hass and Lamb Hass avocado. Studies by Hamacek et al. (2005) showed Hass and Lamb Hass at the hard mature stage meeting the requirements for non-hosts (provided fruit were blemish free). All varieties mentioned above now have access to most domestic markets in Australia using Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA) – 30: Hard Condition of Avocados (Anon 2012 and 2013).

Methodology – A summary

Four large scale confirmatory trials tested a fruit core temperature of $3 \pm 0.5^\circ\text{C}$ at 7 and 9 days against mature eggs and first instars of *Bactrocera tryoni*. *Bactrocera*



Cold treatments trialled with success with Shepard variety

tryoni mature eggs (60% developed) at 23 to 24 hours old and first instars at two days old (post infesting) in Shepard avocado were treated simultaneously in the cold room for each trial. Normal confirmatory trials would be undertaken using a single time period (e.g. 7 days). However due to the short production season for Shepard avocados a decision was made to double the size of the trials and include a second sample period. In addition to having two sample periods the confirmatory trials were undertaken against two life stages (eggs and first instar) rather than a single stage. Treatments were found to be effective against *B. tryoni* with no survivors recorded from an estimated 56535 and 35035 treated eggs and first instar larvae respectively in either sample period. As there were two sample periods (7 and 9 days) a total of 183140 insects were treated with no survivors recorded.

Trial fruit

Fruit weights

All fruit were individually weighed. The average, minimum and maximum weights for each confirmatory trial are shown in Table 1. The average weight of treated fruit for each trial ranged from 189 to 221g.

Table 1. Average (minimum and maximum) fruit weights (grams) of fruit from each confirmatory trial.

Trial Number and Stage	Control Fruit	Irradiated Fruit Day 7 Sample	Treated Fruit Day 9 Sample	Baster Egg Control Fruit	Time to Ripe Fruit	Dry Matter Fruit	Probe Fruit
Trial 1 Egg	188 (181-222)	189 (181-229)	189 (182-228)	223 (212-234)	22°C 191 (189-210)	162 (149-182)	164 (161-168)
Trial 1 First instar	188 (181-219)	189 (181-229)	189 (182-228)	226 (219-233)	28°C NA		
Trial 2 Egg	191 (179-229)	193 (179-232)	194 (189-232)	209 (200-217)	22°C 189 (189-214)	169 (157-190)	169 (159-190)
Trial 2 First instar	191 (179-229)	193 (179-232)	193 (189-232)	209 (179-233)	28°C 189 (189-214)		
Trial 3 Egg	219 (189-249)	221 (182-249)	221 (183-249)	221 (209-247)	22°C 223 (192-251)	191 (182-199)	189 (182-196)
Trial 3 First instar	219 (189-247)	220 (182-249)	221 (183-251)	209 (191-219)	28°C 222 (192-250)		
Trial 4 Egg	192 (189-229)	194 (186-230)	194 (181-231)	187 (178-197)	22°C 196 (189-232)	166 (164-169)	165 (160-170)
Trial 4 First instar	192 (189-229)	194 (189-231)	194 (181-231)	209 (178-234)	28°C 199 (189-232)		

Dry Matter

Marketing requires a minimum maturity standard of 21% dry matter at harvest. Initial dry matter tests were performed 1-2 days postharvest and these tests gave average results of 24.18%, 28.41%, 31.22% and 32.76% for confirmatory trial 1-4 respectively (Table 3), which exceeds the minimum standard for maturity. The avocados were all sourced from the same supplier in Mareeba and harvest dates for these trials were 18 March 2013, 4 April 2013, 29 April 2013 and 14 May 2013 for confirmatory trial 1-4 respectively.

Table 2. Means and standard errors for dry matter of Shepard avocado for confirmatory trials.

Trial number	Dry matter samples	Average % dry matter	
		mean	s.e.
1	Initial test (2 days postharvest)	24.18	1.32
2	Initial test (1 day postharvest)	28.41	0.45
3	Initial test (1 day postharvest)	31.22	1.27
4	Initial test (1 day postharvest)	32.76	1.14

Time to ripe

The average 'time to ripe' results for the avocados used in the confirmatory trials ranged from 5.27 to 9.40 days (Table 3). 'Time to ripe' is the time required for the fruit to reach firm-ripe from time of harvest when held at constant ripening temperature. 'Mature fruit usually ripen within 7 to 12 days without shriveling' (Vock et al. 2001).

Any days the fruit were at ambient temperature was added to calculate the time to ripe days. As we wanted the 'time to ripe' of the fruit being used for the cold trials the 'time to ripe' fruit was stored initially with the trial fruit in the cold room. The 'time to ripe' was held with the confirmatory trial fruit in the cold room for 5, 4-5, 6, and 5 days for confirmatory trials 1 to 4 respectively before being placed at a constant ripening temperature. The time fruit was stored in the cold room was not added to the

'time to ripe' results which could account for the shorter than expected 'time to ripe' results.

Table 3. Means and standard errors for time to ripe of Shepard avocado for confirmatory trials.

Trial number	Time to ripe holding temperature and humidity	Average time to ripe (days)	
		mean	s.e.
1	22°C 80%RH	9.40	0.36
	26°C 70%RH	N/A	N/A
2	22°C 80%RH	7.40	0.29
	26°C 70%RH	5.33	0.21
3	22°C 80%RH	6.27	0.21
	26°C 70%RH	5.27	0.25
4	22°C 80%RH	7.27	0.32
	26°C 70%RH	6.73	0.25

While all disinfestation trials have a standard set up of untreated (control fruit) and treated fruit the methodology in this trial incorporated other estimates of control viability. Cellulose sponge controls were set up as a standard to check egg hatch and carrot media controls were also set up to check egg hatch and pupal recovery of viable eggs. Egg hatch levels on cellulose sponge controls and egg hatch levels and pupal recovery on carrot media controls recorded good results which indicates the colony was vigorous and suitable for use in the confirmatory trials. The mean percentage hatch for control eggs on cellulose sponge for trials treating eggs and first instars was 86.08±1.69 and 86.17±1.19 respectively.

The mean percentage hatch for control eggs on carrot media for trials treating eggs and first instars was 86.08±0.67 and 85.23±0.85 respectively. Pupal recovery on carrot media controls was also high for trials treating eggs and first instars with the mean percentage of pupae recovered being 77.54±0.81 and 77.15±1.20 respectively.

Results and discussion

The results obtained in this project provide a level of certainty that hard mature, undamaged fruit with cold treatment at ≤3.5°C for 7 days will control *B. tryoni* in Shepard avocado. A technical market access submission will be developed based on the results obtained in this project.

Four large scale confirmatory trials tested a fruit core temperature of 3±0.5°C at 7 and 9 days (treated simultaneously) against mature eggs and first instars of *B. tryoni*. Both the 7 and 9 day treatments were found to be effective against *B. tryoni* with no survivors recorded from an estimated 56535 and 35035 treated eggs and first instar larvae respectively at either sample period. As there were two sample periods (7 and 9 days) a total of 183140 insects were treated with no survivors recorded. The lower

Assessing reduced cold treatments for Shepard Avocado continued

mortality 95% confidence limit for the true mortality rate of insects for nil survivors from 56535 insects treated is 99.9947% and for nil survivors from 35035 insects is 99.9914%. The international phytosanitary requirement of Probit 9 or 99.9968% true mortality (95% confidence) is nil survivors from approximately 93 613.

It should be noted that under normal field conditions fruit would never be exposed to such an artificially high level of infestation. In fact, previous DAFF studies on the host status of avocado have shown that hard mature, undamaged fruit still attached to the tree are very poor hosts or conditional non hosts to fruit fly.

The use of very high numbers of eggs per fruit also meant that both control fruit and treated fruit were supplied with an artificial food source to supplement feeding if required. By placing test fruit on carrot media any surviving insects had an alternate food source if the test fruit were completely consumed due to high infestation rates (N.B. there were no survivors in the treated fruit and as such

neither the test fruit or the carrot media was consumed by the insects).

While all disinfestation trials have a standard set up of untreated (control fruit) and treated fruit the methodology in this trial included additional estimates of control viability. Cellulose sponge controls were set up as a standard to check egg hatch and carrot media controls were also set up to check egg hatch and pupal recovery of viable eggs. Egg hatch levels on cellulose sponge controls and egg hatch levels and pupal recovery on carrot media controls recorded good results which indicates the colony was vigorous and suitable for use in the confirmatory trials. The mean percentage hatch for control eggs on cellulose sponge for trials treating eggs and first instars was 86.08 ± 1.69 and 86.17 ± 1.19 respectively. The mean percentage hatch for control eggs on carrot media for trials treating eggs and first instars was 86.08 ± 0.67 and 85.23 ± 0.85 respectively. Pupal recovery on carrot media controls was also high for trials treating eggs and first instars with the mean percentage of pupae recovered



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being 77.54 ± 0.81 and 77.15 ± 1.20 respectively.

All samples were above the minimum marketing requirement of 21% dry matter at harvest. Initial dry matter tests were performed 1-2 days postharvest, and these tests gave average results of 24.18%, 28.41%, 31.22% and 32.76% for confirmatory trials 1-4 respectively. The avocados were all sourced from the same supplier in Mareeba and harvest dates for these trials corresponds with the end of the production period for Shepard avocado in Far North Queensland. The average time to ripe results were shorter than expected but this may be due to the fact that fruit were cool stored for 4 to 6 days before being placed at a constant ripening temperature. The time fruit was stored in the cold room was not included in calculations which could account for the shorter than expected time to ripe results.

The results obtained in this project provide a level of certainty that the use of hard mature, undamaged fruit with cold treatment at $\leq 3.5^\circ\text{C}$ for 7 days will control *B. tryoni* in Shepard avocado.

Recommendations

Technical market access submissions will be developed based on the results from this project.

Acknowledgments

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Member Profile

Colin & Louise Foyster

Colin & Louise Foyster, Aussie Orchards

Avocados Australia members Colin and Louise Foyster are both avocado growers and packers and run a number of avocado orchards. Avocados Australia took time out to visit their orchard based at Pretty Gully in New South Wales. We also invited them to share their perspective on being avocado growers as well as the value of being members of Avocados Australia. Here's what they had to say.

What prompted you to become a member of Avocados Australia?

It is our key industry representative body, and it is a very professionally run organization.

Would you encourage other avocado growers to join Avocados Australia?

All growers gain from Avocados Australia so if you benefit you should also feel compelled to become a member.

What attracted you to the idea of becoming an avocado grower?

I planted a few trees when I left school because two uncles had avocado orchards in the Nambour area. Many years later I realized how suitable the land was for



Left, Aussie orchard's Pretty Gully orchard manager Trevor Broderick with Avocados Australia's John Tyas and Nathan Symonds.

avocados when I was growing potatoes in at Pretty Gully.

How long have you been an avocado grower and what avocado varieties do you grow?

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I planted my first tree in 2000. We now have all Hass in New South Wales, all Shepard in North Queensland. These are the varieties that suit the market and climate. There really are no alternatives.

What did you do before you became avocados growers?

We are still base on the Tweed where we have sugar cane. This is where we pack and market the NSW avocados.

How many orchards do you own and manage?

Pretty Gully in NSW has 90 hectares of mature trees with room for another 1000 trees. Mutchilba in North Queensland has 80 hectares planted evenly since 2009 with the last trees to complete this project to be planted next year. Aussie Orchards packs and markets for one other grower in North Queensland.

Where did you obtain your rootstock when you set out to grow avocados?

Andersons Nursery has supplied almost all of my trees originally on Reed but with a preference for Velvic with Shepard. I am now experimenting with dwarfing rootstock at Pretty Gully because of the problem of prolific vegetative growth.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learnt about growing avocados?

After several very wet periods in the last few years I think drainage is on everybody's mind in the East of Australia. Avocados are a very unforgiving crop so they must be maintained in all aspects constantly.

What approach do you take in deciding time of harvest?

In New South Wales we try to fit in between the Major producers in Bundaberg and Western Australia. Shepards



The Pretty Gully orchard's red volcanic soils.

have a clear season where they are the best consumer option between February to mid April.

What in your opinion is the main challenge that you need to overcome in successfully running an avocado farm in Australia?

One of the main challenges in Australia is the relatively high labour cost compared to our competitors in other countries. And to overcome this we need to mechanize to the maximum wherever possible.

What are the soil types like in your growing region?

Pretty Gully has deep red volcanic soil, high in organic matter combined with high rainfall. Mutchilba is the opposite end of the scale with granite sand of no nutritional value and regularly no rainfall, it's almost hydroponics. The common attribute of soils and sites is that they are both free draining.

How do you obtain pickers to assist you at harvest time?

About 90% of our pickers are backpackers at harvest time and they contact us. Usually the men work in the field and the women in the packhouse.

Which pests are of most concern to you in your orchards at the moment?

Fruit Spotting Bug in North Queensland is clearly the biggest threat facing our production.

What do you think are the biggest opportunities for the avocado industry in Australia?

Our first focus should always be supplying Australia with consistent volumes of good quality fruit. But to do this we must also support a viable export sector to take the oversupply of the Australian market at times.

What advice would you give to farmers looking to make the move to avocado farming?

Be sure you are growing in the right area and know where your market is before you start.

Have you received your copy of "Avocado Australia Problem Solver Field Guide"?

Yes and it is of great value, especially for the benefit of new people coming into our business from time to time.

Do you enjoy eating avocados yourself? If so, how do you enjoy eating them best?

We eat them almost daily in salads or as a spread. I think the breakfast market for smoothies is also a great product.

Growing Generations

This year has been declared International Year of Family Farming and though this largely is in reference to small landholders it seems a good reason to take the time to acknowledge the contributions that farming families are making to the Australian avocado industry. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) there were 93,300 farming families in operation in 2011.

A recent ABC Rural article stated that consumers seem increasingly interested in knowing where their food comes from. This would suggest that Australian farmers are becoming more top of mind for consumers. Add to this the fact that (according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation) estimates suggest that food production worldwide will need to increase by 70% if it is to cater for the expected increase in global population (population was approximately 7 billion in 2012 and forecasted to be 9.1 billion by 2050). Also in 2009, Australian farms produced 93% of the total volume of food consumed in Australia. Therefore, considering all of this, the value of the world's and Australia's farmers quickly comes into focus.

Talking Avocados recently spoke with a number of avocado growers located across Australia about how they became involved with farming and what it means to be part of the industry.

The Silver family have been New South Wales based avocado growers for over two generations. Tom Silver and his father Philip were drawn to farming not only for sound business reasons but also for the lifestyle it affords. Philip Silver established the avocado operation in northern NSW after leaving a career as an accountant in Sydney. Tom took over the operations of the avocado operation after his father retired but Philip still maintains an interest.

"I had a number of friends on the land and I always admired their lifestyle," said Philip Silver

"I believe that a family unit is the natural unit of society and family farmers are good for the community and it is good to be able to run your own enterprise on the land."

Philip said that when they bought the farm their children were young. As they grew older their children could jump on a tractor after school and help out.

Now that Philip's son Tom is running the business Philip is proud to have been able to have a second generation involved.

With trends toward fewer farmers and an ageing farmer population cultivating less arable land, farm succession planning has become an important issue. Philip Silver agrees.

"I believe that generational transfer is important and it helps if the next generation is smarter and harder working than the previous generation."

"Successful inter-generational transfer requires both equity as well as communication, but when it is done properly it is very satisfying for a parent to work with the next generation."



*The Silvers, two generations of farmers (possibly three in future).
Photo by Veronica Silver.*

According to Tom 95% of the avocado growers in his region are family-run farms and he believes that farming families have an important part to play in Australia.

"Family farms contribute to, and help maintain, the rural business sector," said Tom Silver.

According to the ABS people in farming families are also typically known for having a greater sense of connectedness to their local communities.

When asked how a family-run farming enterprise operates differently compared with, for example, a large-scale conglomerate Tom pointed out that family farms often spend less money on administration, and can gain more efficiency from their staff.

"As a small family farming operation I see how employees put the extra time in when necessary," he said.

Tom added that the *"eye of regulation seems to sit heavier on the bigger operations rather than the small."*

An article that appeared in the media recently published the quote that *"Australians want farms run by families"*. Talking Avocados asked Tom if he believed this to be true from his experience and observations.

"I think the appeal is that it's the romance of family-run farms, local people are interested in their local area and their local community."

"Australian family farms are very important, and will always play a big part in the industry, especially in horticulture."

Moving to Western Australia, Talking Avocados talked with an avocado growing family that very much has close ties within their local community. Roma Spiccia comes from a family that has been running family farms for three generations. Roma is an avocado grower and packer and her daughter Sarina Restifo plays a key role in the operation of their family-run business.

When Roma's father came to Australia he did what he knew well, established a farm, and farming was also his passion.

"My father was an apple and vegetable grower but it was my exposure to the family business that inspired me to establish my own farming operation and I chose avocados," she said.

According to Roma nearly 100% of the avocado farms in operation in her region are family-run farms.

"I like the fact that our family operation can provide work for my children and I know other parents who would love to be in the same position," said WA grower Roma Spiccia.

Roma believes the potential for a family farm to diversify is massive.

"If you have a quality product it will be well received and effective marketing is very important."

"I can't believe how the avocado industry has grown over the years."

Roma volunteers as an organiser of the Karragullen Expo in her region (an event that won 'Winner of the Premiers' Award for Community Event' in 2013) this year the event will include a focus on avocados.

Northern Queensland grower Paul Lankester says farming has been part of the Lankester family for many generations. The first venture taking the form of a vineyard planted in Victoria.

Paul, now 34, began running a family farm business at the age of 22 with family guidance. He thinks that mentoring and leadership programs like HAL's "Horticulture the Next Generation" program are good initiatives. He studied Agricultural Science and marketing through university.

"My father grew up in the orchards surrounding Melbourne, packing and selling apples and pears, later going on to over 45 years in the banana industry in Coffs Harbour, Innisfail and the Atherton Tablelands," said NQ grower Paul Lankester.

"We began growing avocados in the mid 1990's and saw an opportunity in a growing industry in which we could offer value."

So what attracted his family to the idea of running a farming enterprise rather than any other kind of business?

"Farming is a way of life rather than a job, in which family members can grow and develop the industry from one generation to the next," he said.

According to Paul Lankester the Atherton Tablelands region is dominated by family farming businesses.

"The number of family run enterprises Australia wide is declining and the Atherton Tablelands is no different as this area is very productive and is attractive to corporate farming and large business expansion."

Paul believes that as farming becomes more efficient and productive it is a natural progression for farming enterprises to become larger as there is more scope for return on investment. He further added however that family farming is becoming increasingly harder to compete.

"I believe initiatives should be provided for family farming business ventures to develop areas of sustainable growth for the future of Australian agriculture e.g. water security, soil and climate. Many family run businesses cannot compete due to one or all of these factors."

There are a number benefits in running a family-run farming enterprise.

"Good family farming businesses can offer greater control in all aspects of primary production due to being owner-operators. I believe this can result in greater quality of production and sustainability if it is managed correctly."

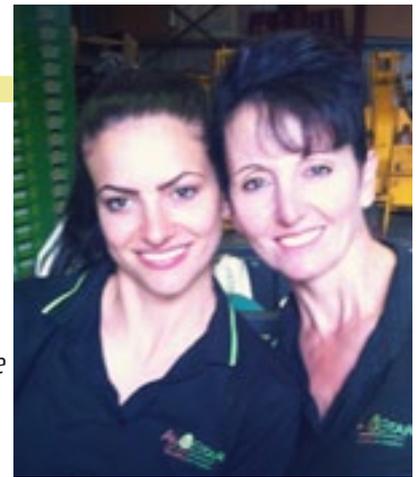
It is Paul's belief that many corporate family ventures are initiated by family owned businesses.

"It is a natural progression for the farming sector to change and develop like any other sector. I believe family farming will most likely morph into larger scale enterprises that take on similar aspects of current larger farming entities."

Many good family farming businesses in Paul's growing region are already diversifying.

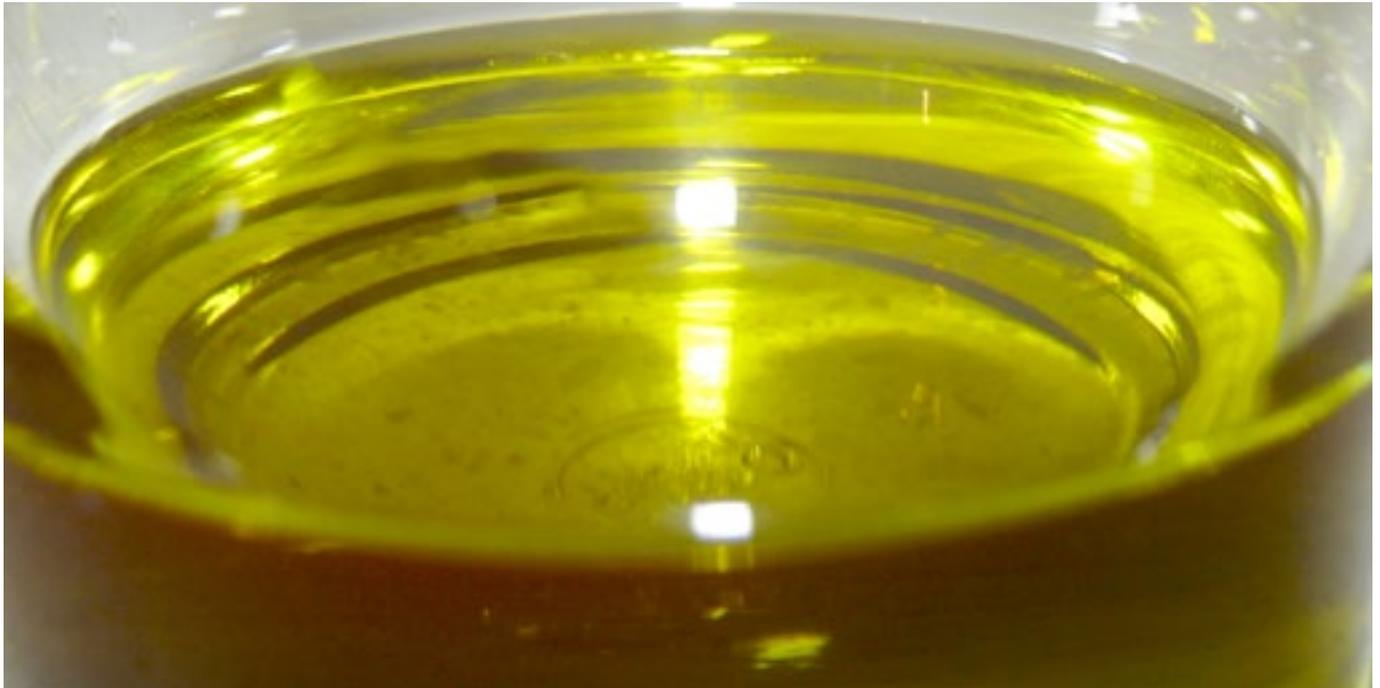
Like Tom Silver and Roma Spiccia, Paul Lankester also wants to see industry growth.

"To a degree I feel that in order for the Australian agricultural industry to grow to its potential it will need outside investment to generate the capital required to develop the areas of opportunity, such as the far north of Queensland, Western Australia and Northern Territory, otherwise this great opportunity will never be realised. However, Australian farming ventures should be at the forefront of government priority in this area, now and into the future."



WA growers & packers Roma Spiccia and her daughter, Sarina Restifo.

Cold-pressed Avocado Oil – What’s the Appeal



Given their high oil content it is not surprising that avocados are becoming an attractive option when looking to extract its oil. Cold-pressed avocado oil is relatively new in culinary circles, and its production volume is relatively small compared with other oils, with approximately 2000 tonnes produced per year. New Zealand, Australia, Mexico, Chile, United States and South Africa are among the main avocado oil producers (Woolf et al, 2008).

One of avocado oil’s main benefits over some other oils is its high smoke point when heated (over 250°C). It is because of this that avocado oil has great appeal in food service when cooking. The smoke point is the point at which heated oil begins to emit smoke and acrid odours, a state that can impart an unpleasant flavour to food. Avocado oil is also used in cold meal preparation in salads and other meals.

Avocado oil is appreciated for its distinctive aroma, taste and health benefits. As well as this avocado oil is distinctive by virtue of its colour or pigment. Pigments are important contributors to the appearance and healthful properties of both avocado fruit and the oils extracted from these fruits (Ofelia et al, 2006). Avocados are known to contain significant quantities of lipid soluble plant pigments including chlorophylls and carotenoids.

In 2005 a study published by the American Society for Nutritional Sciences found that consumption of a fruit as a lipid source with carotenoid-rich foods enhances carotenoid absorption in humans. Carotenoids possess antioxidant properties that have been associated with

cell protective mechanisms such as the regulation of cell growth and differentiation (Unlu et al, 2005 p431).

According to the Australian Avocados website, carotenoids are natural antioxidants that protect plants from the effects of the sun’s harmful rays. Similarly they may play a function protecting our eyes. A study in women found that those with the highest dietary intakes of lutein and zeaxanthin had greater amounts of pigments in the macula – the part of the eye responsible for central vision that can deteriorate with age. It is important to note that more research is needed.



Bede Mackenzie from Maleny Avocado Oil.

Currently consumers can purchase avocado oil in major supermarkets, fruit shops, delicatessens, and speciality stores. Fruit oils such as avocado oil are also gaining popularity in the food service sector in restaurants and cafes.

Maleny Avocado Oil is an Australia avocado producer that supplies select fruit shops, delicatessens and farmer's markets across Brisbane, areas of the Sunshine Coast and Southern Queensland. He sources his fresh avocado fruit from local growers and produces his avocado oil using a cold-pressed method.

"Cold pressed oils retain their flavour, aroma and nutritional value making them great for use in cooking," said Bede Mackenzie from Maleny Avocado Oil.

A recent Chilean study conducted by the University of Santo Tomás found that avocado oil, obtained by means of cold extraction method, allows for maintaining in the oil significant amounts of the bioactive compounds present in the fruit as occurs in olive oil extraction (Flores et al, 2014). It should be noted that when the oil is extracted by non-cold press extraction procedures, physical and

chemical characteristics of the final product can suffer changes.

Chile extracts its avocado oil mainly from the Hass variety, as does local avocado oil maker Maleny Avocado Oil.

Due to the composition of its fatty acids, avocado oil meets the nutritional requirements that focus on the reductions of the amount of saturated fats in food. Avocado oil has a low amount of saturated fatty acids (between 10% and 19% depending on the fruit variety and maturity stage), a high amount of oleic acid (close to 80%), and an acceptable level of fatty acids polyunsaturated (11%-15%) and no cholesterol (Flores et al, 2004).

Currently the production of avocado oil in the world is small compared with other oils and very little published information exists about avocado oil. Production methods differ from country to country, from producer to producer so avocado oil quality can differ greatly. Also there are few regulations in the world regulating avocado oil quality given that this product is a relatively new contribution to the market.



Research Update

Phellinus noxius (Brown root rot)

By David Armour and Elizabeth Dann

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We have been working on several aspects of the *Phellinus noxius* root rot problem in avocados. In previous articles (Spring 2004, Autumn 2008 and Winter 2009), we have described the disease, highlighted the impact it can have on orchard productivity and indicated a number of management options which aim to minimise further tree deaths in the orchard. Unfortunately, too many growers are familiar with this disease either on their own or nearby orchards. We know it continues to spread within orchards and we are aware of its effects in an increasing number of orchards. It is still, however, confined to the tropical and sub-tropical eastern production zones.

The remnant woody debris in the soil is particularly important for the long term survival of the fungus. In August last year, we visited an avocado orchard in Childers suffering severe losses due to *Phellinus noxius*. We collected root debris buried up to 1 m deep from sites where trees had died and been removed at least 3-4 years earlier. We confirmed presence of viable *Phellinus noxius* by isolation onto media, in 40% of roots which were typically 2-4cm in diameter. These roots were encrusted with the characteristic “stocking” such as that seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Avocado root approximately 2cm diameter, excavated from a known *Phellinus noxius* mortality site. The tree had been removed 3-4 years prior to excavation. Note the soil adhering to the “stocking” encrusting the root and the honeycombed interior containing viable fungus

There are no chemical treatment options identified yet, and this highlights the need to clear all debris from infested planting sites. We do not believe that *Phellinus noxius* survives for long periods in soil alone.

A series of glasshouse based experiments are underway which will provide more information on crop diversification options for replacement of severely affected orchards. We are examining the reaction of Reed, Velvick and Zutano avocado seedlings (Figure 2) as well as seedlings of passionfruit, citrus, mango and macadamia to *Phellinus noxius*.

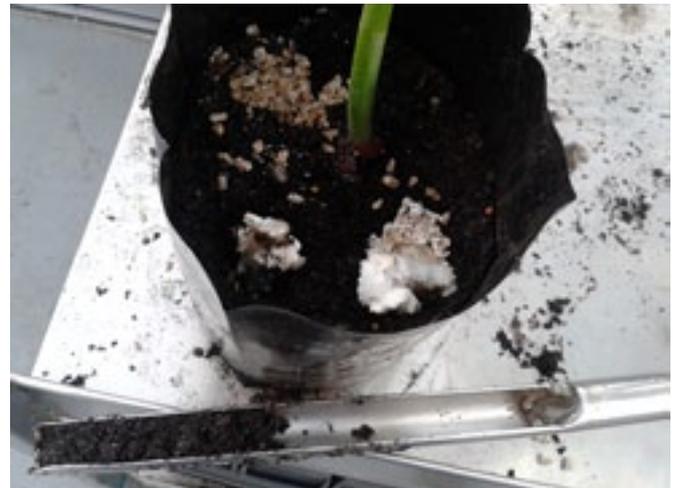


Figure 2. Above: Inoculation of seedlings (in this case an avocado) was achieved by filling cores of soil taken from each pot with grain which had been extensively colonised by *Phellinus noxius* (white mycelia). The mycelia will turn brown with age. Below: Avocado seedlings (black arrows) inoculated with *Phellinus noxius*. Healthy, non-inoculated seedlings are on the left.



Figure 3. An inoculated passionfruit, with *Phellinus noxius* actively growing from the colonised grain (white arrows). Note the healthy fibrous passionfruit roots growing adjacent to, and occasionally touching the *Phellinus noxius* mycelia.



Figure 4. David Armour is a plant pathologist working with Liz on all experimental aspects of AV10001. His time is split between AV10001 and a project funded by UQ on effects of biological amendments on plant health and suppression of *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.

Initial results have shown that avocado seedlings are far more susceptible to *Phellinus noxius* than hoop pine and macadamia. As the trial progresses, we have observed that the very fine roots (e.g. macadamia and passionfruit) are relatively unaffected by *Phellinus noxius* (Figure 3), or just die back at the point of contact with *Phellinus noxius* without killing the plant. Our current understanding, based on these trials, is that *Phellinus noxius* needs to encounter larger diameter roots or stem (>1cm) which it can then colonise and encrust as it progresses towards the root crown, girdling it and eventually causing death.

We intend to follow up this glasshouse experiment with another which will examine several treatments, including fungicide drenching and fumigation, for their potential to eliminate *Phellinus* in woody debris remaining in the ground following tree removal.

Acknowledgements

This update forms part of Project AV10001 which is funded using avocado grower R & D levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia Ltd. AV10001 is due for completion in December 2014.



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Avocados Marketing Update

Turning Avocado Enthusiasts into Avocado Lovers

New Campaign Launch

A New Strategic Direction

Underpinning the Australian Avocados marketing activities has been a significant Industry investment in consumer research to guide the development of the new strategic marketing direction. Fundamentally research revealed that the previous marketing focus on driving avocado versatility has been achieved – evolving from HOW TO USE avocados to building a DESIRE to use them MORE OFTEN is the focus of the new marketing campaign.

The new marketing campaign aims to increase consumption of Australian avocados by creating a stronger emotional connection with targeted consumers that elevates avocado VALUE.

A New Target Market for a new campaign

An important change in focus for the new campaign is targeting the right consumers. Avocado consumers are better segmented based on their attitudes and behaviours not just their demographic life-stage. As a result of the Project Avocado Accelerator research (October 2012) a new approach to consumer segmentation for Australian Avocados has been developed. It identifies opportunities for greater avocado consumption with consumers who have a higher engagement and connection with avocados;

- Avocado Lovers and Enthusiasts are found across all life stage segments - these core consumers represent 63% of the total category volume
- Avocado Lovers and Enthusiasts can see themselves purchasing more - 79% of Enthusiasts and 90% of Lovers can see themselves purchasing more often
- Avocado Enthusiasts are the largest segment at 27% with the biggest opportunity to increase consumption

Lovers	Enthusiasts	Challenge	Functional	Supportive
63% of avocado volume		37% of avocado volume		

A New TVC Campaign

A new catchy and entertaining television commercial will be the centre piece of Australian Avocados marketing activity during 2014. By bringing avocados to life in a high quality 30 second television commercial it aims to build consumers emotional commitment to purchasing avocados. The following details the background and

creative process involved in developing the new television commercial for Australian Avocados.

The Creative Journey

Creating the television commercial has been an extended process that has involved significant investment in consumer research and creative testing to ensure that the new creative idea resonates with consumers. The foundations of this direction were the consumer insights gained from the Project Accelerator research (October 2012) which identified the core strategy around building an “emotional” connection with consumers.

1. Developing Brand Territories

The creative process started with a brief to the advertising agency JWC to develop potential ideas that would answer the challenge of building a greater emotional connection with avocado consumers. The Project Accelerator research had provided some key insights about how consumers engage with avocados as part of their lives. Four (4) creative territories were developed as possible directions – that avocados are an affordable luxury, that avocados offer a big reward for little effort, that consumers have an avocado “moment” and that avocados can “lift” your day.

The four territories were explored further in consumer qualitative research (November 2012) and provided clear feedback on a preferred direction – that avocados provide a “lift” was a favourite amongst the target audience. The idea of a “lift” meant different things to different groups however it resonated with them all. It wasn’t seen as a physical lift (eg.Red Bull) but a more about how a person feels inspired. The challenge was to get the right balance that reflects the layers of anticipation, transformation and enhancement avocados can bring.

2. Concept Development

Having identified the preferred brand territory JWC set out to explore different ways to deliver this in a story. The aim was to develop an original and engaging idea, ensure the campaign clearly communicates an emotional lift in a memorable way and include a campaign ‘device’ that could be leveraged in future activity. It also needed to be reflective of the overall brand essence and personality achieving the desire positioning – everyday gourmet.

The concept development process between HAL and JWC explored numerous manifestations of the idea which could take the brand in different directions. A final concept

was agreed by HAL and presented to the Avocado IAC (February 2013) for endorsement.

3. The Concept - Love That Avocado Feeling

The recommended idea presented to the IAC centred on the consumer insight that Avocados can make you feel good on the inside – this was captured in the campaign idea of **“Love that avocado feeling”**. To describe this further the avocado feeling starts with an eager anticipation at the mere thought of an avocado. This builds to a heightened level of enjoyment, as an avocado is actually tasted. This whole experience produces a positive experience of inner joy which is uplifting for the entire body. That avocado feeling can be seen in others because it expresses itself in elated body movements of carefree delight. These movements are representations of the unique and own-able way to open an avocado – which is of course THE TWIST.

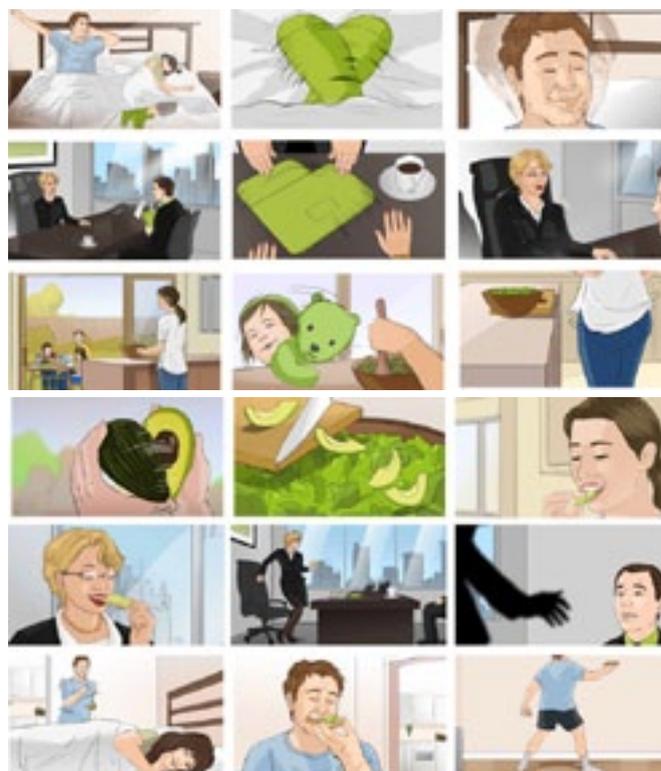
The proposed advertising idea shows people living their everyday lives when suddenly, they happen to see something that reminds them of an avocado. It brings out their avocado feeling – a state of happiness, joy, and want. This is all supported by a catchy and memorable music track that reflects the energy of the feeling.



4. Testing the Concept Idea

The concept was endorsed by the IAC with a key recommendation to test the idea against target consumers to provide reassurance that it would be well received. Given the significant investment required to produce a commercial this was considered a prudent and minor cost to deliver greater certainty to the success of the idea.

A detailed story board was developed (as per below) to provide an accurate representation of the commercial. The scene by scene illustration of the proposed commercial provided an accurate representation of the idea for consumers to assess;



The qualitative research completed by BDR Jones Donald (March 2013) provided strong endorsement of the idea that if well executed it should deliver on its promise. The key research concluded that;

- The likely effectiveness of the proposed commercial suggests the concept should succeed in achieving its objective, of encouraging increased purchasing by Avocado Lovers and Enthusiasts.
- The concept had a high level of engagement and resonance amongst the target audience that was observed in the groups.
- The research provided opportunities to strengthen the execution of the creative concept through particular focus on the setup, the music track, and engagement with the “Avocado moment”.

As a result of the research some minor changes were made to the script and character styles to enhance the overall idea however overall the concept was ready to progress to production.

Choosing a TV Director and Producer

Having confirmed in research that the TVC concept had strong potential the next stage in the process was to select a Director and production house that could bring the idea to life in an entertaining and engaging way, within the prescribed budget. This was a process in itself which involved an initial screening by the advertising

Avocados Marketing Update continued

agency JWC of potential Directors to create a short list of 3 preferred options. The preferred directors were asked to provide their "treatments" of how the storyboard could be brought to life covering style and tone of photography, the approach to music and character development as well as bringing their own interpretation of the idea.

The chosen director was **Tom Noakes** and his production company Photoplay Films. Tom demonstrated an excellent understanding of the concept and combined with his previous experience was considered to be inventive, with a progressive style and creative energy for directing eye-catching commercials. Some of his previous works included commercials for Fisher & Pykal, Penny Skateboards and Kia cars. A recent experiential campaign for Kia Cerato was awarded in the 'Top 6 Outdoor & Interactive' on Best Ads on TV and he is regarded as one of Australia's Top 10 Directors on Campaign Brief.



6. Pre Production

Having chosen Tom Noakes as Director and agreed on a shoot date for 31st October 2013 the process went into overdrive during this critical pre-production stage. Starting in late September 2013 this detailed phase interrogated every scene of the story board to determine casting, location, props, camera angles and lighting. The objective was to ensure all details were discussed and agreed ahead

of time to minimise any issues and costly delays that may occur on the shoot day. During this 6 week period weekly pre-production meetings between the advertising agency JWC, the Director, producers and HAL marketing ensured every step was discussed, agreed and approved.

A critical aspect of the pre-production was development of the composed musical piece which formed the basis for the actions, timing and energy of the characters. This involved briefing alternative musical studios to select the style that was the best fit to the story. The studio with the best sample composition was chosen to collaborate with the agency and TV director to deliver an energetic piece.

7. TV Shoot Day

The TV shoot was budgeted, scheduled and completed as a one 16 hour day that covered 2 separate shoot locations (Parramatta and Gladesville, Sydney) across 3 core scenes – breakfast, lunch and the family meal time. It involved a cast of 8 characters, a production crew of 20, the Director and the Producer. The JWC advertising agency creative team and HAL marketing were all on hand throughout the day to ensure the direction and "takes" were consistent with the decisions made during the pre-production process.





8. Post Production and Final Edit

The next step in the process moved into an editing suite in the hands of Tom Noakes to create a rough first cut version of the TVC timed to 30 seconds. In this process the Director was looking for the best possible “takes” that combined the best performances to music and timing that delivered as close to the final commercial as possible. This rough cut was then presented back to the advertising agency and HAL for approval so that the fine tuning could be completed. This final editing stage took about 2 weeks and included adding special colour effects, grading, sound mixing and timing of music.

Once the 30 second version was agreed this was also cut down to a shorter and punchier 15 second version to allow for extended media frequency.

The Final Commercial - ready for on-air

The end result is a television commercial with great production values with highly likable characters and performances, great avocado shots food with a unique hero avocado twist, and a catchy, memorable music track. It is an original TV commercial that shows people living their everyday lives when suddenly, they happen to see a “trigger” that looks like an avocado. It brings out their avocado feeling – a state of happiness, joy, and want.

Setting up of the Avocado anticipation:



The middle campaign device of an avocado twisting open:



Enjoying that avocado feeling:



The closing frame and logo lock-up of the commercial.

Avocados Marketing Update continued

A New Concentrated Media Plan

To maximise the industries investment in this new commercial a comprehensive **national television advertising campaign** including metro and regional advertising on free to air channels will reach 65% of avocado consumers a minimum of 3 times. The media strategy will deliver more heavily concentrated bursts of advertising and be timed to seasonal fruit availability to maximise the opportunity for all. This will also be supported digitally on-line targeting catch-up television as featured pre-rolls on key video sites as well as subscription TV.

The launch timing of the campaign is **w/c 27th April** which ensures consumers (main grocery buyers) are back into their routines after the Easter and school holiday breaks. This is a more effective media time when TV audience ratings recover against core programming. The media launch will feature 4 consecutive weeks of the 30 second commercial to build the brand message which will be reinforced by the 15 second commercial for another 3 weeks. The 15 second commercial provides cost effective frequency which means target consumers will see the commercial more often. The overall media strategy

summary is detailed in the table below;

OVERALL MEDIA SUMMARY	
Channel Selection	Networks 9 & 10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most efficient network selection The most relevant programming Cost efficient support through daytime & STV
Peak Splits	60% Peak + 40% Off-Peak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most efficient peak split Off-peak is cost effective programming for frequency
Markets	Metro + Regional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure maximum geographical coverage
Flighting	Late April - May - 4 consecutive weeks June - 3 consecutive weeks
TVC Strategy	30 & 15 second TVC's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch with 30 sec for maximum impact Follow through with 15 sec for cost efficient frequency.

The detailed media plan below highlights the weeks on air by region and by the split between the 30 and 15 second commercials.

The total calendar year block plan below highlights how 2014 will be a heavier media year for Australian Avocados. Following the launch campaign burst avocados will be back on air in August to maintain continuity and ensure that awareness doesn't fall away. Throughout the campaign the digital assets of the Australian Avocados

AUSTRALIAN AVOCADOS BOOKED MEDIA PLAN : LAUNCH														
COVERAGE	DURATION	APRIL				MAY				JUNE				
		6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29
Sydney	30'													
	15'													
Melbourne	30'													
	15'													
Brisbane	30'													
	15'													
Adelaide	30'													
	15'													
Perth	30'													
	15'													
NNSW	30'													
	15'													
SNSW	30'													
	15'													
Victoria	30'													
	15'													
Queensland	30'													
	15'													
Subscription TV	30' & 15													

facebook page and website will continue to push content to support the key campaign messages.

MEDIA CHANNELS	2014											
	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC		
Video - TVC / PEA												
Video - Online												
Digital Banner												
Social Media												
Website & Search												

New Look Australian Avocado Website: www.avocados.org.au

The Australian Avocado website is an essential source of avocado inspiration and information for many consumers achieving over 15,000 unique visitors every month. The launch of the new television campaign is an ideal opportunity to launch an updated website with improved functionality and a more contemporary design. Through improved page navigation, search functionality and content the new website will provide a better user experience for existing and new visitors.

New Educational POS to build consumer confidence

Overcoming barriers to increased purchase is a core strategy for Australian Avocados. Many consumers still lack the confidence in their ability to either choose an avocado that is “ripe” for them or to manage the ripening of their avocados at home. In specific consumer research found that 58% of avocado purchasers said they would purchase more if they had specific information that helps with selection, ripening and handling. To address this significant opportunity new in-store and take home POS has been developed as well as a new “How To” section on the website. This will also be regular content through facebook.



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* STANDARD 5.5KG TRAY WITH INSERT - LOCAL AREA



News from Around the World

California Avocado Launches On-fruit Branding Program

The California Avocado Commission (CAC) has launched an on-fruit branding program that will clearly identify California avocados as from California and provide close linkage to CAC's marketing campaign. Several avocado handlers will be applying the new California avocado labels to their fruit this season.

The callout of California origin has been a long-time coming and is in response to the rise in consumers' interest in locally grown produce and checking for country of origin. The Commission also conducted retail tests in 2013 to determine consumer response to the labels. The positive consumer reaction led to the rollout with the California handlers resulting in assorted programs featuring the California-branded labels.

"The California avocado handlers have been open to the research and to the exploration of how to support the program. Each packing line is different so it is not a one size fits all program," says Jan DeLyser, vice president of marketing. "Adding a second label to the fruit or changing their labelling practices to include the California brand during California season is no small feat, but they understand the value this information provides to encourage consumers to purchase more avocados."

CAC also is readying its western-focused marketing and merchandising campaign to start in late-April with a consumer press release and mat release announcing the start of California avocado season. The releases also promote California avocados as an ingredient for healthy snacks and include avocado nutrition messaging. CAC registered dietitian ambassador Katie Ferraro developed four easy and delicious "100-calorie snack" recipes in support of the program.

In April CAC hosted a series of season opener live chats on its Facebook page, which had more than a quarter of a million fans. The same month California avocado grower Doug O'Hara was guest host discussing growing avocados in the Golden State. Registered dietitian Emily Schiller hosted a live chat with fans about avocado nutrition, with an emphasis on snacking. Wrapping up the month a chef talked with fans about cooking with avocados. Avocado usage ideas from the chef provided a segue way into one of the biggest consumption events of the year for avocados, Cinco de Mayo.

California avocado fans could chat, ask questions, share ideas and comment for a chance to win prizes, including fresh California avocados and chef cook books. The contest and event was publicized via CAC's new blog, The Scoop,

promoted Facebook posts, an email newsletter and recurring social media posts.

DeLyser noted that the California avocado crop this season is expected to be in the neighbourhood of 300 million pounds, which is in the "average-size" crop range. Harvest timing will mean a condensed season compared to last year, with good availability from late-April through early September.

Source: www.groceryheadquarters.com

Mexico: Global avocado demand surpasses supply

Seventeen years have passed since the U.S. opened its borders to Mexican avocados and during this time it has achieved remarkable progress. The Mexican avocado production and industry have shown a level of maturity that has allowed it to overcome all of the quality, safety and residual challenges imposed by the international market.

Mexico exports about 50,000 tons of avocados per year to Japan, a country that is even more demanding in terms of residual pesticides than the United States. To do so, the country has introduced extraordinary measures to control the application of chemicals in orchards.

Recently, the country implemented a Pollution Risk Reduction System, which will be mandatory for all producers who wish to export. For the U.S. market, producers must register their orchards on the Integrated Harvest Information System site and, with the help of the local plant health service, must conduct chemical residue analysis using the Japanese standards.

One of the advantages of the avocado, which differentiates it from other fruits, is that, once the fruit has reached physiological maturity, the tree keeps it in good condition for a period of up to four months. Additionally, with a good management of the cold chain, its shelf life once it's harvested can last between 20 to 30 days. These features provide a flexible, competitive advantage that has allowed the avocado business to be much more controllable than other fruit sectors.

The fact that its maturity changes depending on how high above sea level it is grown allows producers to distribute the harvest throughout the year.

Despite the fears that the avocado market would stagnate, consumption worldwide has been growing at a rate of 3% per year over the last five years; thanks, in part, to the campaigns about the avocado's great nutritional qualities. Meanwhile, the planted surface has only increased 2%,

thus, profitability has increased for all global producers.

According to a study, APEAM's return on investment, when promoting avocado in countries like the U.S. and Japan, has been up to nine dollars for each dollar invested and Mexican avocado exports to the United States haven't hurt California farmers at all. During the first months of the 2013/2014 season, up to January, Mexico has exported 286,000 tons of avocado to the United States. This represents an increase in volume, even though exports had grown by 44% in the previous season.

The prices of Mexican exports to the U.S. have increased \$8 more than in the previous season. Currently, Mexican and Californian avocados have average prices of up to \$38 dollars for a 25-pound box (11.3 kilos), which proves the business is and will continue to be profitable.

Source: www.freshplaza.com

NZ: Ambitious plan to lift avocado output, profit

New Zealand's avocado industry is planning to triple productivity per hectare and quadruple industry returns over the next nine years.

The Avocado Industry Council and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) are negotiating a contract to initiate a five-year partnership programme called Go Global.

More than 73 per cent of New Zealand's 1600 avocado growers are in the Bay of Plenty. Avocados account for around two per cent of the Bay of Plenty's gross domestic product.

The programme will formally begin before the 2014 to 2015 avocado season.

The object of Go Global is to "equip the industry with the tools" to increase average productivity up to 12 tonnes per hectare and industry returns to \$280 million by 2023.

Avocado Industry Council chief executive Jen Scoular said the biggest issue for the industry is inconsistency.

Some orchards are achieving 23 tonnes per hectare, but the average yield in the 2012 to 2013 season was four tonnes per hectare.

"We know that we've got some very good orchards. What we've never done is analyse what they're doing or use what they're doing on other orchards."

MPI will contribute \$4.28m to Go Global over five years. An equivalent amount will be contributed by the Avocado Industry Council and six other industry co-investors.

"The programme requires all of the industry to work together," said Scoular. "That's pretty innovative for New Zealand, or for horticulture anywhere."

As well as research, funding will go towards a marketing strategy.

Scoular said the industry does not differentiate New Zealand avocados from any other avocados in the global market.

It is intended that the 'Go Global' concept will create a "New Zealand avocado story" outlining the health benefits and quality control of New Zealand fruit.

New Zealand accounts for around 2 per cent of global avocado production.

The programme will target the Asian market, where Scoular said there is an opportunity for New Zealand to gain a "first mover" advantage.

New Zealand's main competitors in the industry are

Planting Avocado Trees?

Birdwood Nursery is a specialist fruit tree nursery supplying the highest quality fruit trees to commercial growers and retail nurseries throughout Australia

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News from Around the World continued

Mexico and other Central American countries. These exporters focus on the United States market which Scoular said is growing at 10 per cent a year.

Scoular said New Zealand's goals in the Asian market are achievable.

New Zealand is the second biggest supplier of avocados to the Singaporean market after Australia, and Scoular said New Zealand dominance is increasing.

A survey last year showed the majority of Singaporean customers recognised New Zealand as an avocado supplier.

Australia has also doubled consumption over the last 10 years.

"We know what to do, we've just never had the funding," said Scoular.

She said once the five-year funding programme is finished and productivity issues are addressed, a levy can be taken from the industry to continue marketing and research activities.

Avocados are New Zealand's third largest fresh fruit export, behind kiwifruit and apples.

The Avocado Industry Council expects New Zealand's 2014 to 2015 season to produce a record five million trays, or more than 100 million avocados.

Source: www.stuff.co.nz

NZ: Avocado growers predict bumper crop

The New Zealand avocado industry is predicting a bumper export crop for the coming season - in excess of 5 million trays.

The bulk of the fruit is exported to Australia, but stiff competition there from the local industry means exporters are looking further afield, primarily to Asia.

Avoco and Avanza represent the bulk of New Zealand's avocado exporters.



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A Director of both, John Carroll, says the Asian market is very complex and not helped by the fact avocados aren't that well known in Asia.

"Avocados have been a consistently strong growing product around the world, but mainly in existing markets and Asia hasn't been focused on".

He says a lot of effort is being put into developing, what he calls new-frontier markets.

"We have plans to be involved in trade shows in Asia and tying in with American partners, so between us we can supply the market for 12 months".

Mr Carroll says it's hoped that about 25 percent of the export crop will end up in Asia, about 20 percent to the United States and the rest to Australia.

He says New Zealand avocados aren't exported to Europe due to problems with maintaining quality, as the bulk of exports are shipped.

"There are plenty of other, larger avocado producing nations much closer to Europe but if we thought we could overcome technical difficulties getting the fruit there, then we would try in a heartbeat."

Source: www.radionz.co.nz

Italy: Firmness tester for cherries, tomatoes and avocados

Classic firmness testers are not enough for tomatoes, cherries or avocados, so TR Turoni created a hardness tester (in the photo) to determine the best harvesting period.

Owner Enrico Turoni says that "hardness testers help not only for harvesting but also during storing to check how ripening is progressing."

In the past few years, TR Turoni has developed an expertise in ripeness control devices such as the DA-Meter, which is now a very popular instrument in the apple, pear, peach, nectarine, apricot and plum worlds.

The company managed to create new non-destructive instruments to supply precise information about ripening all the while reducing costs, as measurements are quicker and the produce tested does not need to be thrown away. "New devices are on the way," concludes Turoni.

Source: www.freshplaza.com

Grower Member Application Form

Avocados Australia Limited

ACN 105 853 807

For Associate and Affiliate membership application forms please go to www.avocado.org.au or call 07 3846 6566

Member Details

Business name and/or trading name:

ABN:

Key contacts:

Preferred address (postal):

Address of property (if different):

Contact Details

Business phone:

Home phone:

Fax:

Mobile:

Email:

Corporate Structure

How would you describe the nature of your operations (please tick)?

- Individual
 Partnership
 Company
 Trust
 Lessee
 Cooperative
 Other (please specify) _____

Please indicate the area of property that you crop for avocados (please tick)

- 0.5 - 5 ha
 6-19 ha
 20-49 ha
 50-99 ha
 100-149 ha
 150-199 ha
 200-499 ha
 500 ha+

Special Interests

Please tick your main areas of interest from any of the following:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer information | <input type="checkbox"/> Production management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental management/
sustainability | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Assurance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organic farming systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology/innovations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water management | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field days | <input type="checkbox"/> Supply chain management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pest management | <input type="checkbox"/> Key political issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

Grower Member Application continued

Payment Options

Grower Membership of Avocados Australia is \$143 pa (including GST). You can pay your membership by cheque or credit card. To pay your membership fee, please choose one of the following options:

Cheque

Please find enclosed a cheque for \$143.00 made payable to Avocados Australia Ltd.

Please charge \$143.00 to my credit card. Details are listed below.

Credit card (please circle):

MasterCard Visa

Credit card number: _____

Name on credit card: _____

Expiry date: _____

Signature: _____

Once you have completed this form please place it in an envelope addressed to:

**Avocados Australia
Reply Paid 8005
Woolloongabba Qld 4102**

(no stamp required within Australia):

For more information or assistance please go to

www.avocado.org.au or call on 07 3846 6566



News from Around the World continued

Inside the California drought's effect on food prices

American consumers are already feeling the pinch of rising food prices, and they will likely experience more-courtesy of California's devastating drought.

"I would expect a 28 percent increase for avocados and 34 percent for lettuce," said Timothy Richards, a professor of agribusiness at Arizona State University who conducted research released this week on probable crop price increases stemming from the ongoing drought.

In a phone call with CNBC.com, Richards added that the price increases would also include foods including berries, broccoli, grapes, melons, tomatoes, peppers and packaged salads. The higher rises should be felt in the next two to three months, he said.

To come up with his figures, Richards used retail-sales data from the Nielsen Perishables Group, an industry analytics and consulting firm, to estimate how much the prices might vary for the fruit and vegetable crops most likely to be affected by the drought.

Those most vulnerable are crops that use the most water or those sensitive to reductions in irrigation, according to Richards.

Industry estimates range from a half-million to 1 million acres of agricultural land in California likely to be affected by the current drought, said Richards. The state's governor, Jerry Brown, declared a state of emergency in January due to the lack of water.

The Golden State grows more than 200 different crops, some grown nowhere else in the U.S. California produces almost all of the country's almonds, apricots, dates, figs, kiwi fruit, nectarines, olives, pistachios, prunes, and walnuts. It leads in the production of avocados, grapes, lemons, melons, peaches, plums, and strawberries. Only Florida produces more oranges.

Richards said he believes between 10 and 20 percent of the supply of certain crops from the state could be lost.

Richards estimates that avocado prices are likely to go up by 17 to 35 cents to as much as \$1.60 each.

Richards said that even if the drought ended today, it would take months for his projected price increases to reverse, due to severely low snow pack in the California mountains. When it melts, that runoff helps feed the state's water supply.

He explained that even with the rising prices, consumers will likely be more willing to pay them for the items

he's researched. But Sherry Fey, vice president of Nielsen Perishables Group, is not so sure.

"We've identified certain consumers who will be more heavily affected by the price increases," she said in an email. "For example, younger consumers of avocados would be affected and likely not buy them."

Fey also said that non-produce snacking categories, such as chips and crackers that are often consumed with foods like avocados, could be negatively affected with lower sales.

Richards also said that retailers will start looking elsewhere for produce, and that includes importing more items from countries like Chile and Mexico.

That could be an issue for some consumers who want only domestic fruits and vegetables. Imports could help contain price increases but may create possible health concerns, according to Richards.

"We have border inspections of course but things that go wrong with crops usually happen at the growing source," Richards explained. "So there could be some added risk."

Besides the California drought, Richards said a shortage of labour in agriculture is aggravating price increases.

"It's like a perfect storm," he said. "We don't have enough water or enough workers to pick crops. So much food is left in the fields. It's just adding to the woes."

Source: au.finance.yahoo.com/news



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