

TALKING AVOCADOS

VII World Avocado
Congress
5 - 9 Sept 2011

**Get ready for the VII World
Avocado Congress!**

**Avocado R&D and marketing
program overview**



See you in Cairns!

Chairman's Perspective

As we enter this Winter period we can reflect on the Summer that passed us and hopefully we can erase the memory of it from our minds. Most of us had a bad run, except possibly for our Tri State growers who have had the best rain and river flows after long years of drought and despair. So, now we can look forward to the chill of winter and the promise of a better Spring, flowers, fruit set, and beyond.

Now you know where I am going with this. You really do deserve a break from the Winter and where better than in the tropical north? In the warm September sun of Cairns you can recharge your batteries, learn a bit, party a bit, and recover a bit. You may even make some new friends who speak the language of avocado. Get organised, close the shop down for a week and escape - it will be worth the effort! This VII World Avocado Congress is the Olympics of our business and you and I are the hosts.

The North Queensland growers are getting involved by acting as hosts for the touring groups who wish to visit avocado farms in this area. I am pleased to hear that as many as 15 or more growers have offered their farms up for show. I do sincerely thank those growers in advance for their support and for the good work I know they will do. I would also like to thank those researchers who are preparing presentations and displays for the Congress sessions. These are daunting tasks on top of already busy work schedules.

While we might seem to focus on matters of weather and the Congress, there is still a very important program of market development happening. This month our Food Service program is hosting three Chef Training Sessions that will be happening in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. This program educates chefs about how to use avocado in their menus year round. Also, the Early Childhood program is moving from the initial trial stage to a more

comprehensive program involving many more early childhood centres. There are programs running to develop the use of avocado in areas of fine dining to cafes and pub grub, from the corporate buffets to the kitchen table.

The funding required to lobby state governments and the Federal Government on issues such as bio-security, imports and other issues don't come from your avocado levies. So for this funding we need your support through your membership to Avocados Australia, if you are not a member please take the time to consider your membership for this great industry.

Jim Kochi

Jim Kochi, Chairman, Avocados Australia



WARNING

Avocados Australia has for a number of years paid a large amount of money for the industry's right to use the **Heart Foundation "Heart Tick"** on avocados.

If you are using a "Heart Tick" logo from anyone other than the label companies Label Press, Spicer Labels, Sinclair International and Warehouse Packaging and Design you are acting illegally.

No other label printers are able to legally print the "Heart Tick" for use on avocados. Avocados Australia is undertaking a clean up of the "Heart Tick" printing. We will lose access to the "Heart Tick" logo if it is used illegally.

Avocados Australia, AUF and the Heart Foundation will enforce their Registered Trademark rights to the fullest extent.

If you have non-genuine labels do not use them. If you know of label companies offering to print non-genuine "**Heart Tick**" labels for you please let us know on **1300 303 971**, so we can all help keep this valuable tool.

All growers could lose access to the "Heart Tick" logo if you don't act now.



CERT TM

Industry Matters

Written, edited and compiled by
Antony Allen, CEO of Avocados Australia

'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' launches into 2011

Avocado growers of Australia encourage early childhood educators to teach children to 'Eat the rainbow of colourful vegies and fruit'.

Avocado growers of Australia are proud to announce the 2011 launch of 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit'; an early childhood program that equips early childhood educators with the information to encourage children to 'Eat the rainbow of colourful vegies and fruit', 'Try new foods', and 'Eat more green plant foods'.

In August of last year Phase 1 of the 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' early childhood program received overwhelming positive feedback from participating early childhood centres. In 2011, Phase 2 is now well underway with more than three times the number of centres signing up.

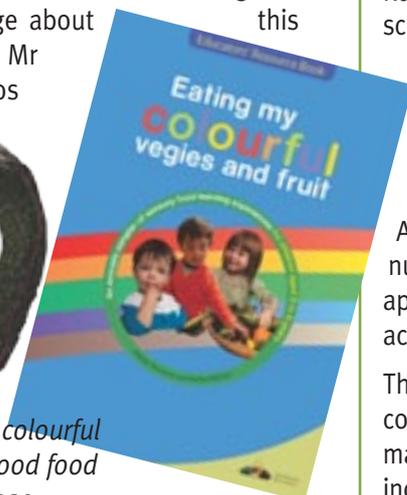
Increasing the consumption of fruit and vegetables has been identified as a priority by national health departments. The 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' early childhood program has been created to support national and state health initiatives by helping educators contribute to well being and food-focused learning experiences for young Australian children.

Avocados are the focus of activities in the 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' early childhood food learning resource package because they are uniquely suited to the overall aims of the program. From a nutritional perspective avocados deserve a place at the top of the list of desirable greens as they make such a valuable contribution to a child's diet.

"Avocado growers of Australia are committed to ensuring that healthy messages about childhood nutrition are included in the curriculum, and this resource will help equip early childhood educators with a range of learning tools and knowledge about this important issue" commented Mr Antony Allen, CEO of Avocados



A selection of the 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' early childhood food learning resource package.

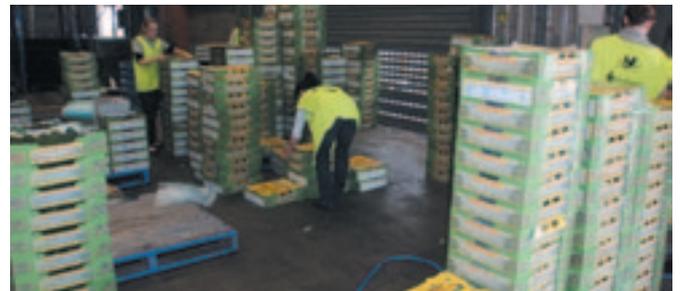


Australia.

For more information about the 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' early childhood program or to register for Phase 3, please visit avocado.org.au/earlylearning or email earlychildhood@avocado.org.au

Avocados Australia sends hundreds of avocado trays to EC centres

To further encourage early childhood centres to use avocados in their activities, in addition to the resources of the 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' program, each centre within a metropolitan area received a tray of avocados. Staff at Avocados Australia coordinated the arrangement, packaging and dispatch of over 300 trays of avocados in Phase 2.



Avocados Australia staff preparing and packaging avocado trays for dispatch.

Each centre received a tray of size 25 premium avocados. The tray was split, with half the avocados sent unripe and half the tray being 2+ days (to factor in delivery time) away from ripe. This was to ensure that the avocados could be used over two weeks. Sent with the tray was an 'Avocado Colour & Ripeness Chart', 'The Little Green Book: The Adventures of Alvin', as well as an A4 sheet of instructions about how to take care of the avocados and the 'Terms and Conditions' of the program.

Special thanks go to Amanda Madden, Julie Petty, Nataly Rubio, Maree Tyrell, and Courtney Vane. Phase 3 is scheduled for September 2011 and is set to double the numbers seen in Phase 2.

Fruit spotting bug project given the green light

A truly integrated project to tackle the avocado industry's number one pest, fruitspotting bug (FSB), has been approved and has hit the ground running with a range of activities planned over the next few months.

The project is jointly funded through industry levies contributed by the major partners, the avocado and macadamia industries, along with the lychee and papaya industries. The Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) Across

Industry Committee has also contributed ‘across industry’ funding; an indication of the importance and potential value this project offers a range of tropical and sub-tropical horticultural industries.

“Avocados Australia have initiated and partnered with this new multi-approach project, in partnership with HAL and other industries, in order to identify and develop alternative control measures for the persistent threat of FSB to avocado growers” commented Mr Antony Allen, CEO of Avocados Australia.

The project will be lead by NSW Department of Primary Industries at Alstonville, who will partner with BioResources, a Brisbane based company specialising in biocontrols for crop pests, research and extension specialists from DEEDI at Mareeba and Nambour, Hortus Technical Services from Bundaberg, and the University of Queensland.

According to project leader, Dr Ruth Huwer from NSW DPI at Alstonville, this project has been in the pipeline for a number of years and brings together a wealth of knowledge and experience in pest management from across the county to focus on the pest.



“We have been looking at a multi targeted approach to managing fruitspotting bugs through biological control, improved pest monitoring using lures and traps, companion planting and softer chemical options for some time. The project team has come together well, bringing diverse set of skills and ideas, and we are confident of positive outcomes for industry.”

“We have some good experience from our work with the macadamia industry, which will directly benefit avocado growers. There are very promising signs that we will be able to reduce the use of chemical sprays significantly and achieve sustainable long term control with this new approach”.

There is already a great of deal of momentum on research components of the project. These include the establishment of an FSB bug colony at BioResources; which will enable testing of the various biocontrol options and eventual mass rearing of those biocontrols for commercial release.

Dr Richard Llewellyn from BioResources explained that

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Industry Matters continued

industry experience with adaption and use of the highly successful biocontrol Matrix for macadamia nutborer, will improve the chances of identifying and establishing an effective biocontrol for FSB.

“Taking a biocontrol agent from the controlled environment of a lab and achieving successful establishment in the field is a huge step, but with this experienced group of researchers and consultants working with growers and industry, I think there is a good chance of success.”

Dr Harry Fay from DEEDI in Mareeba will be developing a pheromone lure and tapping system, which will make the difficult task of monitoring for this shy pest a lot easier.

“It will be a two stage process, as we are dealing with two species of fruitspotting bug in Australia. The one we have up here in the North Queensland is banana spotting bug (*A. lutescans*), and more common bug down south is *A. nitida*. There are subtle differences in the pheromones produced by these bugs, so depending on where we deploy our traps we need to tweak our formulas to accurately target the right species.”

The project team met at the Avocados Australia office in Brisbane in March 2011 for the start up workshop. The

project runs for five years, allowing adequate time to thoroughly test and modify pest management systems on a series commercial case study farms in Queensland and NSW. It is also hoped that measurable practice change in relation to fruitspotting bug management across the wider industry will be evident by that stage also.

Further updates will be published regularly in Talking Avocados.

For more information on the Fruitspotting Bug Project contact Ruth Huwer at Alstonville on 02 6626 2451, or Mark Hickey at Alstonville on 02 6626 2436.

The fruit spotting bug project is a collaboration of industry, government and private enterprise. The project is principally funded by avocado, macadamia, papaya and lychee grower R&D levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia. NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) and Qld Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) are also contributing in-kind funds to the project, and NSW DPI is managing the project on behalf of all partners. Other project partners include the University of Queensland, Bioresources and Hortus Technical Services.

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Notice of the 8th Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given to the voting Members of Avocados Australia Limited that the 8th Annual General Meeting of Avocados Australia Limited will be held at the **Cairns Convention Centre, Cairns QLD 4870**, on **Tuesday 6 September 2011** commencing at 5.40 pm.

Business of the Meeting:

1. To consider and approve the minutes of the 27th October 2010 Annual General Meeting
2. Chairman's Report
3. Chief Executive Officer's Report
4. Financial Statements and Reports
Presentation and consideration of the financial statements of the Avocados Australia Limited, Directors' and Auditors' Reports for the year ended 30 June 2011.
5. Auditors
Appointment of auditors for the 2011-2012 financial year.
6. Other Business
Consideration of any other business for which proper notice has been given.

By Order of the Board.

Antony Allen
Company Secretary

If you are unable to attend the AGM, a member entitled to attend and vote is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote in their stead. Proxy forms will be provided on request to all members of Avocados Australia Limited.

Kids go crazy for Aussie avocados

More than 1300 primary school students and 250 teachers and carers from across South East Queensland attended Rural Discovery Day in Brisbane last month, where they had the opportunity to learn everything there is to know about Australian avocados.

Rural Discovery Day, hosted by the RNA, is a free, fun, educational and hands-on experience of Queensland's primary industries aimed at educating primary students from Brisbane schools, home schools and distance education schools about food, fibre and foliage.

For Avocados Australia, it is a day where kids can learn where avocados come from; how they are grown and picked on farms; and the valuable contribution avocados make to their everyday life, from their mum's chicken and avocado salad to the shampoo with avocado oil they use.

"Rural Discovery Day is an event Avocados Australia looks forward to attending every year. It was fantastic to see so many kids attending who were genuinely interested in learning and talking about Australian avocados," commented Dr John Leonardi, Program Officer for Avocados Australia who represented Australian Avocados on the day.

At the last Rural Discovery Day avocado and vegemite on crackers were one of the most popular ways kids liked to eat avocado. This year, Avocados Australia brought the best quality avocados Australia has to offer and offered students the chance to try this tasty combination.

"Our avocado and vegemite on crackers was a big hit with the kids - some had never tried avocado before," said Julie Petty, Program Manager for Avocados Australia, who also represented Australian avocados on the day.



Industry Matters continued

Dr John Leonardi speaking to and answering avocado questions from enthusiastic students.



A competition was held on the day to learn more about how kids like best to eat their avocados. Some of the fantastic meal ideas included avocado and lemon yogurt; avocado, orange, apple, grape and strawberry salad; avocado, red onion, feta cheese and cucumber salad dressed with olive oil and vinegar; and chicken, avocado (mixed with garlic and cream), lettuce, tomato, cheese wrap.

The winner of the competition was randomly drawn soon after the event. The winning meal idea was 'Avocado Pizza with Cheese'; a very tasty, simple and very popular recipe idea. The winner has won a family pass to a movie of their choice.

"Avocados are a great healthy food for Australian kids, it's so good to see that they love to eat them, and have so many imaginative recipe ideas. There were definitely a few junior masterchefs in the making!" commented Ms Petty.

Up-and-coming chefs get a lesson in Australian avocados

Over the past couple of months, the next generation of culinary stars have been the focus of the Australian Avocados Chef Training Program. Kate McGhie – chef, food writer and national Chair of Judges for Restaurants and Catering – has been busy educating up-and-coming young chefs across the Eastern seaboard to new and interesting ways to serve one of Australia's most loved fruits.



Kate McGhie, Allan Koh, and culinary students attending the Australian Avocados Chef Training Program held at the Melbourne's Crown Metropol.



Sydney's Ultimo College hosted the debut avocado chef training class designed for commercial cookery students and teachers in March, followed by Brisbane's Southbank Institute of Technology in April. Most recently, the Chef Training Program conducted a dazzling session at Melbourne's Crown Metropol, in the state of the art Culinarium training kitchen where Kate was joined by renowned former chef de cuisine of Koko restaurant and Crown's current culinary trainer Allan Koh as co-facilitator of the class.

In addition to teaching apprentices how easy it is to 'be green', the avocado training program has continued to maintain its presence in other sectors of food service around the country.

Udaysen Mohite, executive chef of the Hilton Hotel Brisbane, created a canapé menu of more than fifteen avocado inspired dishes for his guests from other four and five star hotel kitchens in the city. Some of the highlight dishes included horopito and lime cured ocean trout with avocado and traminer soaked cashew quenelle,

blackened kangaroo on green pea and avocado mash, and an avocado kulfi – a gesture to Udaysen's native Indian cuisine.

Australian avocados were given the royal treatment from executive chef Mark Normoyle at the RACV in Melbourne a few weeks later. Mark wowed guests with his play on the classic 'chicken and avo' sandwich; made of brioche, poussin, frites, aioli foam, and Hass avocado and pea mash.

Chefs from some of Australia's best and creative restaurants will be attending the next round of avocado chef training classes happening in the Eastern states. Terry Clark of Persimmon restaurant, the Peter Rowland Catering culinary jewel within the National Gallery of Victoria, will host the first of the series of avocado events, followed by Chef Warren Turnbull at his two-hatted restaurant Assiette, cooking with his head chef and 2010 Electrolux young chef of the year, Soren Lascelles. PJ McMillan will host the Brisbane event at his newly refurbished Harvey's Bistro and Bar at the end of the month.

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Industry Matters continued

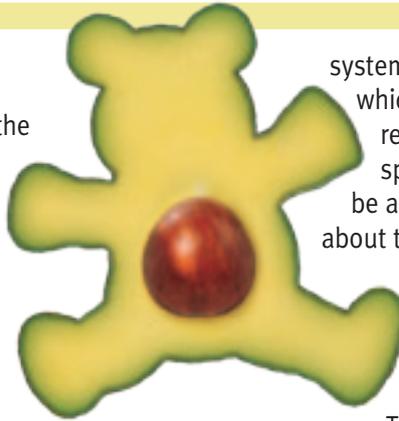
Babies love Aussie avos

When it comes to a baby's health, variety is the spice of life. If your baby has started eating solids, avocado is one of the most nutrient packed and tasty foods they can eat. They will love the texture and creaminess and as well as being completely unprocessed, avos are full of beneficial fats, vitamins and minerals.

This weekend, Australian Avocados will be returning to the 'Pregnancy, Babies & Children's Expo' at the Sydney Showground Exhibition Centre, Sydney Olympic Park. The expo sources the best early childhood expert advice, parenting tips and product innovations to help guide parents to make informed choices on what's best for their child as they grow and develop.

Babies, toddlers and young children will love tasting the yummy spoonfuls of ripe mashed avocado on offer, while parents and older siblings will be amazed at how delicious avocado sprinkled with a pinch of salt, pepper and a squeeze of lemon juice can be.

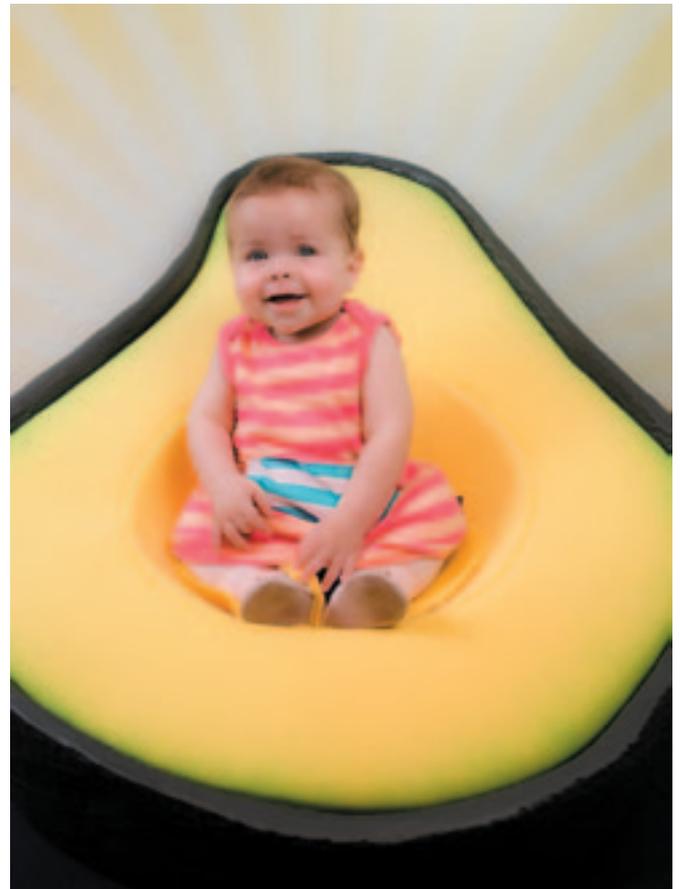
"Avocados are a brilliant food for your baby's health and development. The monounsaturated fats found in avocados are needed for your baby's brain and nervous



system, as is vitamin B also found in avocado which is vital for your baby's neural retention" commented avocado nutritional spokeswoman Zoe Bingley-Pullin, who will be attending the expo to educate parents about the benefits of eating avocado. For more information about the nutritional benefits of avocado and hundreds of avocado recipe ideas please visit www.avocado.org.au

The Australian Avocados 'Cutest Baby Competition' will once again be kicked off at this amazing event. At the last expo, which took place in Melbourne, parents blocked the aisles of the convention centre lining up to have their two to six month old babies professionally photographed sitting in the seed pocket of a Hass avocado. More than 250 babies were entered into competition with over 2200 votes being cast before voting closed. This time it's Sydney's turn to show off their cutest babies!

"The response Australian Avocados received at the 'Pregnancy, Babies & Children's Expo' in Melbourne was absolutely incredible. We are very optimistic that this time around parents in Sydney will equally love a visit to the Australian Avocados booth" said Mr Antony Allen, CEO of Avocados Australia.



Auspak Avocados offers Asia 'A Taste of Australian Avocados'

The Avocado Export Company (AEC), trading as Avoz Exports and exporting Auspak Avocados, is currently offering its customers the opportunity to attend 'A Taste of Australian Avocados', a free training program in the handling and merchandising of Australian avocados.

"Those who participate in 'A Taste of Australian Avocados' are guaranteed an enjoyable and interactive learning environment where they can find out everything they need to know about Australian avocados" commented Ms Jennie Franceschi, Managing Director of the AEC.

'A Taste of Australian Avocados' is a training program launched in conjunction with Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) and the Global Markets Initiative (GMI) of the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI). Training sessions are presented by Ms Jodie Campbell, Business Manager of Horticulture and Forestry Science at DEEDI.

On the 12 April 2011 over 100 participants comprising of employees from major supermarkets, students, and

importers attended the 'A Taste of Australian Avocados' training program at the Berjaya University College of Hospitality in Kuala Lumpur. This event was organised by Euro-Atlantic, a customer of the AEC and importer in Kuala Lumpur.

Participants learned about proper handling of Australian avocados, in order to minimize damage and maximize consumer satisfaction, as well as the many ways of approaching effective merchandising and consumer awareness campaigns. In addition, participants were able to get a sneak-peak of the new Australian avocados display stand that will be used in supermarkets for Auspak avocados, and also enjoyed a cooking demonstration of an



Ms Jodie Campbell with 'A Taste of Australian Avocados' participants.



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Industry Matters continued

avocado entree by well-known Chef Malcolm of BUCH.

'A Taste of Australian Avocados' training sessions were also organised in Singapore by AEC customer and importer Freshmart. 64 participants from NTUC FairPrice Supermarkets attended a training session on 14 April 2011. On the 15 April 2011, 32 delegates from Giant Supermarkets attended a morning training session and 17 delegates from ShopNSave attended an afternoon training session.

Training sessions are scheduled in Bangkok from the 16-20 May and Hong Kong from the 23-25 May 2011. Training sessions to be held in Dubai are currently being finalised.

The AEC is optimistic about the future: with the Australian Hass avocado season in progress, Auspak Avocados is leading the way in the supply of premium quality avocados and the most supported export product on the international market.

"At the moment we are busy exporting avocados from Queensland; the supply is good and the quality is very high" commented Ms Franceschi, "we are confident that we can supply a consistent, high quality, well-supported product to meet your requirements and help you grow your business with avocados."

Bundaberg avocado plant to triple production

The refurbishment of an avocado processing plant in the Bundaberg region will triple the facility's capacity to process the fruit. The changes to Simpsons Farms at North Isis will also create between 15 and 20 new full-time jobs once complete. The farm has recently completed the first stage of a three-stage project which aims to increase productivity at the farm.

Simpsons Farms commercial manager Andrew Mead said once the project was complete the processing facility would be able to process 3000 tonnes of avocados a year compared to the 1000 tonnes it is currently handling. "The way the plant was designed, there was a transfer of product from one side of the plant to the other side," he said. "What we have been able to do is to condense and refine that."

Mr Mead said the refurbishments also meant the plant could manufacture multiple products at the same time. "We are also putting in an Australian first with a semi-automated slicing line," he said. Mr Mead said the first stage of the refurbishment cost about \$30,000. Simpsons Farms currently produces avocado sauces such as guacamole and avocado salsa using fruit which have been rejected for sale in grocery stores. "We take

and process fruit which otherwise would be dumped," he said. The products are used in franchises such as the Coffee Club, Eagle Boys Pizza, Red Rooster and Sizzler. Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies, Tim Mulherin, said the State Government had been working with Simpsons Farms for a number of years to help them increase productivity.

"What the Simpson family have done is to look at benchmarking their products and they have been able to improve their productivity and efficiency," Mr Mulherin said. "We have made a number of suggestions in relation to new markets." Simpsons Farms is one of the country's largest avocado processing facilities and Mr Mulherin said the changes would have flow-on effects to the state's \$95 million dollar industry. "Simpsons Farms has been a leading supporter of industry development, working with the Queensland Government to identify new opportunities to increase domestic and export consumption of avocado products," he said. "Because Simpsons Farms both grows and processes avocados, they are able to sell direct to the market as well as deliver products such as frozen avocado pulp and guacamole to the industrial and food service markets," he said. Source: news-mail.com.au

Talking Avocados available online

'Talking Avocados' is the Australian industry's quarterly journal. Published for over 20 years, it continues to be the most effective communication tool for the Australian avocado industry. Talking Avocados is a clear and succinct magazine ranging between 36 and 68 pages per edition; focusing on technical and industry issues it augments email, web site and hard copy correspondence.

You can now access every edition of Talking Avocados up until the year prior to the current edition at <http://industry.avocado.org.au/Growers/Talking.aspx>



Just one month to go: Register now for the VII World Avocado Congress!

The premier event on the avocado calendar is the World Avocado Congress; held only every four years this amazing event brings together the world wide avocado industry. Online registration to attend the VII World Avocado Congress, to be hosted by Avocados Australia from 5-9 September 2011 in Cairns, Queensland, Australia is now open and readily available at www.worldavocadocongress2011.com

"We have developed a simple, easy and fast registration process for those interested in participating in what is shaping up to be an unmissable event" commented Mr Antony Allen, President Elect of the International Avocado Society and CEO of Avocados Australia.

The VII World Avocado Congress will be delivered in English and Spanish to cater for over 1000 expected delegates comprising of avocado producers, wholesalers, food service providers, market traders, retailers and government representatives from 15 countries around the world.



Congress delegates will have the chance to hear expert insights on the latest techniques for growing; learn about the newest trends in avocado marketing; and listen to up-to-date information about how issues, such as the state of the economy and climate change, will impact the future of the avocado industry. The Congress program will also allow delegates the time and opportunity to take advantage of global networking opportunities; to strengthen old relationships and establish new connections within the industry. "The last World Congress in Chile saw researchers, growers and marketers all attend in large numbers," explains Mr Allen, "attending the Congress was in such high demand among industry stakeholders that unfortunately many missed out and were left disappointed, so I would urge everyone to register early." Registering now will ensure your place as a delegate of the VII World Avocado Congress.

Fulltime member	\$1,050
Fulltime non-member	\$1,195
Fulltime student	\$700
Day registration*	\$500

To register as a delegate or for more registration, accommodation, sponsorship and exhibition information please visit the VII World Avocado Congress 2011 website at www.worldavocadocongress2011.com

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Are your competitors already on board? We have over 35 sponsors and exhibitors already coming to Cairns in September 2011. A number of these Congress sponsors and exhibitors have value added their package with the extras in the 'Last Chance Opportunities' prospectus.

Get in fast to get the best value and visit www.worldavocadocongress2011.com

Industry Matters continued

Who are the delegates? Individual growers, importers and exporters, listed and larger companies in the field of avocado production, international agricultural organisations, government agencies, research scientists and academics, farm suppliers (implements, fertiliser, infrastructure, irrigation), packing and transport, distribution, major retailers, investors, bankers, insurance, asset managers, quality assurers and risk managers.

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Join them now!

Avocados Australia invites you

to participate as a sponsor and/or exhibitor at the VII World Avocado Congress to be held in the tropical paradise of Cairns, Australia from 5-9 September 2011.

We expect over 1000 delegates from around the world to attend representing all sectors of the industry. Registering early for maximum benefit will ensure you a higher level of exposure. An extensive promotional campaign including advertisements, direct mail campaigns and web presence will be implemented in the lead up to the VII World Avocado Congress.

With key opinion leaders and decision makers present, the Congress is the ultimate international forum for worldwide avocado and allied industry stakeholders to exchange ideas.

We sincerely hope to welcome you on board the essential global marketing platform which is the VII World Avocado Congress 2011.

For detailed information go online at www.worldavocadocongress2011.com and for enquiries or further comment please contact:

Nataly Rubio, Congress Coordinator,
 Avocados Australia
 E: sponex@worldavocadocongress2011.com
 T: +61 7 3846 6566



Agriculture Minister kick starts conversation on the National Food Plan

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig, today started the discussion on the Federal Government's National Food Plan.

Minister Ludwig said that all Australians would have an interest in the National Food Plan.

"From the production stages of our food through to processing, purchasing and the consumption of food, people will be able to have their say on issues confronting our food sector now and into the future," Minister Ludwig said.

"Developing a National Food Plan gives us an opportunity to talk about our collective vision for Australia's food sector and how to ensure its continued success."

The Gillard Government announced during the election that it would develop a National Food Plan. "With a changing international food market, issues of food security, food affordability, access to food and the sustainability of food are even more important to address at home," Minister Ludwig said. "I encourage members of the community, as well as industry stakeholders, to provide comments on what they see as key issues for their sector and also for the broader direction of the Australian food industry."

"It is important that such an important document is based on community views and input."

Minister Ludwig said that there is a clear need for a single over-arching food policy framework to bring together the Government's policies and programs relating to food.

"The scope and nature of Australia's food supply is being shaped by global and local forces such as world population growth, limited natural resources, climate change, skills shortages, and international trade," Minister Ludwig said.

Minister Ludwig noted the role individuals, businesses, governments, non-government groups and communities played, and the need for their contributions. He added that he would also continue to work with his ministerial colleagues and with State, territory and local governments.

The Issues paper is available at www.daff.gov.au/nfp
Source: DAFF

Supermarkets busted for mislabelling fruit

Two supermarkets in Sydney have been caught selling imported fruit as Australian. Woolworths will pay a fine of \$1540 for advertising American lemons as Australian at its Newington store and Coles at St Marys will pay an \$880 penalty for not disclosing its grapefruit was from Israel.

The supermarkets have been put on the NSW Food Authority's Name and Shame Register. Peter Darley, on the Horticulture Committee of the NSW Farmers Association says the large food barns are the worst culprits at not displaying where the fresh fruit and vegetables come from.

"They're the ones that are certainly not complying and that's disappointing," he said. "In one respect it's interesting to see that Woolworths and Coles have been caught in this, but I think there's a lot of others out there that will be caught in the investigations as the Food Authority steps up their investigations and inspections."

Woolworths says it was "an isolated case of human error", where individual lemons from the USA were correctly labelled, but the shelf said the lemons were Australian. The company says 97 percent of its fresh produce is locally grown. Coles has yet to respond to calls from the ABC. Source: abc.net.au

Global food prices to rise this decade

A major international report has predicted that average food commodity prices will be much higher this decade than the last.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD) and the Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO) have projected maize costs will be almost 20 percent higher this decade on average, and rice more than 15 percent higher.

It also predicts that butter prices will soar worldwide and stay high, rising more than 45 percent, with poultry prices increasing from 30 to 35 percent. Wheat prices are projected to remain stable, but generally, cereal prices could be 20 percent higher and meat 30 percent higher, the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook released today (17 June) said.

However, these projections, the organisations noted, "are well below the peak price levels in 2007-08 and... this year". Food consumption will expand "most rapidly" in eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America, especially the consumption of meat, dairy, vegetable oils and sugar.

FAO director general Jacques Diouf said: "In the current market context, price volatility could remain a feature of agricultural markets, and coherent policies are required to both reduce volatility and limit its negative impacts. The key solution to the problem will be boosting investment in agriculture and reinforcing rural development in developing countries, where 98 percent of the hungry people live today and where population is expected to increase by 47 percent over the next decades."

OECD secretary-general Angel Gurría said high prices

Industry Matters continued

are “generally good news” for farmers but warned of the possible “devastating” impact on the world’s poor.

“That is why we are calling on governments to improve information and transparency of both physical and financial markets, encourage investments that increase productivity in developing countries, remove production and trade distorting policies and assist the vulnerable to better manage risk and uncertainty,” Gurría said. Source: Australian Food News

Woolies freezes prices of some fruit and vegetables for a year

Woolworths fired a shot back at Coles on 3 July in the war for the shrinking consumer spend with the announcement that the supermarket giant will fix prices on five fruit and vegetables categories for a year.

This follows a Coles announcement on the weekend, dropping the price of a loaf of home brand white bread by nine cents to \$1 a loaf. The price of a home brand wholemeal loaf dropped from \$1.79 to \$1.50.

From 3 July at Woolworths supermarkets, loose apples (Granny Smith in WA and Red Delicious in all other states) will cost \$2.98 per kg, truss tomatoes loose \$4.98 per kg, a 1kg bag of carrots \$1.45, 1kg bag of brown onions \$1.88 and a 4kg bag of Golden Delight brushed potatoes \$4.98 (in all states except Western Australia and Tasmania).

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that fruit prices rose 14.5 percent and vegetable prices rose 16 percent in the March quarter. Source: The Courier Mail

British farmers forced to pay the cost of supermarket price wars

As profits soar at the supermarkets, food producers say they are being forced out of business by unfair buying practices

You can pick up a punnet of British raspberries – at their best this weekend – on a two-for-one offer in most supermarkets. But as shoppers reach for that quintessential summer treat, they should perhaps ponder the fact that it is the farmer, not the supermarket, who is paying for the generous discount.

The farmer may well be making no profit at all, with no choice in the pricing and little or no idea, when he picked and shipped the raspberries, how much he would get for them. Or that the packaging would be paid for by the farm, but done by a company chosen by the supermarket – at up to twice the cost of it being packaged independently.

Farmers do not talk about these things. Many of them, during a month-long investigation, told the Observer that in the midst of the downturn they dare not risk annoying the big processors and shops. There is a 'climate of fear' – the National Farmers Union's phrase – in the monopolistic world of modern food retail: small producers are too frightened to speak out about the abuses that are impoverishing them because they risk 'reprisals', which may mean losing the only customers there are. Very few felt able to speak to us on the record.

Henry Dobell runs a fruit farm near Stowmarket in Suffolk. He has given up raspberries and now sells heritage apples from his 300-tree orchard, but only to local shops because the relationship with the supermarkets became 'impossible'. Their demands saw his costs rise by 30 percent and he was making no profit.

“One year Sainsbury's refused all my raspberries after we'd picked and packaged them,” he said. “So the producer organisation [the intermediary the supermarkets insist on dealing with] sold them to Somerfield and we had to buy new packaging. But they all went on as a two-for-one offer: we had no say. At one point we were being paid less per punnet than it cost to put a lid on it.”

“I used to grow tree-matured Cox for Waitrose – in the last year with them the fruit got lost in the organisation's system and I got a much lower price than I'd been promised. It took nine months to get paid. So I said I wanted to quit.”

“There was no written contract, but the company threatened legal action. They wanted a £30,000-£40,000 payment if I didn't stay with them for another year, and said I had to sign a confidentiality agreement. So I stopped, and now we sell our apples direct to the Co-op in the east of England, or to farm shops. If I do a promotion, that's my choice. I sell for the same price, but keep 100 percent of the money rather than 25 percent.”

These and many more restrictive and potentially illegal practices are blamed for driving 3000 small and medium-scale farmers in Britain into poverty or out of business over the past decade. Many more have been affected abroad. The abuses could be addressed by a long-awaited piece of government legislation, the groceries code adjudicator bill: an attempt to enforce codes of conduct on the 10 biggest supermarkets and their processors over how they deal with their suppliers. It has cross-party support.

But the giant supermarket chains – four of which control almost 80 percent of food retail – have mounted a fierce attack on the bill, with the threat that more regulation will lead to food prices rising even more than the current 4.9 percent rate of inflation. This is a real concern to ministers committed to keeping inflation down.

The British Retail Consortium, which speaks for nine of the 10 supermarket chains, has issued a stern warning: “Prices are already under considerable pressure from rising global commodity costs and climbing fuel and utility prices... the extra costs of dealing with a new administrative body will make it even harder to keep price rises away from shop shelves.”

Campaigners reject this as risible. Andrew George, the Liberal Democrat MP for St Ives who leads the Grocery Market Action Group, said: “The cost to each retailer for the costs of the adjudicator is put at £120,000 per annum. It's a gnat bite – nothing, given their record profits in the depths of the greatest recession of modern times. Are they saying that it will cost them more to behave decently and legally in their dealings with suppliers?”

From the NFU to Friends of the Earth and ActionAid, a surprising range of organisations say the draft bill, discussed by the House of Commons business select committee, needs an ombudsman who can investigate proactively and hear complaints anonymously or from trade organisations. Most importantly, they say, the adjudicator should be able to impose fines.

At issue are a range of problems that trouble the government: Britain's 'food security', food price rises, rural poverty, food health scares, and the bleak fact that nearly two-thirds of British farms are deemed not economically viable by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

At least one dairy farmer has gone out of business in Britain every day for the past decade, as supermarkets have more than doubled their share of the price of a pint of milk. As many as 30 pig farmers have gone bust in the past year, according to the National Pig Association.

At the heart of the problem, say campaigners, is public ignorance of how supermarkets buy produce and the system that allows them to offer lower prices while increasing their profits. Tesco's profits were above £3.5bn for the first time last year, and Sainsbury's rose by nearly 13 percent.

These results – despite the supermarkets endless price wars – are achieved largely by getting suppliers to reduce their prices. Most sectors of British farming, from eggs to fruit, vegetables and pork, have seen farm-gate prices drop in the past year, despite record increases in costs. “Supermarkets have handed the risk back to us: they charge ever-increasing mark-ups, force us to take part in promotions,” one Welsh farmer in vegetables and dairy told the Observer. “The farmer takes all the risk, pays all the costs and gets virtually nothing above the price of production.”

Discounts such as 'buy one get one free' are not a generous gift from the supermarket. What they mean is that the farmer will be paid less – but he or she has no ability to negotiate or even be informed if their crop is put on special. If a crop has been over-ordered and doesn't sell, the supplier may have to pick up the cost of disposal.

Fruit farmers contacted by the Observer said they had seen their produce on sale in supermarkets for less than it would have fetched on the same day at the wholesale market. Others have seen produce turned away at the packers for spurious quality reasons, because there was a glut. Yet contracts still oblige them to continue supplying.

The supermarkets, often working through agreed processors and packagers, offer binding contracts that do not specify prices. These tend to lift the brakes on how much is ordered, because the shop will not suffer if produce is not sold. This is particularly painful for soft fruit and salad growers, whose entire year's income can be ruined by a couple of rainy summer weekends when people don't want to buy summer produce.

But it affects more than just farmers. A major independent confectioner – who did not wish to be named – said that over his 30 years in business the basic dynamic of trade with supermarkets had changed.

“There has been a transfer of risk, from retailer to manufacturer. We have to take much more responsibility for what doesn't sell. Of course, they have other risks and I think it's fine if you negotiate under fair rules and there is no abuse of power. But what should not happen is a renegotiation, with subtle or overt pressure, after you've agreed something. It is possible to be trampled on by an unscrupulous customer and you can't really afford not to deal with them. I think that is where abuse occurs.”

Despite years of appeals to government from producers' organisations and two damning competition commission reports, the retailers, led by Tesco and Sainsbury's, have resisted the proposed legislation for 11 years. Both companies said the existing code of practice was “working well” and there was no need for an adjudicator.

At the root of the debate is a host of restrictive practices that, suppliers say, has grown as the four biggest supermarkets (Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda and Morrisons) have taken control of nearly 80 percent of British food retail. Farmers and organisations the Observer contacted were all reluctant to be named, citing regular occurrences of retribution by retailers or their favoured middlemen. “If I piss them off, they can just destroy me overnight. And there is nowhere else to go,” said one north of England meat farmer.

Other farmers told of ‘punishments’ exacted if they

Industry Matters continued

complained. One poultry farmer in East Anglia went public after a buyer told him verbally that his premium chickens would be put on sale at a discount. After he complained about 'bullying' and the system of negotiating outside contracts at an industry conference, he found his next shipment refused on quality grounds.

This is just one among a range of unfair practices, some of them potentially illegal. These include 'no-contract' deals that refuse to specify prices but tie a farmer to an outlet. There is often no right of negotiation or arbitration and farmers are frequently forced at short notice to let their crop be sold at a discount. The buyers do this verbally, not by letter.

A particular bone of contention is that supermarkets insist that packaging and processing be done by firms they nominate – even though charges are much higher than they would be on the open market for exactly the same service. Last week, in evidence to a parliamentary committee, the chairman of the NFU, Peter Kendall, said he knew that some processors and packers pay back some of the premium charged to farmers as a 'backhander' to the supermarket.

"We have a lot of examples of where this sort of thing goes on," said Kendall, but added there no way of using the information without threatening the farmers' livelihood.

The groceries supply code of practice was introduced by the government last year and the adjudicator's job would be to oversee it. Consumer minister Ed Davey announced the code, saying: "We want to make sure that large retailers can't abuse their power by transferring excessive risks or unexpected costs on to their suppliers."

No farmer has yet made any complaint under the code and the retailers say that is proof it is working. But the NFU and other organisations say the lack of complaints are because farmers are frightened of revealing their identities and have often been made to sign confidentiality agreements.

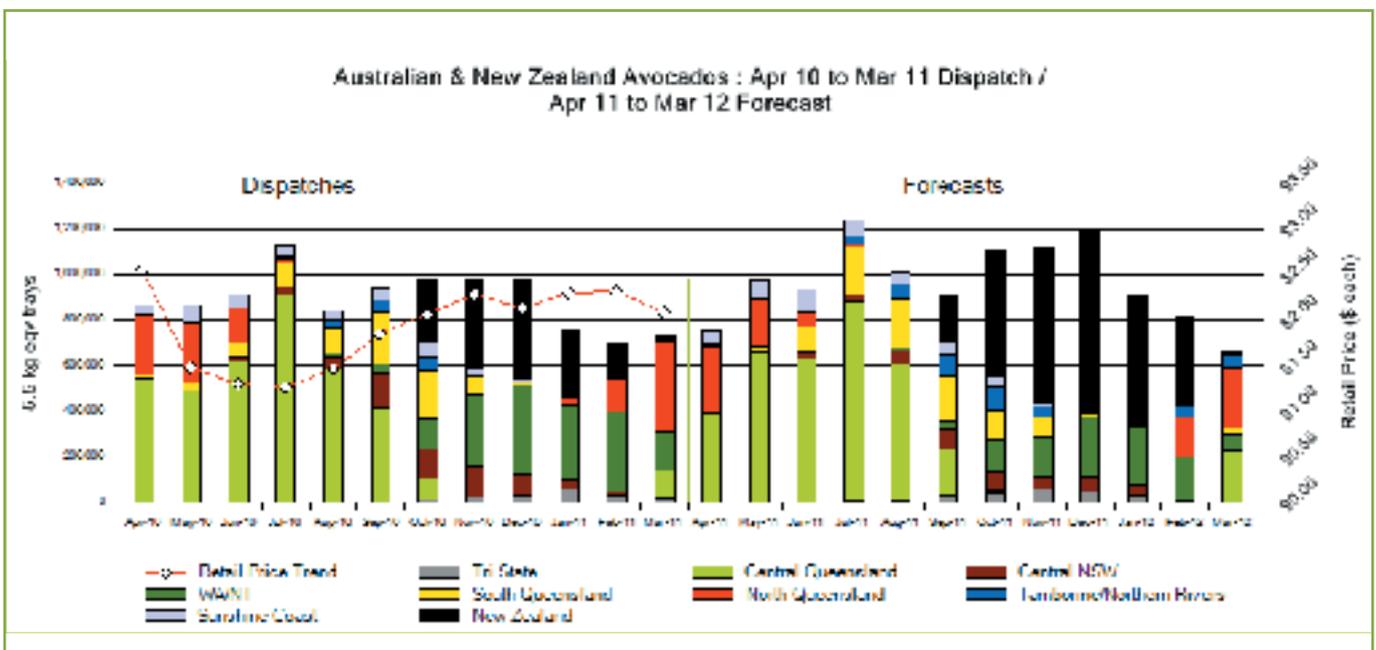
Patrick Holden, former head of the Soil Association, is a dairy farmer in Lampeter, west Wales. For 20 years he farmed organic carrots for supermarkets, but gave up in 2007, frustrated at unreasonable demands that continually pushed up his overheads. He said that the decline in small and medium-sized agricultural businesses in Britain is largely because of the big retailers' 'amoral' buying policies.

"Government wants food prices kept down, but the only way to do that in this country is through this tyranny of exploitation, continually screwing down the prices paid to producers. And if a producer doesn't sell to them, you go quietly out of business," he said. "But we're all complicit. We shop in supermarkets, we own shares in them, our pension funds are in them. We have to question this way of providing cheap food. It has put me and tens of thousands of others out of business."

Infocado update

Below are extracts from the April 2011 Quarterly Infocado Report and the most recent Infocado Weekly Report. The next Quarterly Infocado Report is due to be released to all contributors in the coming weeks.

As you can see from the below graph, volumes are predicted to be slightly higher in the coming months than during the same period last year.



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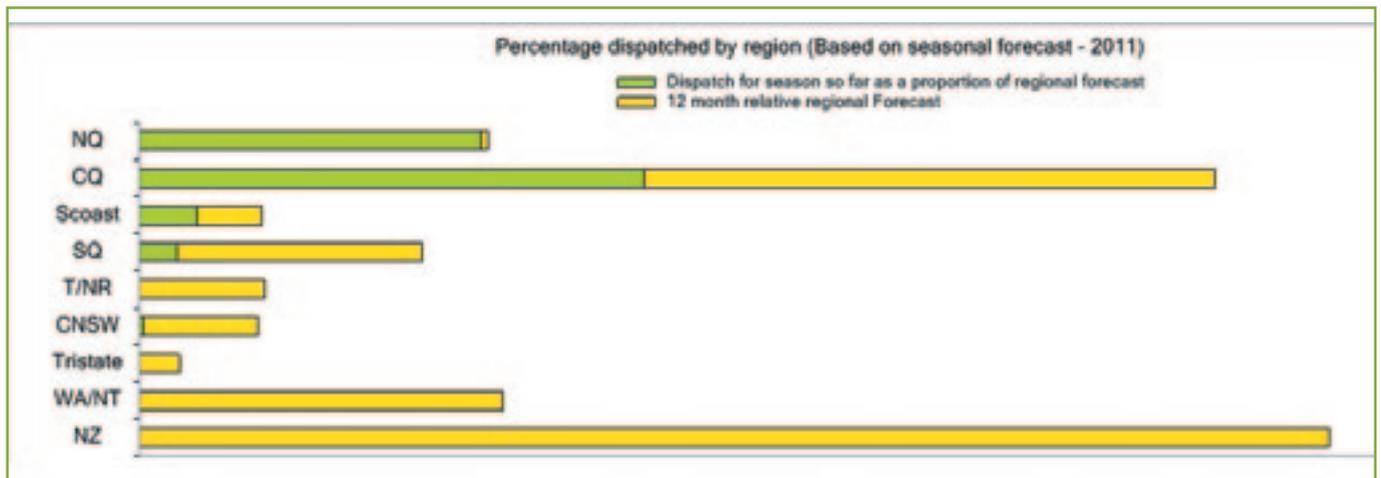
Industry Matters continued

The economic outlook is somewhat uncertain for the Australian market with consumers saving at the highest levels in decades. This potentially means we need to work harder at marketing our product at both a commercial and an industry level.

Exports have been on the rise throughout May and early June and this assists in stabilizing the domestic market overall.

As the next Quarterly Infocado Report is due to be

published soon, we strongly urge all growers and wholesalers to update their 15 month forecast by the given deadlines, as this helps us to provide more accurate and timely reports for everyone's use. Not only does this information feed into the Quarterly Infocado Reports but it also translates directly into the 'Percentage Dispatched by Region' graph on page three of the Weekly Infocado Report; see the below example. It shows a true reflection of the crop still to be dispatched in the future.



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Around Australia

Tamborine and Northern Rivers Report

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



As I bang out this report I am watching the latest east coast low move off (looking a lot like an alien spaceship out of Independence Day) towards the south and the long suffering avocado growers of the mid coast, leaving perfect blue sky and westerly winds behind it. We've had at least one of these events annually for the last five years and depending on where it settles it decides which primary producer it wishes to ruin. It seems the Alstonville Plateau has got off lightly with only 150mm of rain.

Tamborine and Northern Rivers growers would now be in full swing into their harvest if they are lucky enough to have a crop. Though many growers will harvest virtually nothing, some orchards which were first thought to be completely void of fruit are bearing relatively well, but definitely below average. Coming off such a large flowering growers were bound to be disappointed with the set, however as the growing season developed the fruit started to show, and what fruit was there has sized well.

Though wet, the 2011 growing season has exhibited fairly low insect pressure, most likely as a result of the cooler conditions. Unfortunately, the only hot spike that occurred was in late January and February, which resulted in some sun burn to exposed fruit and limbs. Luckily, the region amazingly missed out on the rain which devastated Toowoomba and the South East QLD region; this has contributed to orchard health remaining relatively good. However, the diligent Phytophthora control measures of the region's growers is the major and best line of defence against die back, for which we've had plenty of practice in

recent years.

Despite all this talk of rain, old timers are using their bones and other unscientific equipment to predict a dry Spring which combined with an already significant bud swelling means that growers are at risk of falling short on soil moisture during the all important bud development and flowering period. Growers with irrigation would do well to ensure their systems are ready to go after so many years of inactivity.

As always, thank you to the hard working team at Avocados Australia and my fellow board members, especially Daryl Boardman and his universal growing area reports! Hoping to see as many growers as possible in Cairns in September for what will be a truly eye opening and international 'avofest'.

Central New South Wales Report

By Chris Nelson, Avocados Australia Director for the Central New South Wales Growing Area



I write this report under candlelight. The savage wind gusts we are experiencing with the relentless downpours have obviously claimed a power line nearby. The June long weekend has brought between 500 and 600mm of rain and fruit-plucking wind storms to our coastal region. What freakish weather we are all suffering from in 2011. I finished my last report writing about how many areas were still waiting for significant water storage replenishment. They wait no more.

During the last few weeks I have enjoyed the privilege of visiting many growers along the length of the NSW coast. I find it amazing how micro climate variation can deliver brilliant crops to some and only empty trees to others. The areas around Newcastle and Sydney in the south and Green Pigeon in the north have faired well. Growers in

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most other districts are already looking forward to another flowering and another throw of the dice.

The upside to this season as I see it, is that the crop damage that all areas on the east coast have suffered from has lead to the situation where the pre-New Zealand supply period will be marginally under supplied; hopefully resulting in better than average returns. So, on that slightly more positive note I wish everyone the best of luck with the weather from now on.

North Queensland Report

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



GONE FISHING - most have and some have yet to return. After the season we had last year who can blame the avocado growers up here from getting in a little R&R before the season starts again.

The Shepard growers in the Mareeba area started with a decent flower set but the deluge of Summer rains has caused serious problems with water logging and Phytophthora, and so we have had significant tree deaths. So this seems to be the activity not to look forward to as the growers put away their tackle boxes and take out their chainsaws.

The Atherton area growers who have Hass have had a poor flowering period, then heavy stripping of fruit from trees by Cyclone Yasi, and then heavy downgrading of fruit skin through mechanical blemish and lenticil spotting. Phytophthora is a major problem to manage in all orchards after this season and I hear that most growers are attending to the task.

So, the flowers are starting to come out on Shepards and

the Hass are budding up (in June) - so here we go again for round 2012. I hope those great fishing stories last until the Summer, or at least until the Congress in September where much boasting about giant Barramundi and fierce mud crabs can occur.

Tri State Report

By Nick Hobbs, Avocados Australia Director for the Tri State Growing Area



Queensland-like weather equals Queensland-like crop. We are through the Summer and fruit drop period and local growers are really pleased with both the size of the fruit set and also the way the fruit is sizing. We just need to get through the frost period and start harvesting.

Having tropical weather also brings with it increased disease risks. Many years of dry hot weather have made disease control a minor consideration and I know growers who have not undertaken any disease control for ten years or more. With this in mind the South Australian Avocado Growers Association decided to focus on disease control for their recent Annual Growers Meeting (AGM), to ensure that any possible issues were at the front of growers minds. We were very fortunate to have Elizabeth Dann visit from Brisbane to discuss disease control. Elizabeth focused on anthracnose and root rots, giving both a formal presentation and an informative field walk to around 30 growers. Thanks must go to Colin Fechner and the committee for organising the event.

We have now had three field days in the last 12 months that have all been very relevant to avocado production in the region and have carried on from the really successful events coordinated by Simon Newett. Every little piece of information makes us better growers and I know the

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Around Australia continued

organisers get rewarded when they go to a property and see ideas from the field days being incorporated into the properties management. With substantial increases in production in the pipeline we will need to be more consistent with our yields and attempt to eliminate the excessive off years. Every bit of information we can share in the district gets us all closer to achieving this.

Sunshine Coast Report

By Henry Kwaczynski, Avocados Australia Director for the Sunshine Coast Growing Area



The harvest season began in earnest with some predictable problems with anthracnose, Phytophthora and fruit sunburn in some orchards – due to harsh climatic conditions in this region late last year and especially early this year with record rainfall. From all other aspects the current season is shaping up as a reasonable one with potentially good returns to growers.

Now is the time to review your farming and marketing systems in an endeavour to maximise the return on your investment. I have written many times on the subject of marketing; encouraging growers to work collaboratively. Somehow I get the feeling that a lot of smaller operators believe they can ‘do better’ going it alone. While this may seem to work in the short term, perhaps with niche markets, the longer term prognosis is not sound. I strongly recommend that Sunshine Coast growers join the peak body, Avocados Australia, and seriously consider joining one of the marketing groups in our local area. I am more than happy to discuss this with interested growers.

I also urge you to register to attend the VII World Avocado Congress, to be held in Cairns early in September. It

has taken the avocado industry more than 20 years to bring this important event to our country. The Congress will showcase the Australian avocado industry and scientific achievements, and give us a place on the world horticulture stage. Visit www.worldavocadocongress2011.com if you would like more information.

I am stepping down from the Board of Avocados Australia in September, and would like to thank avocado growers in this region for your support and sometimes very searching questions. My time on the Board has often been challenging, certainly never dull, and hugely satisfying. I leave my position with a strong conviction of the strength of the avocado industry and the passion of avocado growers. I firmly believe that Avocados Australia’s promotion, marketing, research and development programs and initiatives ensure that our industry is well placed to meet future local, national, and global challenges.

Central Queensland Report

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



The year is quickly moving forward with half of it almost gone. A smaller than forecast Shepard season certainly helped to keep the market strong and fruit moving through the system. This was even to the point that the price of avocados actually increased after Easter, a rarely seen event. Volumes of Hass have increased the flow of fruit into the market with estimates seeing the Hass crop around the same volume as last year. The market is still okay with prices better than last year. It is hoped that prices will remain where they are but the system is under some pressure at the time of writing this. The price of the market and expectations of frost down south has dragged more fruit out of the woodwork from regions south of us.

Rain, rain, go away. After wishing for some rainfall at the end of last year we certainly received more than our fair share. Sometimes you have to be careful what you wish for. This has led to a percentage of tree deaths in the rain affected growing regions. The other challenge of course is the threat of Phytophthora and this has certainly raised its head in areas not seen before. The numbers of trees that have died have already been replaced by new plantings that have occurred in the region this year among a number of growers. Given the growth that we have here these new trees will take up the slack of the trees that have died in only a few years.

Given that a lot of the growing regions have had a ‘rest’

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this year it is reasonable to expect a jump in production next year. What it means for us as an industry and as individuals is that we must work hard in promoting and marketing our product in a strategic and coordinated way to maintain sales values; because achieving the sales returns we are getting now will be harder next year.

Growers and packers can also look at reducing what it costs us to grow and sell our product. What we have seen over the last few years has been the increase in cost in our packing operation because we have tried to accommodate the different demands that our customers want. The question we need to weigh up is do we get the benefit in increased returns by adding this extra cost? Each business will have a different answer. Incorporated into our business has been the implementation of lean manufacturing processes. Lean manufacturing is an ongoing and systematic approach to improving service and quality while reducing costs. By focusing on reducing waste in the process we have been able to maximise throughput and returns to ensure sustainability.

Lean gives us the tools to be flexible while understanding the impacts of different products, packaging, and processes on the overall efficiency of an individual process and the business at large. Sacrificing efficiency to

accommodate an individual customer can have negative long term effects for both parties. Lean has put us in a better position to answer the question of cost versus return. All businesses should look at this and determine if supplying our product in a certain way is the best for our business when at the end of the day what our customers want is good quality avocados.

Anyway, enough of that. The next big event is obviously the Congress in Cairns and I hope as many people as possible attend as it is not only a showcase of the industry in Australia but it gives Australian growers the opportunity to mix with people from other countries.

South Queensland Report

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



Winter in South Queensland; I must be getting old or soft because I have felt it this year. I hope for growers in frost prone areas that the frosts are light and don't cause any more damage to trees. Packing has begun in South Queensland with growers concerned with frost picking first. Due to the very wet conditions earlier in the year it has taken its toll on the trees and fruit and is affecting quality and fruit size.

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Around Australia continued

In early June I attended a field day at Hampton orchards, this was organized by a company from Mapleton called Mapleton Agri Biotec. Dr Robert Bower spoke. Dr Elizabeth Dann from the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) talked about Phytophthora root rot and management. Dr John Leonardi was also talking and updating growers on his Sustainable Orchard Management Practices project and what he has currently looked at. Mark Parkinson from Lockyer Agronomics spoke about biological and sustainable farming practices. The day was extremely cold but was very informative and well received by over 40 people who attended. I congratulate all that were involved in organising this event and Mike Gerahty for hosting the day.

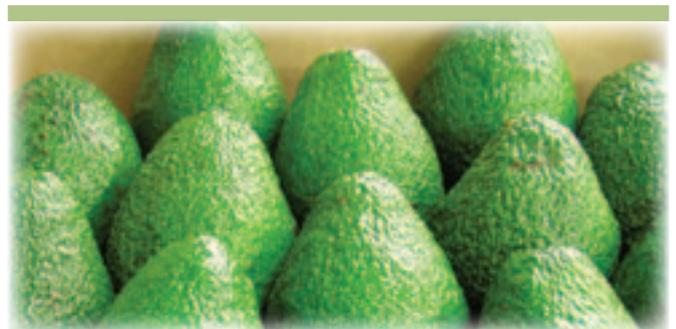
On Saturday, 18 June I was invited to a farewell for a grower at Blackbutt that I believe needs recognition in this region. This grower is Eric Erbacher and he has just retired from avocado growing – at least. Eric, the eldest of 13 children, has been involved in agriculture and value adding since he was a child himself, and I believe use to help his parents with their egg production; packing eggs under their house on the Sunshine Coast. He was then involved in vegetable growing with his parents and

eventually went his own way developing properties in Palmwoods, Flaxton, and then the Blackbutt regions.

Eric moved to Blackbutt and established his property in 1994 at age 54 and has built this into a very productive and profitable orchard. Eric has been growing avocados for around 25 years and says that it is the best crop he has grown due to not having major problems that can be experienced with other crops. Eric's sister, Kate, who is child number 12 in the family, was convinced 21 years later by Eric to move to Blackbutt and try her hand also at avocados. Kate has developed a nice orchard and will remain to keep the Erbacher name in avocados. Eric's parents started the Erbacher fruit shop on the Sunshine Coast I believe in the early 70s and this is still run today by Eric's brothers. Eric and Carol, it's has been a pleasure to know you, from myself and Sally and I am sure I speak for all that know you and Avocados Australia, we wish you all the best with your move back to the Sunshine Coast.

It's election time again and this round the South Queensland Growing Area is up. I will be standing again for the representative of this region as I believe I still have more to offer this great industry. In the time I have been the representative for the South Queensland Growing Area I have seen a lot of changes. These changes will keep continuing and growers will face both good and bad into the future; with the forever changing world of technology these seem to happen much more quickly. The cattle industry is probably an example I would prefer not to use but it shows us how an industry can be turned on its head, shaken a few times before they get back on their feet and know what the hell just happened. I would like to think that the Avocados Australia Board looks at all these possibilities when making any decision we do so that we have as many areas covered as we can to prevent such surprises. Sure we won't get it right all the time but I can assure you we try our very best. If you ever have anything of concern that you would like discussed at an industry level that's what I am here for and I welcome your call at any time.

I hope for your support in the upcoming elections and hope to see you all at the VII World Avocado Congress in Cairns this September.



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Update on Sustainable Orchard Management Practices

(AVo8020)

By John Leonardi, Avocados Australia

Trials investigating the effect of a range of orchard management strategies on tree growth, fruit quality and yield are currently being assessed. The outcomes for the 2011 season to date are presented below.

Mulching trials

The effect of mulching treatments on tree growth, fruit quality and yield was established on 2¹/₂ year old Hass trees in Central Queensland in September 2009. Filter-press, avocado woodchip and cane-tops were re-applied in September 2010. A grower treatment (inter-row slashings with a thin layer of filter-press of less than 2cm) was included for comparison.

The effect of mulching on shoot growth (Spring and Summer flush length) and fruiting was assessed in 10 shoots in each of seven trees. Fruit was harvested at maturity on the 20 June 2011 and the number and weight from each tree recorded. Average fruit weight was calculated from the data (Table 1).

There was no effect of mulching on shoot growth however there was an increase in the percentage of those shoots bearing fruit in trees mulched with avocado woodchip (55.7%) and cane-tops (54.3%) compared with 38.6 percent in the grower control trees. There was also an

Table 1. Effect of mulching on shoot growth, percentage of shoots bearing fruit, number of fruit, average fruit weight and yield in four year old Hass avocado trees. Shoot growth and percentage fruiting data are means of 70 shoots from seven trees per treatment. Yield data are means of seven trees per treatment.

Treatment	Shoot growth (spring + summer) (cm)	% of shoots with fruit	No. of fruit	Yield (kg/tree)	Av. fruit wt (g)
Grower treatment	27.9	38.6	259	70.5	276.2
Filter-press	24.0	37.1	281	78.1	277.1
Avocado woodchip	20.3	55.7	380	97.7	258.4
Cane-tops	22.2	54.3	317	84.4	268.3

increase in yield in trees mulched with avocado woodchip (97.7 kg) and cane-tops (84.4 kg) compared with 70.5 kg in the grower control trees.

At harvest, 20 fruit of uniform size were sampled from five trees from each treatment and ripened at 20°C. This fruit will be visually rated for the severity of rots and internal disorders. The effect of mulching on the severity (% of flesh volume affected) and incidence (% of fruit affected) of fruit rots and disorders will be determined in July.

Microbes - TwinN®

A trial investigating the effect of foliar and soil applications of TwinN® on tree growth, fruit quality and yield was established on 3¹/₂ year old Hass trees in Central Queensland. A grower nitrogen and a reduced nitrogen treatment were included for comparison. TwinN® is a freeze dried product containing a range of nitrogen fixing microbes that been reported to promote plant growth, particularly root growth.

Treatments were applied in August 2010 (floral buds were at cauliflower stage at this time), in November 2010 (maturity of the Spring growth flush), and in April 2011 (maturity of the Summer growth flush and prior to floral bud development).

Foliar treatments were applied at a rate of five litres per tree when leaves were moist usually in the early morning or after a shower of rain to prevent drying out of the microbes. The soil applications were applied as a drench at a rate of 10 litres per tree to an area under the canopy. The microbe solution was applied to moist soil and is followed by an irrigation to push the microbes to the root zone.

The effect of TwinN® application on yield was assessed in 10 trees for each treatment. Fruit was harvested at maturity on the 27 June 2011 and the number and weight from each tree was recorded. Average fruit weight was calculated from the data (Table 2).

Update on Sustainable Orchard Management Practices continued

Table 2. Effect of TwinN® application the number of fruit, average fruit weight and yield in four year old Hass avocado trees. Data are means of 10 trees per treatment.

Treatment	No. of Fruit	Yield (kg/tree)	Av. fruit wt (g)
Grower treatment	248	68.5	277.0
Foliar applied TwinN	277	75.2	272.9
Soil applied TwinN	251	69.8	278.5
Foliar applied TwinN (reduced nitrogen)	297	80.7	272.3
Soil applied TwinN (reduced nitrogen)	259	72.2	286.5

In the first year of the experiment there was no significant effect of TwinN® application on fruit size and yield. At harvest 20 fruit of uniform size were sampled from five trees from each treatment. This fruit will be ripened at 20°C and will be visually rated for the severity of rots and internal disorders. The effect of treatment on the severity (% of flesh volume affected) and incidence (% of fruit affected) of fruit rots and disorders will be determined in July.

In the last edition of Talking Avocados (Autumn 2011) there was a small error with tags in regards to the photographs depicting the effect of treatment on root growth. Root growth was assessed three months after treatment in November 2010 and February 2011. In November there were more roots present in trees receiving the soil applied TwinN® (Photo 1) compared with the untreated trees (Photo 2). While in February there was little visible difference in the amount of root growth three months after the second treatment with all trees having ample root growth. Root growth will be assessed three months after the third application in July.



Photo 1: Root growth 3 months after soil applied TwinN®



Photo 2: Root growth in untreated trees

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all growers who have assisted in conducting trials and Mapleton Agri Biotec Pty Ltd for supplying the microbial product (TwinN®). This project is funded by using avocado grower R&D levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia.



Rootstock evaluation programme. Part 2.

Five years of data collection for clonal and seedling rootstocks with 'Shepard' as scion

By Dr Danielle Le Lagadec

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Agri-Science Queensland.

Department of Employment, Economic
Development and Innovation

'Shepard', a Mexican cultivar selected from an 'Edranol' seedling (Whiley *et al.* 2002), is commercially produced only in Australia. This green-skinned cultivar represents approximately 18 percent of Australian avocado production. 'Shepard' is the first cultivar harvested in the season and therefore often results in good financial returns. The trees are small with dense canopies and are reliably good bearers in warm climates. 'Shepard' is temperature sensitive and will only set fruit under warm ambient conditions. For this reason the cultivar is only grown in the Tablelands of northern Queensland and in the Bundaberg/Childers region (Whiley *et al.* 2002).

Rootstocks have a significant influence on avocado yield, tree health, vigour and disease susceptibility (Ben-Ya'acov *et al.* 1995; Bijzet and Sippel 2001; Wolstenholme 2003). The Australian avocado industry is based largely on the seedling rootstock 'Velvick'. Although this rootstock is well adapted to local conditions and performs well in Australia, several new imported and locally selected rootstocks are now available which may outperform 'Velvick'.

Since there is very little information published on suitable rootstocks for 'Shepard', a rootstock trial was established in 2004 at Goodwood Plantation in Childers, central Queensland. This is a large trial involving 33 rootstocks with 'Hass' as scion and 11 rootstocks with 'Shepard' as scion. The rootstocks tested with 'Shepard' as scion are listed in Table 1. The trial was established on deep, red krasnozem soil with a soil pH of approximately 6.3 and low Phytophthora pressure.

Vegetative vigour, tree health, yield and fruit quality were monitored from 2006 to 2010. Yield was expressed in kg per tree and as 'yield efficiency' i.e. kg of fruit produced per m³ of canopy volume, assuming an elongated spheroid shaped tree (Arpaia *et al.* 1993; Mickelbart *et al.* 2007).



Table 1. Seedling and clonal rootstocks included in the trial with 'Shepard' as the scions. The country of origin is given in parentheses.

Seedling rootstocks	Clonal rootstocks
'Ashdot' (Israel)	BM1 (RSA)
'Degania' (Israel)	BM2 (RSA)
'Reed' (USA)	
'Zutano' (USA)	
BW18 (Aus)	
BW197 (Aus)	
BW2 (Aus)	
BW78 (Aus)	
'Velvick' (Aus)	

Results and discussion

The clonal rootstocks took longer to establish than the seedling trees. The first crop was harvested in 2006 with seedling rootstocks producing significantly larger crop loads than the clonal trees, (Table 2). Throughout the five years of data collection, 'Velvick' was amongst the top producing rootstocks. With the exception of BM1, all the 'Shepard' trees produced good yields over the five-year period. There was no statistical difference in the cumulative yields of 'Velvick', 'Degania' BW197 and BW78. BW2, 'Ashdot' and 'Reed' performed equally well, as did 'Reed', 'Zutano' and BM2.

Table 2. Average yield per tree for rootstocks with 'Shepard' as scion.

Rootstock	Average yield per tree (kg)					Cumulative
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
Velvick	5.0	45.4	69.8	30.1	149.1	299.3
Degania	3.6	49.3	58.8	34.1	143.1	288.9
BW197	3.2	51.0	60.9	33.1	140.4	288.6
BW78	3.4	50.3	63.6	37.2	131.9	286.3
BW2	4.5	54.2	46.0	38.5	119.4	262.5
Ashdot	2.4	52.7	51.3	45.5	109.9	261.7
BW18	3.5	43.1	61.0	27.2	126.4	261.2
Reed	2.3	42.2	39.1	30.3	105.9	219.7
Zutano	3.6	47.9	40.0	30.6	92.0	214.1
BM2	1.1	31.6	28.8	30.6	113.9	206.1
BM1	0.6	19.2	14.0	23.7	83.3	140.8
Group avg	3.0	44.3	48.5	32.8	119.6	248.1

Rootstock evaluation programme - Part 2 continued

Large vigorous trees may produce a good crop load but may not be the most cost effective trees. Although ‘Velvick’ had the largest cumulative yield over five years, it also produced the most vegetatively vigorous trees (Figure 1). BW2, ‘Ashdot’, and the clonal rootstocks BM1 and BM2 produced trees with less vigour. Following the 2009 season the ‘Shepard’ trees were pruned, hence the perceived lack of vegetative growth in 2010 (Figure 1).

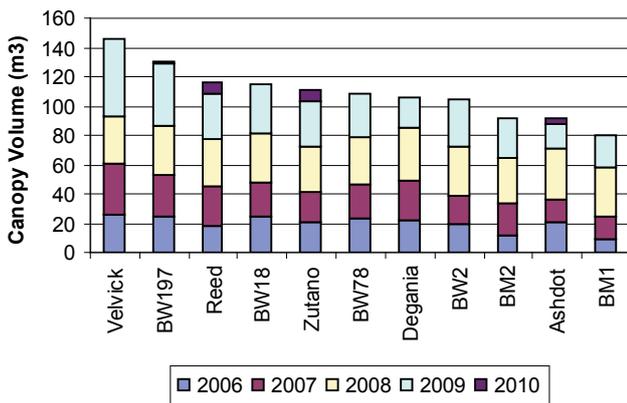


Figure 1. Average canopy volume for rootstocks with ‘Shepard’ as scion.

Since large trees tend to produce a good crop load, yield was expressed in terms of canopy volume, and referred to as ‘yield efficiency’. Despite the excellent yield produced by ‘Velvick’ it was not the most efficient rootstock tested (Figure 2). ‘Ashdot’, one of the smaller trees, produced the highest yield efficiency. Being a smaller tree, ‘Ashdot’ may be prone to environmental stresses and may require careful management. BW2 which is a seedling of ‘Velvick’ produced a moderate tree size with excellent yield efficiency. ‘Zutano’ produced reasonably even sized trees but the yield varied greatly from tree to tree with as much as a seven-fold difference in yield between plots.

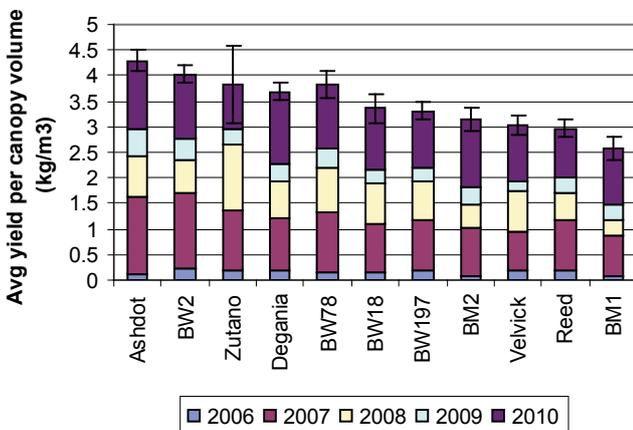


Figure 2. Average yield per canopy volume of ‘Shepard’ on seedling rootstocks. Bars above the column indicate the standard error of the mean for the cumulative yield (2006 to 2010).

Throughout the five years of data collection, all the ‘Shepard’ trees maintained excellent health. Despite the heavy crop load, none of the trees showed any sign of stress or tree decline. A slight rootstock overgrowth was observed in some of the rootstocks early in the trial, but the overgrowth had disappeared by 2009.

Fruit from the 2008, 2009 and 2010 harvest were assessed for quality after a fortnight of cold storage. A positive correlation was found between fruit quality and crop load ($r=0.78$, $r^2=0.61$, $P=0.005$). Throughout the trial, the general fruit quality was excellent with more than 90 percent of fruit sampled being marketable. Low levels of cold damaged were observed in fruit harvested from trees on ‘Zutano’, BM1 and BM2 rootstocks. However, it is speculated that this could have been related to the relatively low yields produced by these trees rather than being genetically linked to the rootstock.

Some of the rootstocks tested in this trial were bred for their high root rot (*Phytophthora*) tolerance. These rootstocks have yet to reach their full potential because they have not been subjected to high root rot pressure. The central Queensland region appears to be entering a wet climatic cycle with above average annual rainfall. *Phytophthora* root rot may become a serious problem in many orchards. It will be interesting to see whether these root rot tolerant rootstocks have the potential to outperform the others in the trial.

Recommendations

Unless otherwise noted, recommendations pertain to orchards established on deep well drained soils with low *Phytophthora* pressure.

- ‘Velvick’ remains a good rootstock for ‘Shepard’ but excessive tree vigour may be a problem in deep fertile soils.
- BW2 appears to have good potential as a rootstock and produced a slightly smaller tree than ‘Velvick’ but with good yield efficiency.
- ‘Ashdot’ has excellent yield efficiency (yield per canopy volume) but can only be recommended for establishment under optimal growing conditions. Under suboptimal conditions these small, heavy bearing trees may be at risk of showing signs of tree stress.



Acknowledgements

I thank all our financial sponsors: Birdwood Nursery, Simpson Farms Pty Ltd, Agri-Science Queensland and Horticulture Australia Limited. I thank Birdwood Nursery for initiating and establishing the trial and Simpson Farms for maintaining the trees and providing labour and equipment for harvesting the trial. Rachael Langenbaker, Terry Campbell and Wayne Rose are thanked for their technical support and Roger Broadley and Denis Roe for their constructive criticism of this article.

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In less than one month the most important event on the global avocado calendar is coming to our shores; the VII World Avocado Congress will be hosted by Avocados Australia in beautiful Cairns, Queensland, from 5-9 September 2011, and it is an event not to be missed!

The Congress will be delivered in English and Spanish to cater for over 1000 expected delegates comprising of avocado producers, wholesalers, food service providers, market traders, retailers and government representatives from 15 countries around the world.

The Congress will be held at the Cairns Convention Centre; one of the most innovative, adaptable and flexible centres of its kind, it is also the most stunning inside and out. The spectacular award winning design is contemporary and stylish, bright, airy and very welcoming.



With key opinion leaders and decision makers present and with over 80 percent of Australian and global avocado production attending the Congress, it is the ultimate international forum for worldwide avocado and allied industry stakeholders to exchange ideas.

“One of the great opportunities that the World Congress allows is the exchange of information between the Spanish and English speaking avocado world” explains Mr Antony Allen, President Elect of the International Avocado Society

and CEO of Avocados Australia, “everyone comes together, researchers, growers and marketers, they all attend!”

The Congress will include more than 230 presentations from leading industry experts in the fields of genetic resources, pests and diseases, culture management, post harvest/processing, marketing and the commercial stream.

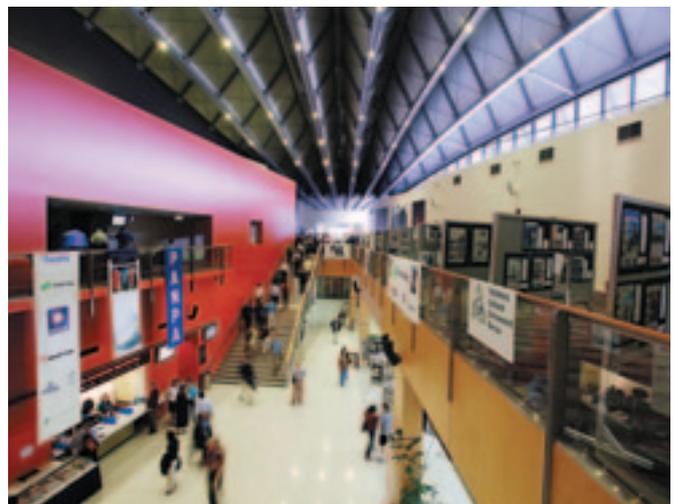
Delegates will have the opportunity to hear the latest techniques for growing; learn about the newest trends in avocado marketing; and listen to up-to-date information about how issues, such as the state of the economy and climate change, will impact the future of the avocado industry.

The Congress program will also allow delegates the time and opportunity to take advantage of global networking opportunities; to strengthen old relationships and establish new connections within the industry.

“The last World Congress in Chile saw researchers, growers and marketers all attend in large numbers,” explains Mr Allen, “attending the Congress was in such high demand among industry stakeholders that unfortunately many missed out and were left disappointed, so I would urge everyone to register to ensure their place at what is going to be an amazing event.”

Delegates who register with a full time registration will have the opportunity to be a part of the Welcome Reception; attend all Congress sessions, the industry exhibition, morning and afternoon teas and lunches on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; receive the Congress handbook/abstracts in English or Spanish; and hear full translations from English to Spanish or Spanish to English during the Congress.

Register now at
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Avocado is one of the fastest growing fruit and vegetable products in Australia and around the world. The VII World Avocado Congress is an event that will bring together the key opinion leaders and decision makers of the avocado industry; with over 80 percent of Australian and global avocado production attending, it is the ultimate international forum for worldwide avocado and allied industry stakeholders to exchange ideas.

The Congress already has over 800 registered delegates from Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, Chile, Peru, Columbia, USA, South Africa, Spain, Brazil, Israel and many more. With more than 1000 delegates expected to attend, the Congress is THE opportunity to showcase your company and products to customers from more than 15 countries around the world.

The VII World Avocado Congress 2011 gives sponsors and exhibitors a fantastic range of opportunities that cover all aspects of the Scientific Program, Social Program, the industry exhibition and pre-event marketing.

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- Reinforce relationships with existing clients and develop new contacts.

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Get ready for the VII World Avocado Congress! continued

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Dow Agrosiences	Enviromist	
Hydralada	J-Tech Systems	Madec
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Social Program

Delegates of the VII World Avocado Congress will enjoy a number of networking opportunities including a Welcome Reception, Gala Dinner, a site visit to an avocado farm, and an afternoon of Australian culture. Pre-touring and post-touring options are also available, in addition to an Accompanying Person’s Program that will run in conjunction with the Congress.

Pre Field Trip: the first taste of the Australian avocado industry

The Pre Field Trip allows delegates from outside Australia the opportunity to see the Australian avocado industry before the Congress begins. For those delegates that currently live in Australia, this trip presents an opportunity to see first-hand how a different growing region operates, it also allows delegates a chance to establish and/or maintain invaluable international and inter-state contacts.

The Pre Field Trip will depart from Brisbane and includes visits to working avocado farms, packing sheds, nurseries and research stations across Toowoomba, the Sunshine Coast and Bundaberg region in beautiful Queensland.

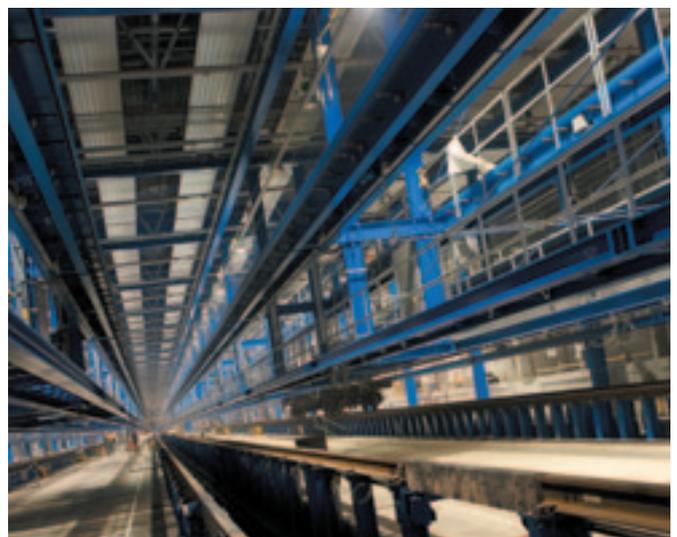
Walk through beautiful avocado orchards; tour established packing sheds; sample premium Australian avocado fruit; and discuss with some of the most prominent growers, packers, and scientists in the Australian avocado industry



issues such as irrigation, nutrition, canopy management, pest and disease control measures and mulching.

Date: Thursday, 1 September 2011 - Sunday, 4 September 2011

Location: Brisbane, Toowoomba, Sunshine Coast and Bundaberg



Welcome Reception

Join colleagues and guests for a warm and friendly Aussie welcome to the VII World Avocado Congress 2011. Enjoy a drink and some appetisers while you network and meet some of Australia's favourite native animals!

Date: Monday, 5 September 2011

Time: 1800 – 2000 hours

Location: Cairns Convention Centre

Price: Included for full time registered delegates and student registered delegates

Guest tickets and day delegates: A\$75 per ticket

Dress: Smart casual

Gala dinner

Come and dine with colleagues and friends, celebrating a successful VII World Avocado Congress 2011 and dance the night away.

The band Chukale is dedicated to showcasing the cream of international Latin American talent. The band built its reputation working from the ground up with residencies in a variety of Brisbane hot spots. The eleven-piece Afro-Cuban Salsa ensemble have been delighting Australian audiences since 2005.



The Rat Pack's Back has burst into the special event and concert scene in a tongue-in-cheek show evoking the style of the infamous American Rat Pack. Starring Australia's and the UK's brightest talents together, three dashing performers sing and dance up a storm with some of the world's most loved songs made famous by Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jnr.

Date: Friday, 9 September 2011

Time: 1900 – 2330 hours

Location: Cairns Convention Centre

Cost: A\$165 per ticket

Dress: Cocktail

Field Trip and Cultural Activity

Don't miss out on what is set to be an absolutely amazing day that will include a tour of an working Australian avocado farm, followed by an enjoyable afternoon taking in the natural beauty and rich culture of Australia.

Delegates will depart Cairns and head straight for the Atherton Tablelands; a blend of the best attractions of the wet tropics and the dry outback charm. Among the World Heritage listed rainforests, national parks, mountains, rivers, lakes and waterfalls are some of Australia's richest agricultural and horticultural lands, cattle country and charming small townships.

Avocado Farm Visit

Delegates will have the morning to walk through beautiful avocado orchards and talk with some of the most prominent growers in the Tablelands about issues such as irrigation, nutrition, canopy management, pest and disease control measures, and mulching.

Rainforestation Nature Park

The afternoon will take delegates to Kuranda and the Rainforestation Nature Park which is set on 100 acres of World Heritage rainforest. This unique eco-friendly tourist attraction hosts Army Duck Rainforest Tour, a Pamagirri Aboriginal Experience, and encompasses Kuranda's largest Koala & Wildlife Park.

Army Duck Rainforest Tour

Experience the tropical rainforest from a totally unique perspective – aboard an amphibious World War II Army Duck. Traverse the Australian landscape with a knowledgeable Duck Captain/Guide on an unforgettable 45 minute rainforest tour; the Army Duck cruises up to the water's edge whilst turtles, fish and eels swim up close. Delegates will need to keep an eye out for water dragons

Get ready for the VII World Avocado Congress! continued

or pythons sunbaking or slithering up trees.

Pamagirri Aboriginal Experience

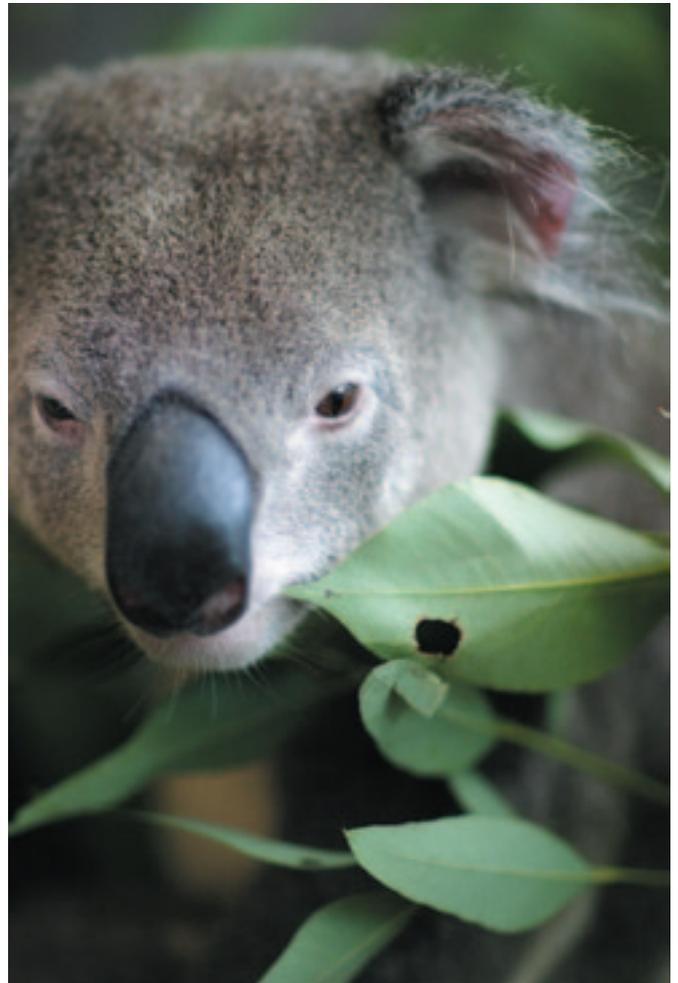
Australia's Indigenous culture is one of the oldest surviving cultures in the world, and Rainforestation Nature Park recognises the importance of preserving and sharing this unique culture. Delegates will join local indigenous Pamagirri Guides on a journey to discover the Dreamtime. This half-hour guided tour along an all weather walkway modelled on the Rainbow Serpent gives insight into aboriginal traditions and beliefs, and how several ancient implements were used. Delegates can try their hand at boomerang throwing, observe spear-throwing - you'll be amazed at the distance the Pamagirri Guides can throw spears, - and have the chance to play a didgeridoo.

Delegates will witness a Pamagirri Corroboree; a traditional dance performance depicting aspects of indigenous culture including animals, food gathering and hunting. The rainforest serves as the theatre walls and sounds of wildlife provide accompaniment to the haunting sounds of the didgeridoo and clap sticks. The dance program is available in 14 different languages.



Koala & Wildlife Park.

The Koala & Wildlife Park will allow delegates to experience another facet of Australia when they join a guided group tour with an experienced Wildlife Keeper along a series of elevated boardwalks that provide close-up uninterrupted views of Australian animals and reptiles. Delegates will have an opportunity to handfeed the free roaming kangaroos and wallabies in the landscaped gardens, observe the carnivorous tiger quoll and the



endangered cassowary, see wombats and lace monitors, and view local snakes and other reptiles. After the tour, delegate may have their photo taken holding one of Australia's sleepest marsupials; the koala, or holding a small fresh water crocodile.

Kuranda Scenic Railway

On their return to Cairns, delegates will embark on a world famous train adventure - the famous Kuranda Scenic Railway! This is a journey that combines the exciting pioneering history and scenic beauty of tropical North Queensland. This is a world famous train adventure not to be missed!

**Don't miss out on this exciting experience!
To book your place on the Field Trip and**



**Cultural Activity please contact:
registration@worldavocadocongress2011.com**

- Date:** Thursday, 8 September 2011
- Location:** Atherton Tablelands, Queensland
- Price:** A\$150.

Accompanying Persons Program

With a fantastic selection of day tours that will available throughout the Congress, accompanying persons of Congress delegates will thoroughly enjoy accompanying their other halves to the VII World Avocado Congress. The day tours have been designed to be both exciting and relaxing, and will return guests to their hotels in time for any social events in the Congress program.

Tour days will include the following:

Cape Tribulation and Daintree

This wonderful day will include travelling along one of Australia's most scenic coastal drives to visit the Wildlife Habitat for morning tea. Guests will have the opportunity to wander through the wetlands, grasslands and rainforest environments of this leading wildlife exhibit, and have the opportunity to hold a koala, python or crocodile!

From there, guests will take the ferry across to Cape Tribulation where they will enjoy a tropical buffet lunch before exploring Cape Tribulation Beach. Guests will then continue onto Alexandra lookout (a perfect photo opportunity with magnificent views of the Daintree River and Coral Sea) before taking the Daintree river cruise back to Cairns, and enjoying some light afternoon tea.



Get ready for the VII World Avocado Congress! continued

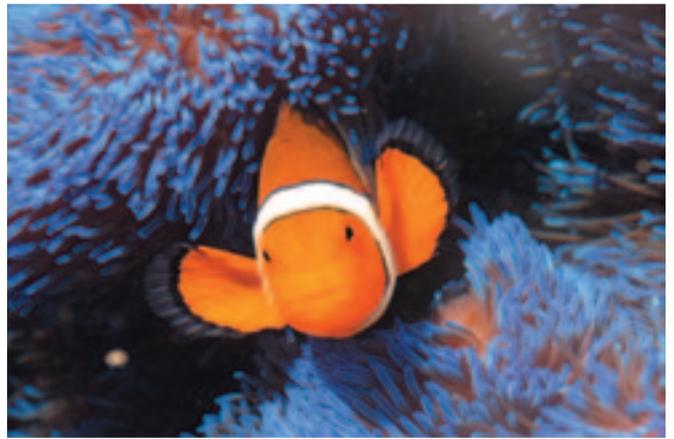


Frankland Island

By way of a private coach transfer, guests will be taken to the river jetty, where they will embark on a 30 minute river cruise (with commentary) and be provided with a light morning tea. The river will eventually break onto the reef, where guests will then enjoy a 30 minute ocean cruise to the Frankland Island.

Frankland Island is a National Park with a healthy and vibrant surrounding coral reef community. Guests will have the opportunity to enjoy a day of relaxation, participating in activities such as snorkelling (with tuition if required and a guided snorkelling tour with a marine biologist), a coral viewing glass bottom boat tour, and a guided rock pool discovery tour on the island.

After enjoying a fabulous tropical lunch on the island, guests will then be provided with some time for relaxation and various activities before embarking on a return cruise back to the river jetty to meet the private coach (and will enjoy a light afternoon tea along the way).



Port Douglas

Guests will have the opportunity to enjoy a tour of Port Douglas (an international celebrity hotspot and popular film location), including Four Mile Beach, St Mary's By The Sea, and the Marina.

Guests will then be provided with time to shop and explore at their own leisure (browsing the boutique shops at Marina Mirage, and along the vibrant Macrossan Street) or visiting the celebrity hot spots such as the Iron Bar, Courthouse Hotel and Salsa.

Guests will then enjoy a 2 course lunch with views overlooking the picturesque Port Douglas inlet, before departing Port Douglas via Palm Cove Esplanade. Morning tea and afternoon tea are not included in this day tour.





If you would like your partner to participate in the Accompanying Persons Program please contact
registration@worldavocadocongress2011.com

Post Field Trip in New Zealand

Farm To Farm Tours Ltd will be conducting a post-Congress tour to avocado production regions, producers and associated businesses in New Zealand. Additional options will include cultural and scenic experiences.

Delegates will enjoy five days and four nights of production and packing visits; new technology; meeting processors, exporters; and talking with industry leaders. Not only that, delegate will enjoy the Rotorua geothermal area and experience Maori culture.

The Post Field Trip starts 11 September 2011 in Auckland and finishes 15 September 2011 in Auckland. If delegates have more time, there is an option to visit scenic areas of NZ's South Island.

For further information or an itinerary, email James Dixon *james@farmtofarm.co.nz*



Inflation Threats

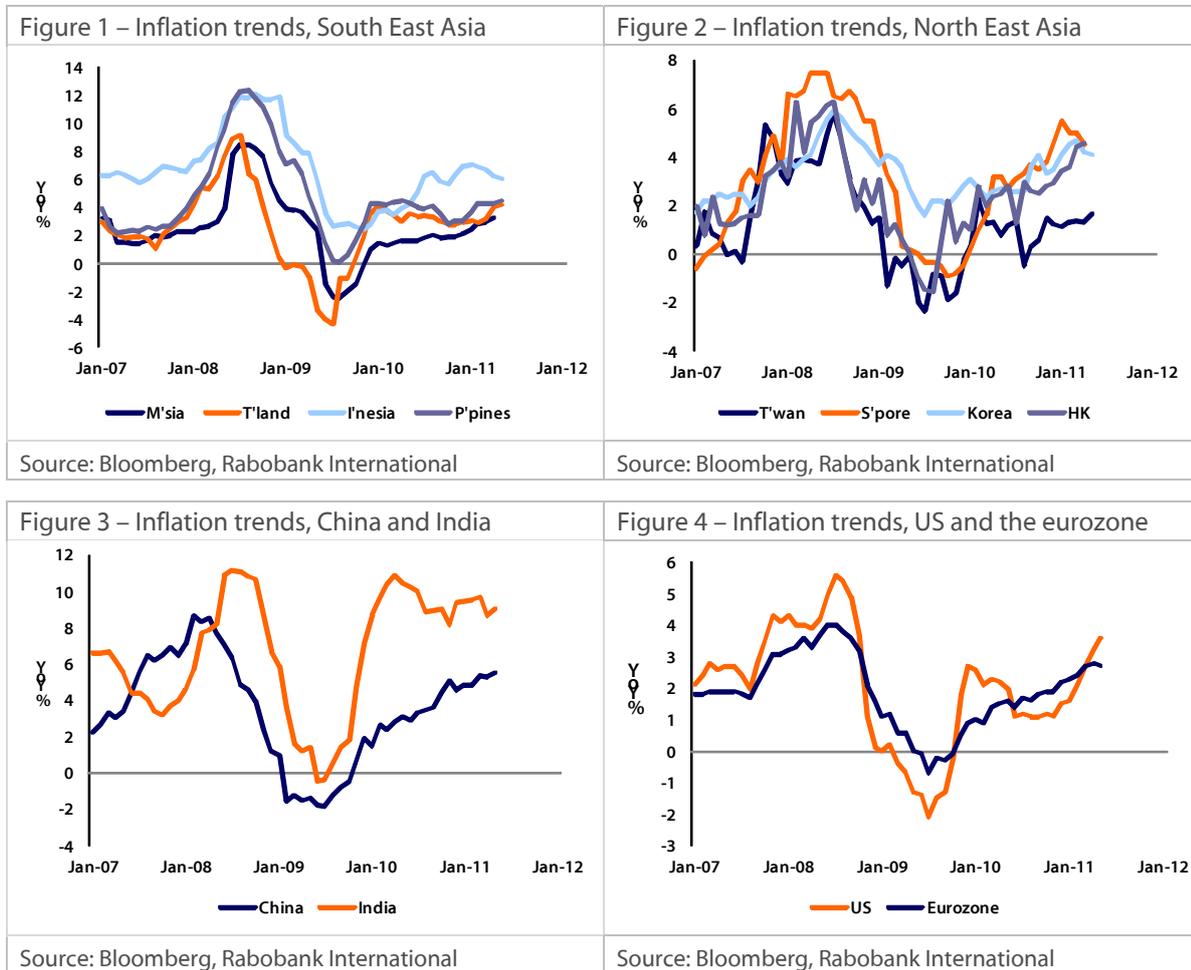


Rabobank

Is the inflation threat peaking in Asia-Pacific?

Inflationary pressures remain front and centre

In an article on 9 March 2011 we discussed our view that whilst inflationary threats were increasing around the Asia-Pacific region, we expected them to ease later in the year. We highlighted that 'output gaps' persist in major economies and in the Asia-Pacific region as a whole, and these tend to reduce inflationary pressures over time. Here we take stock of recent inflation trends and highlight that we might now be experiencing the maximum inflationary impulse from global factors, such as oil and food prices. As Figures 1, 2 and 3, below, show inflation has increased in most of the major economies of the Asia region that we consider here, as it has in both the eurozone and the US, as shown in Figure 4. Without focussing too closely on the individual lines in each Figure, below, the point of interest is the similar cycle most of them show with most increasing on the recent readings.



Despite many differences between the countries of the Asia-Pacific region in terms of the stage of development, and the resilience of each economy to the recent global downturn, to name a couple, there has been a broadly similar pattern of inflation around the region and in the major economies, the eurozone and the US. As we show and discuss overpage, the trends in oil and food prices are common factors impacting inflation in these various regions and countries.

Please note the disclaimer on the last page of this document

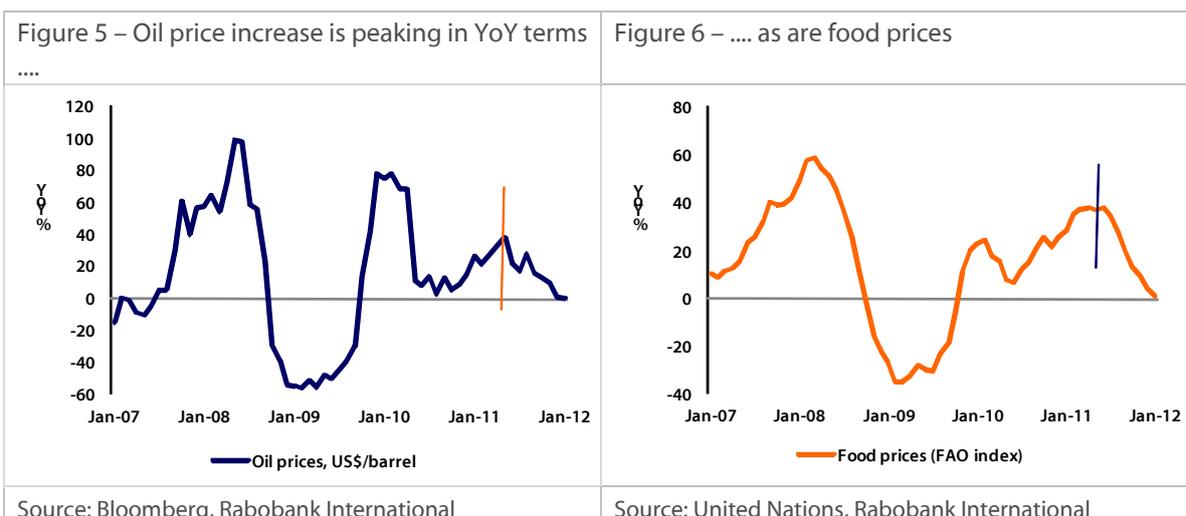
International inflation pressures might be peaking

The global economy continues to grow, led by strong growth in many emerging economies but with challenges persisting in many developed countries, and tensions persist in some parts of the Middle East and North Africa. The oil price and food prices are high and these are sources of inflationary pressure impacting all economies, especially in the Asia-Pacific region.

With food representing a larger share of the consumption basket in poorer economies i.e., those countries with a lower average per capita income, food price inflation is an important challenge in many poorer countries. High oil prices obviously exacerbate this challenge.

What is interesting, though, is that the month of May will likely represent the (recent) peak in the YoY rise in oil prices. Figure 5 charts the YoY change in the NYMEX benchmark price (light, sweet crude). In May, the price was \$102.70, which represented a 38.8% increase over the price of May 2010, as shown by the orange vertical bar in the chart. The oil price is currently just above \$92 per barrel and this represents a 22.2% increase over the price in June 2010; the YoY increase is declining and this signals the inflationary impulse from high oil will also ease. There are ongoing threats to stability and oil supply in several oil producing areas but barring an unforeseen escalation of tensions and a jump in oil prices, as 2011 unfolds the YoY rise in oil prices will likely ease further. As an example, if the current oil price persists into year end 2011, the YoY change will fall to about 1% YoY by December, as shown to the right of the orange line in Figure 5. The inflationary impulse now so clearly evident will also fade.

Food prices have shown a similar pattern as oil prices with Figure 6 charting the YoY change in food prices (using the UN Food and Agriculture World Food Price Index) since 2007. The level of this index peaked in February and has already eased lower since. Food prices look set to peak in June (i.e., the current month) in YoY growth terms. The latest (full month) reading is for May, shown by the blue line, and it shows food prices to be 37.1% above May 2010. On a month-to-date basis, food prices in June are tracking 38.3% above June 2010. Holding food prices steady through July will see the growth rate ease to 34.8% YoY, and holding them steady through to year-end will see the YoY growth slow to 4.2%, as shown to the right of the blue line in Figure 6.



Food prices have a larger impact on poorer countries

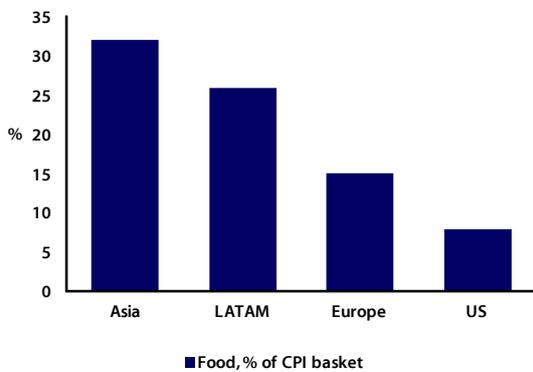
There is, of course, the danger that both oil and food prices increase again in the months ahead and this would keep the inflation threat alive. But against the backdrop of a global economy that continues to experience challenges in several significant areas e.g., below trend growth in the US and the fiscal constraints in the European periphery, we doubt demand conditions will pull oil prices markedly higher now that they have reset as a result of the global recovery underway since 2009. Food prices

Inflation Threats continued

are, of course, subject to the vagaries of the weather as much as they are impacted by demand conditions. We can't be confident that food prices will not increase further again. And we know that higher food prices are more keenly felt in the developing world due to the higher share of food in the consumption basket of poorer people.

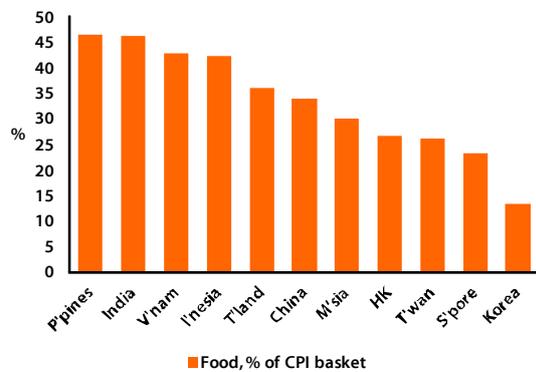
Figure 7 shows our estimate of the share of food in the basket of goods and services comprising the Consumer Price Index in the regions shown, on average. Clearly, the share of food in the CPI basket in Asia is high and this is one reason why central banks in the Asia region have been at the forefront of interest rate policy normalization since global recovery kicked-off in 2009. Figure 8 adds more detail to this by showing the share of each Asian country's CPI accounted for by food. No surprise that food is a larger share of consumption in the lesser developed countries of the region.

Figure 7 – Food has a significant impact on inflation in Asia



Source: CEIC, Reuters Ecowin, Rabobank International

Figure 8 – with large differences around the region



Source: CEIC, Rabobank International

With the risk of yet higher food prices staying 'live' through coming months, we expect inflation to continue to be perceived as a threat through this period even as the impulse from oil prices fade. But, over time, slowing YoY growth in the oil price will offset the inflationary impulse of further food price rises if they do occur. And even if the level of food prices does rise further, this will delay the easing in the YoY growth rate rather than erase it on what we consider a reasonable outlook for prices.

Our point here is to highlight that the underlying forces currently pressuring inflation higher are likely to become significantly less intense around the region in the months ahead.

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Avocado R&D and marketing program overview

Prepared by John Tyas
Industry Services Manager,
Horticulture Australia

Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) is a national research, development and marketing organisation. HAL is an industry-owned company that invests more than \$100 million annually in research and development (R&D) and marketing projects for the benefit of horticulture. HAL works in partnership with the horticulture sector to invest in programs that provide benefit to Australian horticultural industries. The avocado industry invests through HAL in R&D and marketing programs using avocado levies and voluntary contributions. All R&D funds are matched, dollar for dollar, by the Australian Government through the HAL program.

The avocado investment program is reviewed and adjusted annually in line with the industry's strategic plan. A new strategic plan was developed in 2010/11 to guide investments over the next five years. The new strategic plan is based on three key objectives:

- Objective 1 - To build a sustainable and competitive supply of Australian avocados to meet consumer needs;
- Objective 2 - To increase demand for Australian avocados, and
- Objective 3 - To ensure appropriate organisation, resourcing and management of the affairs of the Australian avocado industry to support the development of the industry on an ongoing basis.

Projects relevant to the avocado industry are funded through four different mechanisms and these are:

1. Avocado grower levies,
2. 'Voluntary contributions' (VC projects),
3. 'Multi industry' projects where the avocado industry jointly funds a project with one or more industries (MT projects) and,
4. 'Across industry' projects that are funded by all horticultural industries including avocados (AH projects).

VC projects that relate to avocados can be found below with the grey shaded background.

MT or HG projects funded by avocado levies can be found below with the yellow shaded background.

AH projects can be found below with the blue shaded background

Following is a snapshot of the current avocado program funded through HAL. For further details on the specific projects, we encourage you to contact the relevant Principle Investigator.

Objective 1 – To build a sustainable and competitive supply of Australian avocados to meet consumer demand

AV09001

National Avocado Quality & Information Management System

Project Start: 1 Oct 2009

Project Completion: 30 Sep 2012

Principle Investigator: Julie Petty, Avocados Australia

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

The aim of this project is to bring together all of the results from AV06006 (Scoping of a national avocado quality system and management of avocado industry information systems), and the supply chain projects that were managed by it, and develop and implement an integrated quality and information management system. The supply chain projects managed by AV06006 identified where the industry currently sits in terms of quality and productivity and points out in the supply chain where issues related to productivity and product quality should be addressed. It also identified lessons from overseas and other industries for developing a quality standard and maintaining that standard.

AV06006 was also successful in implementing and rolling out a system for managing critical information from sectors of the industry including production and productivity (Orchard Info), fruit dispatches to market (Infocado - packhouses), and sales to retail (Infocado – wholesalers and retail price surveys).

The information generated regarding these two critical components of the industry i.e. quality and productivity is now available and in a format which can be used to develop quality and production management systems.

Two of the main issues which impact on the returns to avocado growers are related to fruit quality management and the efficiency of avocado production and marketing systems. Both of these issues are being addressed through this project.

Continued management of the multifaceted information

Avocado R&D and marketing program overview continued

management system in the form of Infocado and Orchard Info provides the industry with accurate production, sales, and productivity data on which to make all future decisions. Development of a framework for and assisted management of a quality management system will provide the industry with a tool to differentiate premium quality fruit. This will assist in targeting different segments of the market.

AV10006

Avocado Supply Chain Education Materials - Phase 2

Project Start: 2 Aug 2010

Project Completion: 30 Nov 2012

Principle Investigator: Julie Petty, Avocados Australia

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

Phase 1 of the 'Avocado Supply Chain Education Materials' project (AVo8017) produced a range of educational materials, heavily focused at the main post harvest sectors of the avocado supply chain; including the packhouse, wholesale and retail sectors.

Both the 'Avocado Colour & Ripeness Chart' and 'The Little Green Book: The Adventures of Alvin' have been distributed to all members of the industry as general reference materials and as a platform for the more focused, specific materials. Other posters have been distributed to members of the relevant supply chain sectors.

Phase II of the Supply Chain Education Materials project aims to expand on Phase I both in terms of filling any gaps in information available and ensuring the most effective methods/tools are used in extending that information to the intended audiences. Because of the high level of correlation between level of ripeness and potential to develop and express quality issues, handling at the retail level potentially has a high level of impact on avocado quality. This project will therefore implement a training program targeted at retail staff to facilitate the uptake of the information provided in the retail handling guides developed in phase I.

Phase II will also pick up on two sectors of the supply chain that were not addressed in phase I including the harvest and transport sectors. These will be addressed in the form of a best practice harvest guide and a transport handling guide. Additionally, the need to update both the information and the format of the AAGF avocado grade standards has been identified. These grade standards are used across all sectors of the supply chain and will be redeveloped to match the international avocado quality

guide and be reformatted in line with the education materials that have been developed in phase I.

Another significant component of Phase II of the education materials project is the development of interactive learning objects in support of both the new materials detailed above and those that were produced in phase I of the project. These new learning objects will be an extension of the poster series and will be designed in a format suitable for online delivery. The learning objects are for adult learners and therefore will need to appeal to that audience.

AVo8034

Avocado Retail Quality Monitoring - Phase II

Project Start: 1 Apr 2009

Project Completion: 31 Oct 2011

Principle Investigator: Julie Petty Avocados Australia

Funding Source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

As part of its key strategic focus on improving the quality of the avocados offered to Australian consumers, Avocados Australia and HAL are continuing a project to assess and improve current industry practices affecting customer and consumer satisfaction with the end product. The industry is adopting a staged approach to achieving this.

The Supply Chain Improvement project (AVo6009) is a two phase project which has been developed to specifically address objectives P1.1, P1.2, P2.1 and P2.2 in the strategic plan. The first 12 month phase was aimed at identifying where the industry currently sits in terms of quality and efficiency, and identification of points in the supply chain where further work is required to make improvements in these areas.

This project is Phase II that resulted from the recommendations of Phase I to address gaps.

Phase I has produced three outputs

1. Benchmarks for industry performance in eating quality (primarily maturity and freedom from rots or bruising) - from the consumer research and sensory research conducted in 2007 and 2008.
2. A supply chain resource audit of the industry.
3. A supply chain situation analysis for the industry

This project forms part of Output 3. To date, consumer sensory testing has been completed to determine quality levels which provide an acceptable consumption experience for consumers and hence does not negatively impact on future purchasing decisions. The results from

this work in summary have indicated that consumers prefer fruit of maturity between 22 percent and 28 percent dry matter (DM); creating a competitive advantage by supplying fruit increasingly along this range. The results indicated that 85 percent of consumers prefer to buy avocados at a level of ripeness that they can consume that evening and that that level of ripeness is in the range of ripe to soft ripe. Consumers indicated that any internal quality defects to more than 10 percent of the overall flesh at all price points would impact negatively on their next purchase intent.

The first stage of this project was aimed at measuring how much fruit at the retail level currently fulfils consumers quality demands and where there are significant differences in quality (between store types and/or seasons).

AV11015

Avocado Retail Quality Surveys - Phase III

Project Start: 1 Nov 2011

Project Completion: 29 Feb 2016

Principle Investigator: Julie Petty, Avocados Australia

Funding Source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

Avocado quality is recognised as impacting significantly on consumer purchase behaviour. Furthermore from recent research we are now able to quantify the levels of damage that have a negative impact on purchases, specifically in relation to maturity, ripeness and internal quality.

In the updated strategic plan (2010 – 2015) the requirement to ensure that consumers can confidently purchase consistently high quality fresh avocados at retail level is a large focus with one of the outcomes required from research and development in the next 5 years to be to increase the percentage of fruit sold at retail level meeting consumer requirements from 75 percent to 90 percent.

There are a broad range of projects within the avocado research and development portfolio that are aimed at addressing the issue of improved quality.

To date there are two projects preceding this one aimed at collecting data to determine the proportion of fruit sold at the retail level that meets consumer quality requirements, AV07018 (Oct 07 to Sep 08) and then AV08034 (Oct 08 to Sep 11). The results from these projects have shown that there is still around 25 percent of fruit that is unacceptable in terms of internal quality and that bruising is the most significant issue in terms of cause of damage. The results have also indicated that there is still immature fruit being

marketed.

This project will continue on from those projects (using the same methodology) to track and quantify changes in quality and use that information to track and measure the success of projects (as above) aimed at improving quality. The results will also be provided to members of the supply chain to illustrate the beneficial impact of improved quality on overall profit. Finally the tools and processes used within the project will be used within the framework of an overall Quality Management System to be implemented through AV09001.

MT10021

Determination of Cold Tolerance in Immature Stages of Australian Fruit Fly Pest Species

Project Start: 1 Nov 2010

Project Completion: 31 Dec 2013

Principle Investigator: Mr Peter Leach, Department of Employment, Economic Development & Innovation (DEEDI)

Funding source: Matched R&D levies (multiple industries)

SUMMARY

Research on cold treatments to control fruit fly in Australia has been undertaken over the last four decades. The major focus of this research has been on two species: Queensland fruit fly and Mediterranean fruit fly. Unfortunately, Australia has over ten species of fruit fly which could be categorised as serious quarantine pests. The fact that there is no data on the tolerance of tropical fruit fly species to cold treatment is a major risk to both current and future export protocols.

The aim of this multi industry project is to develop testing procedures to determine the cold tolerance of Australian pest fruit fly species. This will allow negotiation of robust protocols based on science rather than relying on trading partner's interpretation of a particular species pest status (e.g. Taiwan and the efficacy of cold treatment against Queensland fruit fly). The data packages will also have benefits for producers in fruit fly free areas should an incursion by a tropical fruit fly species occur. Under such circumstances trade would be able to continue (using a cold treatment) until the incursion is eradicated. Without data packages on cold tolerance, trade may be lost until eradication is complete.

Avocado R&D and marketing program overview continued

AV09005**Coordination of Export Development for Australian Avocados****Project Start:** 10 Mar 2010**Project Completion:** 30 Nov 2011**Principle Investigator:** Jennie Franceschi, Avoz Exports,**Funding source:** Matched R&D voluntary contribution**SUMMARY**

The overall aim of this project is to increase exports of Australian avocados to key export markets in Asia (Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Bangkok) and the Middle East (UAE). This will assist in managing the supply/demand balance in the Australian industry, with an aim to maintaining profitability in the Australian avocado industry.

The Avocado Export Company (AEC) is intended to be the primary vehicle to drive Australian export market growth. The AEC has as its shareholders; avocado production, packing and marketing businesses that represent in excess of 50 percent of Australian production volume. The business structure that it has adopted provides a mechanism for potentially all Australian growers and packers to participate, if they wish (assuming they meet the obligations required of a company shareholder). To achieve its goals AEC has recognised the need to address, as a priority, a number of the export market development needs outlined in Avocado Export Road Map (HAL Project AV06010: Export Development for the Australian Avocado Industry).

Outputs from the project will include:

- Export Market Development Plan for the AEC
- In-market research reports related to key markets
- Market out-turn reports related to the shipments of Australian avocados from the AEC
- Export Manual with details regarding product specifications, treatments, handling, packing etc. for growers and packers
- Product handling training guide and manual for importers/wholesalers
- Product handling and merchandising training material appropriate for retailers in key export markets
- In-country training of importers and key retailers on avocado handling practices
- Training for participating export growers on requirements to meet product specifications in selected export markets
- Communication Plan and related media to increase Australian avocado growers understanding of the benefits of exporting, considerations and requirements to meet international market requirements

AV10001**Improving Yield and Quality in Avocado through Disease Management, Phase 2****Project Start:** 31 Dec 2010**Project Completion:** 31 Dec 2014**Principle Investigator:** Dr Elizabeth Dann, DEEDI - QLD**Funding source:** Matched R&D levies and voluntary contributions**SUMMARY**

The loss in productivity due to poor tree health and sub-standard quality fruit is a continuing concern for individual avocado growers and the industry alike. The aim of the project is to enhance avocado fruit standards by optimising fruit yields, fruit quality, and tree health, by improving management of insidious diseases affecting fruit, roots or whole trees. Strategies which reduce the reliance on chemical fungicides will be assessed, in accordance with public and regulatory attitudes and policy both in Australia and overseas, and the adoption of effective 'softer' options encouraged where possible. This will be achieved by a series of field and laboratory trials, some of which will continue from the previous project (AV07000), for example assessment of selected material under high *Phytophthora* conditions. Other field trials will build upon results obtained in AV07000 with respect to phosphorous acid applications, and assessment of fungicides and non-pesticidal products purported to reduce diseases and boost health in other crop systems. A new area of field and laboratory/glasshouse research will be the assessment of cultural and chemical options for the management of brown root rot.

Briefly, benefits to industry will include:

1. Improved management of root rot, via resistant rootstock material and more effective applications of phosphorous acid.
2. Enhanced fruit quality and yields, via improved integrated management of postharvest diseases.
3. Investigation of management options for brown root rot, caused by *Phellinus noxius*.

AV09024**Mechanisms of Cultivar and Race-based Disease Resistance in Avocado****Project Start:** 11 Jun 2010**Project Completion:** 1 Jul 2013**Principle Investigator:** Dr Andre Drenth, University of Queensland

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

This project is the first in an ongoing program of avocado research scholarships.

It is well established that rootstock influences resistance of avocado (*Persea americana*) to anthracnose in fruit (*Colletotrichum gloeosporioides*) and root rot (eg. *Phytophthora cinnamomi*). However, little is known about the physiological, molecular or biochemical bases underlying this resistance or tolerance. The aim of this project is to determine key characteristics among rootstocks from the three ecological races of avocado which correlate with disease resistance. Once these characteristics are identified, we can use them as markers to screen and select for higher levels of resistance among large number of cultivars or races of *Persea sp.* Knowledge of these underlying mechanisms and identification of molecular or biochemical markers correlated with improved disease resistance will significantly speed up breeding and selection for superior material for the Industry. The project has linkages with existing HAL/ Avocados Australia funded projects on avocado disease management and rootstock evaluation.

MT10049

A Multi Target Approach to Fruitspotting Bug Management

Project Start: 1 Mar 2010

Project Completion: 1 Apr 2016

Principle Investigator: Dr Ruth Huwer, NSW Dept of Industry and Investment

Funding source: Matched R&D levies (multiple industries)

SUMMARY

Fruitspotting bugs are a major native pest in a number of subtropical and tropical horticultural crops in Australia. Until now, using a single targeting approach, namely broad-spectrum insecticides, has been the only management option for growers. This approach is not sustainable in the long-term. In addition, it has also become apparent that a single strategy approach from different research teams has not been able to find a solution for fruitspotting bug management and therefore a multi-target approach is suggested. This project team was formed following a workshop in Brisbane in April 2010. The team has a vast skill set, ranging from development and commercialisation of biological control agents, to pheromone chemistry, to adaption of these new integrated management systems for implementation on commercial farms.

The strategies proposed in this project are:

1. Collation of past research
2. Investigate effective chemical control options
3. Development of monitoring and trap cropping
 - i. Trap cropping
 - ii. Pheromone traps
4. Development of biological control options
5. Demonstrate improved management options through Integrated Pest Management (IPM) case studies
6. Implement control strategies on a regional basis through Area Wide Management (AWM)
7. Industry adoption
8. Project coordination
9. Project reference group. To ensure a successful progress of the project, the project will be guided and reviewed by a project reference group consisting of industry representatives, HAL, the Project Coordinator and the lead research agency (NSW I&I).

AVo8000

Rootstock Improvement for the Australian Avocado Industry – Phase 3

Project Start: 01 Jan 2009

Project Completion: 01 Dec 2012

Principle Investigator: Dr Tony Whiley, Sunshine Horticultural Services Pty Ltd

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

The Australia avocado industry has continued to expand for the most part, using an ad hoc range of rootstocks selected by nurserymen for which there is no data to substantiate their performance. Despite a technically sound nursery scheme (ANVAS) to supply disease-free, true-to-type trees to industry, the development and use of superior rootstocks largely remains in limbo. 'Velvick', (predominantly West Indian race), is one local rootstock selected about 20 years ago where a body of performance data is slowly being developed both within Australia and overseas. Recent studies in Australia comparing postharvest anthracnose development of 'Hass' fruit from trees grafted to different rootstocks, have found that fruit from one line developed less disease compared with others.

During Phase 1 of this project a range of rootstocks from both Mexican and Guatemalan race populations were identified and propagated as either seedlings or vegetative clones. They were then grafted to either 'Hass' or 'Shepard' and planted out in replicated experimental blocks in the major avocado production districts of Australia (completed on 31/12/2004). The second phase of the

Avocado R&D and marketing program overview continued

project monitored the growth and early production of trees in the various locations where experimental sites were established. Additionally, rootstocks from the elite recovery program in Phase 1 were multiplied for field planting and evaluation with new selections recovered during Phase 2.

Phase 3 will move on to more detailed assessment of tree growth, yield and postharvest (physiology and disease characteristics) fruit performance. The project will also recover and propagate new elite rootstocks for future evaluation wherever the opportunity arises.

AVo8002

RNA Silencing-based Phytophthora Root Rot Resistant Avocado Rootstocks for Improved Production of Genetically Modified (GM) Free Fruit

Project Start: 28 Nov 2008

Project Completion: 30 May 2012

Service Provider: Dr Neena Mitter, DEEDI QLD

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

This project aims to use the cutting edge revolutionary technology of RNA silencing to engineer avocado rootstocks for resistance to Phytophthora root rot. RNA silencing can provide high-level pathogen resistance by specific targeting of pathogen sequences in transgenic plants. A key advantage of RNA silencing mediated resistance is that dsRNA has no translational ability to produce a functional protein. This technology will be utilised to target essential genes in *P.cinnamomi* and deliver it by means of transgenic rootstocks. Thus, when the fungus will attack the transformed rootstocks it will be recognised by the homologous gene silencing triggers targeting the essential genes of *P.cinnamomi*; this will result in killing of the invading fungus or making it non-pathogenic.

A DEEDI internally funded proof-of-concept project that commenced in October 2007 will deliver the tools targeting essential genes of *P.cinnamomi* ready for introduction into commercial rootstocks for protection against the root rot pathogen. The proposed HAL project will generate real outcomes for an important target disease for the avocado industry. It aims to deliver glasshouse tested Phytophthora root rot resistant rootstock/s established and ready for field trial.

The big advantage of using this approach is that although the rootstock will be GM, the grafted scion will remain non-transgenic and will produce GM-free fruit.

AVo8020

Evaluation of Sustainable Avocado Orchard Management Practices

Project Start: 30 Jan 2009

Project Completion: 30 Nov 2012

Principle Investigator: Dr John Leonardi, Avocados Australia

Funding Source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

There are increasing demands on growers to optimise fruit yield and quality, reduce chemical use, develop market opportunities and meet consumer expectations to remain competitive. There are a range of products and orchard management practices either being used by growers or recommended by various companies for use in avocado production, often with little scientific validation. The effectiveness of orchard management practices on fruit yield and quality need to be validated before wider industry recommendations can be made.

This project will identify sustainable orchard management practices used by growers across Australia, evaluate the effect of these strategies on tree health, fruit yield and quality and determine the cost effectiveness of these strategies compared to current industry recommendations.

MT09026

Protecting Pollination for the Australian Horticultural Industry Stage 2

Project Start: 30 Mar 2009

Project Completion: 31 Jul 2012

Principle Investigator: Kim James, HAL

Funding source: Matched R&D levies (multiple industries)

SUMMARY

This multi industry project aims to address the risks of loss of pollination by Honeybees. Honeybees are the key pollinator in some crops, particularly in horticulture, and an important pollinator in others, including some pasture species and broadacre crops.

The industries reliant on honeybees for pollination are facing the risk of incursion of *Varroa destructor*. Incursion of this mite pest would substantially increase beekeepers' costs, reduce their productivity and limit the current extensive movement of hives around Australia. Moreover, it would destroy the feral honeybee population leading to the loss of much of the incidental honeybee pollination that many horticultural industries now rely upon.

This project provides funding to implement the Pollination five year plan. HAL has worked closely with the Rural Industries R&D Corporation (RIRDC), the Australian Honey Bee Industry Committee (ABIC) and the Pollination Australia alliance via the Pollination R&D Committee to develop the research and development, biosecurity risk management, and education and training priorities.

AV09028

Development of an Avocado Rapid Library Tray System

Project Start: 15 Apr 2010

Project Completion: 30 Sep 2011

Principle Investigator: Dr Danielle Le Lagadec, DEEDI - QLD

Funding Source: Matched R&D voluntary contribution

SUMMARY

An effective library tray system can be of great value to a fresh produce supply chain. Its primary purpose is to quantify the quality of the fruit that the chain is providing, and how to improve the quality if it is not meeting customer requirements. The other benefit is as an 'insurance' against claims of poor outturn quality. Many avocado producing countries such as Chile, Peru, South Africa, California and New Zealand, have well established library tray system, suggesting that it could be of benefit to the Australian avocado industry also. Most existing library tray systems are focused on tracking unit quality after sea-freight export, and therefore involve long storage times. The Australian industry has developed a strong export focus, but currently most of its production is sold domestically, with relatively shorter times from harvest to sale. Hence a more rapid library tray test could be developed and would provide more timely indications of consignment quality.

A rapid ripening test, Avotest, was developed as part of the Avocado Robustness project (AV07005). The test is simple, and could be adapted for use as a library tray system for domestic market fruit.

It is proposed that Hass fruit be sampled from the end of the packing line early in the Hass season, various rapid ripening protocols tested, and the resulting fruit quality correlated with fruit subjected to a simulated handling protocol that is typical of how domestic fruit are handled. Once a suitable rapid ripening protocol has been developed the test will be verified using mid and late season Hass fruit and in the following season for Hass fruit.

The project will extend over two seasons.

AV10019

Reducing Flesh Bruising and Skin Spotting in Hass Avocado

Project Start: 1 Aug 2011

Project Completion: 28 Nov 2014

Principle Investigator: Dr Daryl Joyce, DEEDI – QLD,

Funding Source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

Up to 80 percent of 'Hass' avocados on the retail shelf have defects in the flesh which can reduce consumer purchasing. Bruising and rots are the two most significant defects. Reducing rots in avocado fruit has received considerable attention, but there is no clear understanding how to reduce flesh bruising. The requirements to achieve this are knowledge of where and how bruising is occurring and tools to help businesses to reduce bruising. In addition, recent research and anecdotal evidence indicates that typical skin spotting severity on partly-coloured 'Hass' fruit can significantly reduce consumer intent to purchase, incur occasional rejections and discounting by agents/distribution centre (DC)/importers, and cause some importers of Australian 'Hass' fruit to deem levels of skin spotting unacceptable.

Previous research suggests that there is very little bruised flesh in avocado fruit sampled from the end of the packing line, and that susceptibility to bruising increases as the fruit softens. This suggests that flesh bruising is more likely to occur from the ripener onwards, and is most likely once trays of fruit are handled individually.

The first year of the project constitutes a scoping study to develop and apply a methodology for identifying the critical steps where fresh bruising is occurring, start developing a suitable decision tool to assist industry to reduce bruising, and better understand the commercial impact of skin spotting.

The project will consist of four parts:

1. Improving the efficiency of bruise assessment: Two small trials will identify how quickly bruising occurs after an impact to enable more efficient assessment of sampled avocado fruit.
2. Identifying where bruising is occurring: Fruit will be sampled from three major suppliers on arrival at two Brisbane ripeners and then at dispatch from the supermarket chain DC, the storage area at the back of the retail store, and the retail shelf for four stores in Brisbane and four more on the Sunshine Coast across the two main supermarket chains. Relevant practices contributing to bruising will be documented during

Avocado R&D and marketing program overview continued

sampling. Fruit will be assessed for flesh bruising severity to identify those points in the chain where bruising severity increases. The fruit will be sampled approximately weekly over the main supply period starting in June. A critical review after three to four weeks will determine whether the results clearly indicate those parts of the supply chain contributing to bruising, or whether the methodology should be refined and more sampling conducted.

3. Decision aids: If definitive survey results are quickly obtained, then the research work will focus on developing a decision aid tool to assist product handlers to determine if they are causing bruising and help them improve practices.
4. Skin spotting: Discussions will be held with agents, retail store operators, and importers on the commercial impact of skin spotting and tolerances. These discussions will be included in other avocado projects where possible.

Critical evaluation of project results will be held at the end of the first year to determine priority areas for continued R&D in year's two to four.

Objective 2 - To increase demand for Australian avocados

AV11500

Avocado Domestic Marketing Program

Project Start: 1 Jul 2011

Project Completion: 30 Jun 2012

Principle Investigator: Ms Gunjan Tandan, HAL

Funding source: Marketing levies

SUMMARY

The 2011-2012 annual marketing plan for the domestic promotion of avocados takes the industry into its second year of the new strategic plan. Initial results from Homescan analysis and Consumer Tracking Study have shown that the campaign that started in January 2010 has had positive results (retaining existing customers and attracting new customers) and the creative is working well.

For 2011/12, the brand essence of 'one fruit, endless possibilities' will be the same as it is still strong and very relevant for the direction the brand is headed.

The target audience is:

1. Bustling Families - Primary Target Audience (large households where main grocery buyer would be 40+

and the oldest child in their teens and staying at home)

2. Start-up & Small Scale Families - Secondary Target Audience

The promotional activity will be in the marketplace from July 2011. The aim has been to make sure that existing activities are maximised and that the industry has a strong social media structure in place that can be built upon in the coming years. To date the communication has been one way using mediums such as TV, magazines and a some two way dialogue through the website and online campaigns. However, the shift moving forward will be from one way to a two way dialogue; engaging the brand advocates through launching the industry's social media structure/campaign.

Media

The focus of the media activity reflects the move towards an everyday usage message building on the versatility platform built from the 'Add an Avo' campaigns. This shift manifests itself most clearly in the television activity which has seen the avocado marketing program make a larger commitment to pay TV and, more specifically to the Lifestyle Network.

Creative

The campaign will be freshened up with a new set of recipes and quick ideas that will help demonstrate the versatility of the avocado with a strong drive to both the industry owned website and Facebook page. The TV commercial will be updated to include the mention of the Facebook page. New A3 sized posters will be developed for distribution to retail outlets. These will be based around new recipes developed as well as provide information on selecting and storing an avocado. The digital assets (website and social media) will be leveraged to engage, educate and inspire the target audience to push more regular use and drive ongoing conversation about avocados.

Website & Search Engine Optimisation

The digital strategy in 2011/12 focuses on integrating social technologies into the website, to create a better platform for sharing Australian Avocados content and reaching a wider audience. Continued support of the various consumer campaigns will also be maintained on the website. Additionally, as the website statistics show that people were using their mobile devices to access the industry website, a mobile device friendly version of the website will be developed. This will be centered on task-based and on-the-go areas such as recipes, 'how tos', and nutrition information.

Public Relations - Footy and Early Childhood Initiatives

In 2011, the PR 'I Heart Footy' program is being extended, with NRL code-level support secured alongside the involvement of all 15 Australian-based clubs in the NRL competition. This allows Australian Avocados to integrate national and local media relations with social media and online activity, including Facebook and twitter content (including a specific 'I Heart Footy' Twitter handle), display advertising, electronic direct mail and a survey to NRL fans, NRL club videos to encourage fans to vote, and consistent messaging across all materials.

In addition to the 'I Heart Footy' program, a PR campaign will be conducted to support the continuation of the Australian Avocados early childhood initiative. This activity will include a focus on raising awareness of the program via 'new' news, to reach out to influential mummy and food bloggers, as well as health writers and local media to highlight activities in local child care centers, and support with generic early childhood imagery where permission restrictions do not allow photos to be taken in local centers.

Nutritionist

Zoe Bingley-Pullin has been contracted again on behalf of the industry as the avocado nutritionist spokesperson. Zoe will help in developing content for the regular monthly

updates on the website, be an active contact on the industry Facebook page as well as provide content for the EDM's (electronic direct mailers). The PR campaign will be using Zoe in media releases to further enhance the campaign and gain more media coverage.

Domestic Cooperative Promotions

Based on the success of previous year's cooperative promotions, an allocation has been made to encourage growers, state organizations, market authorities, wholesalers and retailers to promote in a consistent manner to the nationally developed positioning to build brand equity.

Foodservice Program

The avocado R&D and marketing program is supporting an extensive strategy to develop the food service market. AV11016 (below) will fund the third year of chef training masterclasses. Marketing levy funds will support the chef training classes through:

- Magazine advertising in key foodservice publications - the adverts this year will have a stronger call to action to drive more enquiries for the training classes to Whiteworks.
- Creative development- EDM's, recipe styling and



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Avocado R&D and marketing program overview continued

photography, organization of gift bags, TAFE collateral.

- Website - website updates in line with feedback received from chefs.
- PR - In the third year of its implementation, the Australian Avocados foodservice PR program will extend into new spheres of media influence while maintaining and reinforcing its prominence in the main food service media. One aspect of this year's PR program is the active inclusion of consumer food media.

AV11016

Avocado Chef Training

Project Start: 1 Jul 2011

Project Completion: 30 Jun 2012

Principle Investigator: Stewart White, Whiteworks

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

In late 2009, Australian Avocados embarked on a program with then intent on engaging with food professionals via a series of master classes to better educate the food service industry about Australian avocado versatility, seasons, types, handling and purchasing. The program spanned six months across the eastern seaboard and targeted a variety of food service sectors; including clubs, 'star' hotels, restaurants, pubs and cafés.

In its third year, the Australian Avocados food service strategy will continue to reinforce its key messages in the commercial catering sector through a partnership with Sodexo. Three catering chef classes have been scheduled across the eastern seaboard, with plans for a national program pending Sodexo's training timetable.

TAFE's and restaurants across the three core states will again be targeted in 2011-2012; as part of the tactic to continue to influence the avocado usage attitudes in young chefs and to maintain interest and currency of the program respectively. The program will also engage with the 'star' hotels sector in Melbourne as well as make a return to facilitate a training class with Brisbane club chefs.

Newcastle and Canberra, non-metropolitan but highly populated 'regional' centres, will also be a focus for this year's program.

AV11017

Food Service Menu Penetration Survey

Project Start: 1 Jul 2011

Project Completion: 30 Jun 2012

Principle Investigator: Neil Stollznow, Stollznow Research

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

In May 2009 prior to commencing the avocado foodservice program a menu penetration survey was undertaken to establish baseline data for monitoring changes over time. 1100 food service outlets were contacted by telephone and asked questions about their use of avocados in their menu (Project AV08044). The survey was short and simple and designed to be answered by anyone in each food outlet who could accurately report on the dishes listed. Interviews took no longer than five minutes each.

Types of outlets included in the survey were cafés, restaurants, hotels, pubs and clubs. Quotas were set for the outlet type, cuisine style in each category, and location of outlet. In addition, 10 in-depth telephone interviews were completed to help understand what the barriers and opportunities were for chefs when using avocados in their menus.

Since this survey, the foodservice program for avocados has begun its third year and hence, it is an ideal time to assess the effectiveness of the programs and understand how avocado use has changed. The survey objectives are to assess change in avocado usage in food service from 2009, across regions and food outlet types.

AV11005

Avocados in Early Childhood Initiative 2011-12

Project Start: 1 Jul 2011

Project Completion: 31 Mar 2012

Principle Investigator: Shelly Woodrow, Woodrow Consulting Pty Ltd

Funding source: Matched R&D Levies

SUMMARY

The main objective for 2011-2012 is to continue the roll out of the Australian Avocados 'Eating My Colourful Vegies and Fruit' program to early childhood educators throughout Australia, refining the delivery process with key lessons from 2010-2011 (AV10005).

The industry undertook a scoping project (AV08038) to help address which educators within the educational environment would benefit from equipping them with a range of learning tools and knowledge on the issue of healthy eating. The scoping study also helped identify linkages, complementing and leveraging off existing initiative and 'hot issues' such as literacy, numeracy, communication and technology education, quality

pedagogy etc. The study identified the need to engage with educators of the early learning childhood sector and hence educational resources were developed (AV09522) to equip early childhood educators with information about healthy eating, food learning and avocados using best practice pedagogy.

Project AV10005 was about distributing the resources developed to educators in 440 childhood care centres.

The ongoing support and input from the principal creator of the resource (Shelley Woodrow) throughout this delivery phase from July 2011-June 2012 will ensure the maintenance of the educational integrity of the program by giving the industry:

- availability of a key educational advocate;
- expert knowledge and opinion of current events and developments in the early childhood sector;
- expert advice on delivery and logistics for the ongoing program; and
- communication to existing users of the kit to encourage ongoing use, and to key stakeholders to promote and further support the uptake of the program.

AV11501

Avocado 11/12 Export Marketing Program

Project Start: 1 Jul 2011

Project Completion: 30 Jun 2012

Principle Investigator: Gunjan Tandan, HAL

Funding source: Marketing levies

SUMMARY

This project aims to support avocado exports through promotion and market development activities. The two activities to be supported in 2011/12 are Cooperative Promotions and the Australia Fresh Program. Cooperative promotion activities will be considered for funding through a formal process of calling for proposals. The Australia Fresh Program is a multi industry marketing project which provides industries with international advertising and access to participate in a range of international trade shows.

The major activities of the program will raise Australia's profile in export markets providing synergies across Australia's fresh produce industries with a marketing mix that includes:

- Australian stand and networking events at Asia Fruit Logistica in Hong Kong each September.

- Australian stand at Fruit Logistica – Berlin each February.
- Advertising for Australian horticultural produce in Asiafruit and Eurofruit trade magazines and other suitable mediums.
- Positive trade PR messages for international produce journals.
- Ongoing development of the Australia Fresh Website targeting international buyers as a source of produce information and connections to suppliers.
- Ongoing development of Australian themed point of sale material for use in targeted retail chains in the developing Asian markets.

AV11019

Avocado Nutrition Research 2011-2012

Project Start: TBA

Project Completion: TBA

Principle Investigator: TBA

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

PROJECT UNDER DEVELOPMENT

AV10017 (Avocado Nutrition Desktop Research and Best Minds Panel) completed in June 2011 as the first stage of a three year strategic approach to health and nutrition research for the Australian avocado industry. The three core components of this first stage were:

1. to undertake desktop research of the key nutritional issues relating to the consumption of avocados,
2. to form a panel of key dieticians and undertake a roundtable discussion, and
3. to develop a comprehensive and detailed plan for the 2011-12 financial year.

AV11019 will commence the implementation of the new research program once developed.

AV11020

'Australian Grown' Consumer Research

Project Start: TBA

Project Completion: TBA

Principle Investigator: TBA

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

Avocado R&D and marketing program overview continued

SUMMARY

PROJECT UNDER DEVELOPMENT

This project aims to:

- Understand the current importance of ‘Australian grown’ in the fresh produce area and in particular with regard to avocado.
- Better understand the gap between claimed support for Australian produce and what actually happens at point of purchase (intent vs. actual behaviour).
- To help develop an informed market development strategy.

AV07023

Avocado Weekly Retail Price Survey

Project Start: 2 -Jun 2008

Project Completion: 30 Aug 2012

Principle Investigator: Julie Petty, Avocados Australia

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

The Australian avocado industry experienced an extremely large growth phase in production with a 25 percent increase in 2007 and a further increase of 17.5 percent forecast in 2008. Creating an environment in which market forces work efficiently to clear product quickly through the market is essential under such conditions. Currently, the retail avocado market tends to operate independently from these market forces thus creating the situation where market signals are not clear and fruit can become backed up in the system. Although growers have a very good understanding of the prices they are receiving for fruit there is not an up-to-date retail price reporting system to alert them when market forces aren't operating to clear the market. Equally, consumers are also unaware at any point in time as to the price differentials between wholesale prices growers are receiving and retail prices they are paying.

This project is aimed at providing clear retail price data to assist consumers and the market to make informed decisions.

MT08060

Consumer Tracking Study

Project Start: 1 Dec 2008

Project Completion: 1 Dec 2011

Principle Investigator: Steve Sheppard, Brand Story Pty Limited

Funding source: Matched R&D levy and marketing levy (multiple industries)

SUMMARY

This project provides an online tracking study to monitor a range of marketing metrics for assorted horticultural industries. The objective is to track consumption; attitudinal and purchasing behaviour and category perceptions; track change in product positioning for the participating industries and their impacts on key performance indicators; and to assist future strategic planning development.

The project uses a national database for tracking responses via an online questionnaire. The study is national, with the target market of main grocery buyers. The study will be conducted in six waves over two years with three debriefs to industry, using a total sample of 1800 people. The outcomes will assist in planning and market development projects by monitoring changes in environmental and market factors affecting the drivers of the horticulture industry.

A new project is planned to be developed during 2011 (MT11020) to provide continuity of consumer tracking data.

MT10017

Driving Demand Growth through Understanding Consumer Purchase Behaviour (Retail Scan & Homescan Analysis)

Project Start: 01 Aug 2010

Project Completion: 14 June-2012

Principle Investigator: David Chenu, HAL

Funding source: Matched R&D levy (multiple industries)

SUMMARY:

This project aims to provide the fruit, vegetable, dried fruit and nut industries with the knowledge required to increase consumer demand. It creates a unified approach to the processing, analysing and reporting of both supermarket sales data and consumer purchase data.

This project funds:

1. The acquisition of Retail Scan Data (from one major retailer) and Homescan Consumer Data (from a consumer panel of 10,000 households).
2. The servicing and professional analysis of this data.
3. The reporting of industry trends and market development strategies associated with the insights gained from the data.

Retail Scan Data analysis and Homescan Consumer Data analysis will be analysed in tandem by external experts to optimise their value.

Objective 3 - To ensure appropriate organisation, resourcing and management of the affairs of the Australian avocado industry to support the development of the industry on an ongoing basis

AV10008

Avocado Industry Communications

Project Start: 1 May 2011

Project Completion: 1 Oct 2014

Principle Investigator: Antony Allen, Avocados Australia

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

PROJECT NOT YET APPROVED

The Australian avocado industry aspires to be a growing, progressive, profitable and sustainable industry, in addition to being a leader in product, supply chain and industry development innovation. To ensure Australian avocados are an everyday food option/purchase, the industry aims to deliver to its customers a consistent, good quality product; innovation and choice; and a product that is recognised and appreciated as Australian and an essential health food.

The avocado industry is faced with two areas of change: an extensive levy program and a rapidly expanding production base. Alongside such changes technical advances, industry growth, as well as changing responsibilities and expectations for communication to the industry, will be faced in the next few years.

The avocado industry communication outcomes are:

- diversity in industry commitment and expectation,
- wide variation in understanding and differences in experiences,
- multiple sources of information,
- equitable access to information,
- holistic approach to communication through multiple delivery methods, and
- tools and processes to ensure effective communication to and from industry participants.

The avocado industry communication strategy is to be delivered through:

- Web Site

- Email
- General communication
- Talking Avocados
- Face to face meetings/briefings
- Presentations, conferences and forums
- Provedores communication

AV08025

Avocado Resource Audit Web Database

Project Start: 15 May 2009

Project Completion: 31 Dec 2011

Principle Investigator: Antony Allen, Avocados Australia

Funding Source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

This project aims to develop and implement a web based database of all known avocado industry resources. Large amounts of important information are housed in various areas including peak industry bodies, research organisations and other government departments. The project will develop a knowledge portal for industry stakeholders using database content developed through the Avocado Supply Chain Mapping and Resource Audit project, AV06026.

AV09029

Planning for the VII World Avocado Congress in 2011, Cairns Australia

Project Start: 1 Jun 2010

Project Completion: 1 Jul 2011

Principle Investigator: Antony Allen, Avocados Australia

Funding source: Matched R&D voluntary contribution

SUMMARY

The Australian avocado industry has been awarded the VII World Avocado Congress in 2011 (7WAC11). This Congress attracts over 1000 industry delegates from around the world. Delegates include researchers, marketers and growers from over 18 avocado producing countries. The Congress is the preeminent avocado event in the world.

The 7WAC11 is to be held during 4-9 September 2011 in Cairns Australia. Avocados Australia is the host organisation as designated by the International Avocado Society.

The World Avocado Congress is an event of significant size which has a long lead time, planning and development

Avocado R&D and marketing program overview continued

processes to ensure a successful congress outcome. Avocados Australia needs to ensure resources are applied internally and externally over the next 15 months to organise a successful Congress. This project will allow the resourcing and planning for the Congress to be undertaken.

AV10002

Avocado Best Management Practices and Internet Based Information Delivery

Project Start: 1 Nov 2010

Project Completion: 31 Dec 2013

Principle Investigator: Mr Simon Newett, DEEDI

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

This three year project will focus on the creation of clear, concise, up-to-date information products to assist Australian avocado growers to grow premium quality avocados at a competitive cost. An internet based content management system is proposed to provide the framework for delivering information for producers both during and beyond the life of this project. A hard copy full colour field guide will also be published to allow growers to identify problems in the field.

The wealth of information generated in the previous avocado extension project (AV06003) will form the basis of these information resources for growers together with additional input from other technical experts. A basic understanding of avocado growing costs in Australia will be established and a check list of recommended best management practices will be developed against which growers can compare their own management practices and production costs. AVOMAN software users will continue to be supported and hands-on training will be provided where possible.

A steering group will guide the project to ensure that the information products developed are relevant and useful.

AV10004

Biosecurity Capacity Building for the Australian Avocado Industry: Laurel Wilt

Project Start: 1 Oct 2010

Project Completion: 30 Sept 2012

Principle Investigator: Dr Andrew Geering, DEEDI

Funding source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY

Laurel wilt, caused by the fungus *Raffaelea lauricola*, is

one of the most immediate and serious biosecurity threats to the Australian avocado industry. This pathogen is transmitted by the ambrosia beetle *Xyleborus glabratus*, a native of Asia with a geographic range extending from India to Japan and Taiwan. *X. glabratus* has a symbiotic relationship with *R. lauricola*: female beetles bore into the sapwood of trees to create brood galleries and at the same time inoculate the tree with the fungus. The beetle larvae then feed off the fungal hyphae as it colonizes the wood.

The aims of this project are to develop a surveillance and diagnostic capacity for *X. glabratus* and *R. lauricola* in Australia. Diagnostic protocols developed in the USA will be validated in Australia to ensure that these protocols are capable of discriminating these exotic organisms from endemic relatives. Finally, a diagnostic manual will be produced for use in Australia.

AV11900

Partnership Agreement

Project Start: 01 Jul 2011

Project Completion: 30 Jun 2012

Principle Investigator: Service agreement between Avocados Australia and HAL

Funding Source: Matched R&D levies and marketing levies

SUMMARY

This project covers a range of activities to be conducted by HAL and Avocados Australia in managing the avocado levy investments. These include: management of the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC); conduct of the Annual Levy Payers Meeting; and effective consultation between Avocados Australia and HAL.



AV11006**Analysis of the competitive threat to Australian fresh avocado market from processed avocado products****Project Start:** 3 Oct 2011**Project Completion:** 27 Apr 2012**Principle Investigator:** Dr Kent Fanning, DEEDI**Funding Source:** Matched R&D levies**SUMMARY**

Minimally processed or frozen avocado products are increasingly being used where convenience or ready-to-use formats are needed. New products are being developed and exported particularly out of the USA and Mexico. These products represent a threat to the use of the both locally grown fresh avocado and locally processed avocado, which removes second grade product from the local fresh market. The aim of this study is to:

- Understand the impact of current or potential imports of minimally processed avocado products on the market for fresh Australian whole avocado, and
- assess the market opportunities and challenges of competing with imported products for existing consumer and food service markets and potential new markets.

The strategies that will be used include:

- Desk top research of current minimally processed avocado products with the potential for import into Australia.
- Development of a positioning map to understand where minimally processed avocado products sit in the consumer and food service space in relation to whole fruit. This will include the performance of consumer focus groups and interviews with food service providers.
- Food technology and food processing appraisal of the properties, production technologies and values of current processed products compared with whole fresh avocado.
- Desktop review of all available science, technical, market and product information.

The output of this work will be a detailed analysis of the competitive threat to the Australian fresh avocado market from imported processed avocado products. An analysis of the challenges and opportunities for Australian processed avocado products will also be presented. The outcome of this study will be an understanding of the opportunities and challenges for both Australian whole

fresh avocado and Australian processed products versus imported products. This will inform an industry response to best competitively position local Australian products into current and new markets.

AV11012**Issues Management Plan****Project Start:** 28 Nov 2011**Project Completion:** 30 Apr 2012**Principle Investigator:** Antony Allen, Avocados Australia**Funding Source:** Matched R&D levies**SUMMARY****PROJECT UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

This project aims to:

1. Identify key risks to the Australian avocado industry.
2. Establish appropriate risk management procedures for priority risk areas (e.g. food safety, natural disaster, environmental impacts, OH&S, biosecurity)
3. Provide communication and extension strategies to the broader industry.



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4. Protect the long-term, commercial interests of the avocado industry and avocado businesses.
5. Minimise the impact of the crisis on the reputation of the avocado industry and avocado businesses.

AV11013**Integrated Industry and Market Data**

Project Start: 1 Sept 2011

Project Completion: 30 Apr 2012

Principle Investigator: TBA

Funding Source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY**PROJECT UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

The data information projects include:

- Infocado (included in AV09001) provided by AAL
- Avocado retail price surveys (AV07023) provided by AAL
- Avocado retail quality surveys (AV08034) provided by AAL
- Understanding the purchase behaviour of fresh produce consumers (MT10017) provide by HAL under contract to Nielsen
- Export-import market intelligence (MT10022) provided by HAL
- Consumer tracking study (MTo8060) provided by Brand Story Pty Ltd

AV11014**Rootstock Commercialisation Plan**

Project Start: 17 Oct 2011

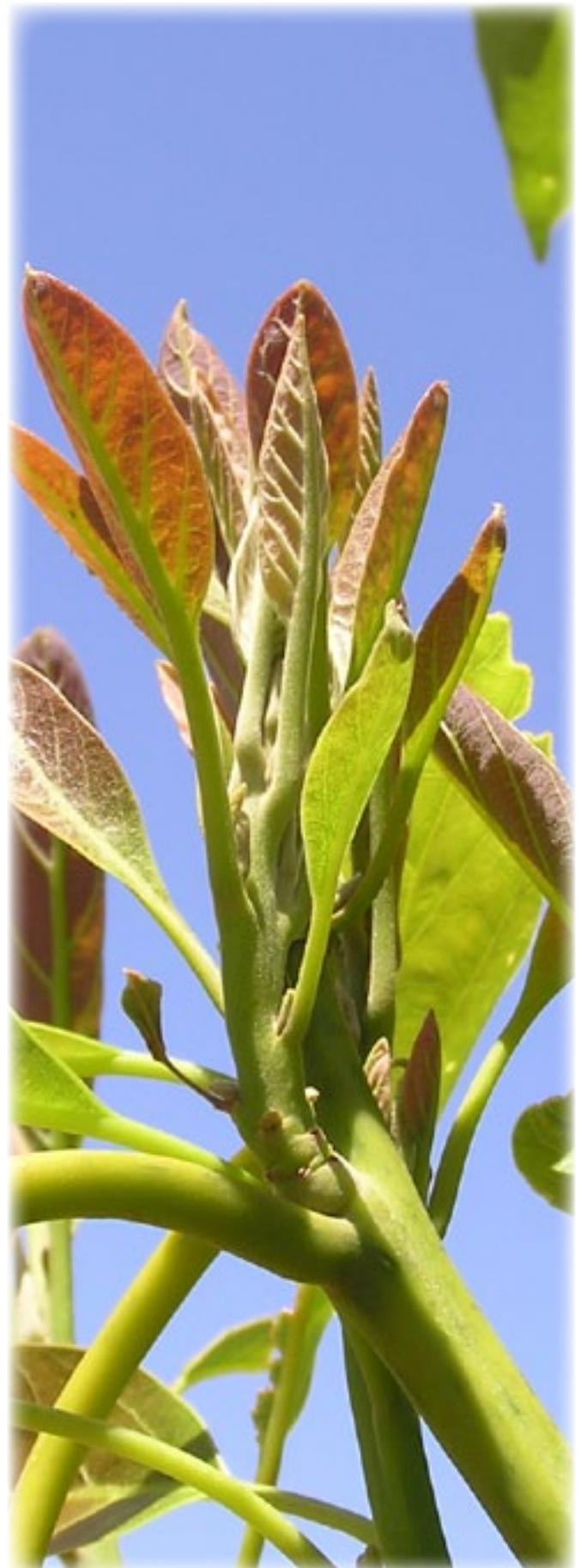
Project Completion: 31 Mar 2013

Principle Investigator: Antony Allen, Avocados Australia

Funding Source: Matched R&D levies

SUMMARY**PROJECT UNDER DEVELOPMENT**

New rootstocks developed through the HAL avocado levy funded program have been identified for commercialisation. This project will develop a detailed commercialisation plan and provide resources to assist with managing the commercialisation process of new rootstocks from the program.



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Avocado R&D and marketing program overview continued

ACROSS INDUSTRY PROGRAM

The across industry R&D program is funded through matched R&D levies and voluntary contributions. A contribution of 3 percent from all HAL-funded R&D projects is allocated to the across industry program to fund much needed R&D that is of benefit to all horticulture industries. Below are the projects endorsed for inclusion in the 2011-12 Across Industry program. Further information is available from Warwick Scherf, Horticulture Australia Limited, warwick.scherf@horticulture.com.au



Project No	Title	Project Start	Project Completion	Organisation
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Outcome 1: Enhance the efficiency, transparency, responsiveness and integrity of the supply chain for the total industry to provide clear market signals.

AH10000	Updating Statistical Handbook for Horticulture	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11013	Horticulture Supply Chain Fresh Summit Scoping Study	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd

Outcome 2: Maximise the health benefits of horticultural products in the eyes of consumers, influencers and government

AH11012	Partnership Program with Dieticians Association of Australia	2011-12	2013/14	Horticulture Australia Ltd
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Outcome 3: Position horticulture to compete in a globalised environment

AH09018	Office of Horticulture Market Access – National Director	2009/10	2011/12	Stephen Winter and Associates
AH09021	Office of Horticulture Market Access - Operations Support	2009/10	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH09027	Investing in Youth Successful Scholarship Applicant	2009/10	2013/14	Rural Industries R&D Corporation (RIRDC)
AH10008	Future Focus - Ongoing Maintenance	2001/11	2012/13	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11009	Supporting the Advancement of Mechanisation Technology in Horticulture	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11014	Across Horticulture Leadership Training	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11015	Across Horticulture Data Acquisition & Management	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd

Outcome 4: Achieve long-term viability and sustainability for Australian horticulture

AH09003	Plant protection: Regulatory support and coordination	2009/10	2013/14	AKC Consulting Pty Ltd
AH09014	Climate Change Initiative 2009/10	2009/10	2009/10	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH10003	Horticulture component of the National Climate Change Research Strategy for Primary Industries	2010/11	2010/11	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH10006	Pesticide spray drift in horticulture - a response to new guidelines from the APVMA	2010/11	2010/11	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH10009	Response to Productivity Commission	2010/11	2010/11	Horticulture Australia Ltd
MT09043	Enhancing confidence in product integrity in domestic and export markets	2009/10	2010/11	Horticulture Australia Ltd
MT10029	Managing pesticide access in horticulture (cont from AH04009 and MT07029)	2010/11	2014/15	AgAware Consulting Pty Ltd
AH11005	Horticulture Environmental Desk Audit	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11006	Biochar and Implications for Horticulture	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11007	Lifecycle Assessment in Horticulture	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11008	Horticulture Risk Analysis in Response to APVMA Spray Drift Regulations	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11010	Biotechnology Awareness in Horticulture	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11011	CRC for Plant Biosecurity	2011/12	2015/16	Horticulture Australia Ltd

Outcome 5: Other

AH11004	Across Industry Program communication	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd
AH11003	Support function for Across Industry Program	2011/12	2011/12	Horticulture Australia Ltd

News from Around the World

Avocados planted over Mexican marijuana plantations

A fruit production scheme in the Mexican state of Chihuahua has encouraged farmers to switch from marijuana to avocado crops, website *Oem.com.mx* reported. The Temporary Employment Program has been taken up by at least 400 farmers in the state's subtropical area of Sierra Tarahumara in the Morelos municipality, the story reported.

Farmers have been digging holes to plant avocados over 400 hectares of land that used to be dedicated to illegal marijuana farming, which Mayor Sergio Cruz said was 'unaffordable', the story reported.

"It is already unaffordable for farmers who have no other work alternative. The same people who come every day to the office, some even crying because of their plight, declare that this illegal and risky activity is no longer profitable due to low prices, high production costs and no market," Cruz was quoted as saying.

"Prospective buyers want to pay MXN100 (US\$8.48) a tonne. Many kept the harvests of years past when almost all people were dedicated to the plantation of marijuana/cannabis."

Mexico: Avocado exports to the U.S. a success

Avocado exports from the Mexican state of Michoacán have come to a close for the 2010-11 season with expected total shipments of 277,703 metric tonnes (MT) to the U.S., newspaper *Cambio de Michoacán* reported.

Michoacán Association of Avocado Producers and Packer-Exporters (APEAM) manager Alberto Ayala, announced the industry had originally aimed to export 200,000MT to the North American country. But despite the increase in exports to its major avocado market and Japan (20%), the state registered falls in exports to other markets such as Canada (-7%), Central America (-17%), Europe (-39%) and Asia (-65%), the story reported. In total, shipments to non-U.S. markets fell 7 percent to 68,647MT for the season. Source: APEAM

Zero tax rates for avocado growers in Argentine province

The Argentine provincial government of Tucumán has granted zero tax rates on gross income for avocado producers, with benefits set to apply until April 2012, website *Lagaceta.com.ar* reported.

The move follows an extension of tax concessions for the province's citrus, blueberry and strawberry industries.

The government made the decision as the avocado industry was in a similar state of crisis to the other fruits, sparking a need to reduce the tax burden to boost primary production, the story reported. The measure takes full effect for the May monthly tax payment and will be valid until April 30 next year. The story reported most of the province's avocado production was bound for export and was mostly of the Hass variety.

US: Subway jumps on avocado bandwagon

The avocado's about to get respect in the one place where it can finally meet the masses: fast food. Subway today will unveil plans to roll out avocado next week as a sandwich option nationwide. The public embrace of avocados by the sandwich giant, which with 24,188 U.S. stores has more domestic locations than McDonald's, is pegged to the healthier eating theme that's been crucial to Subway's success. The move is expected to nudge other major fast-food chains to elevate the vitamin, mineral, and calorie-packed fruit to their menus. At Subway, avocado makes its debut as preservative-free, 100 percent avocado spread in a 'Turkey & Bacon Avocado' sandwich that sells for about \$7.

Customers will have to pay from 50 cents to \$1 to have the mashed avocado spread added to most other sandwiches. On the West Coast, instead of the spread, sliced avocados are offered at many Subways. Both have sold very well in tests, Subway marketing chief Tony Pace says. "We'll help avocado go mainstream," Pace says. So mainstream that upcoming TV spots will showcase spokesjocks Michael Phelps and Apolo Ohno juggling avocados. The move comes at a time avocado is showing up in new chips, dips and cooking oils. More than 75 new products made with avocado have rolled out over the past five years, Datamonitor reports. And domestic avocado sales rocketed to 1.3 billion pounds in 2010, up 16 percent, the Hass Avocado Board says.

Don't be surprised if some burger giants — under pressure to add nutritional offerings — soon embrace avocados, says Tom Vierhile, director of product launch analytics at researcher Datamonitor. Subway's move is a bid to separate itself from major fast-food chains while luring customers from fast-casual chains such as Panera and Chipotle, where avocado is common. Rival Quiznos has sold subs with guacamole for years. Subway is eager to boost its own better-for-you image. Last month it announced that it had cut sodium in its sandwich line by 15 percent. Subway will tout the slogan "Grab the Green" in TV spots that promote avocados as well as the upcoming

summer flick Green Lantern. Avocado also will be available on its breakfast sandwiches, Pace says. "It's very good news nutritionally if you're substituting avocado for mayo," dietitian Hope Warshaw says. But she says, with the avocado spread at 70 calories per serving, "from a calorie perspective you can't do better than mustard and vinegar." Source: usatoday.com

US: Avocado thieves hit San Diego County growers

San Diego County Farm Bureau Executive Director Eric Larson said avocado theft has been going about as long as farmers have been growing the fruit. "But it peaks when the price of avocados is high," said Larson. "So when they become more valuable the thieves are more inclined to steal the fruit. And we're having record prices this year, so I think it's a bigger problem this year than we've seen in many past years."

Larson said avocado theft has gotten so bad, the California Avocado Commission has increased its reward to \$5000 for information leading to a felony arrest and conviction. "I would say in the peak of the season we're losing between 2000 and 5000 pounds of fruit a week over a period of several months," Larson said. "So it's a substantial

number, it's a lot of fruit being stolen out of the avocado groves."

He said farmers lose several hundred-thousand dollars worth of avocados due to theft each season. California's \$275 million avocado industry produces about 90 percent of the nation's avocado crop. More than half of the state's avocado crop comes from San Diego and Riverside counties. Avocados are the top food crop produced in San Diego County Source: kpbs.org

Peru: Avocado exports drop 35%

ProHass estimated that this year the export volume will be six percent higher than in 2010 and it will reach 70,000 MT. Avocado exports decreased 35.1 percent between January and May of 2011, according to statistics from Inform@cción calculated with Customs preliminary figures, totaling US\$22.7 million (13,300 MT), while in the same period of 2010, were recorded US\$35 million (24,300 MT).

The main destinations of this fruit were: the Netherlands (66.7% of share), Spain (16.1%), England (8.6%), France (5%) and Chile (1.1%), which registered a variation of -35.4%, -69.1%, -14.3%, -58.1% and -38.7%, respectively. France is the first consumer of Hass avocado in Europe, accounting for 31% of the market. Peru is the third largest

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News from Around the World continued

exporter of avocados worldwide.

Between January and May 2011 the main exporting companies of avocados were: Agroindustrias Solcace (12.7% of share in exported volume), Camposol (11.7% of share), Agroindustrias Verdeflor (11.5%), Agrícola Tamarindo (5.9%), Perú Frut Tropical (3.8%), Corporación Fritícola de Chincha (3.8%) and Agrícola Los Libertadores (3.6%), according to alert@economica.

Chilean drought affects hectares of avocados

The growth and low productivity that avocados have are due to alternate bearing, which brings a number of benefits and problems for the industry. Benefits, because in the years of great abundance, is that a significant amount of fruit has been kept on the national territory, pushing its consumption significantly. Moreover, prices have increased due to falling production and a demand that has remained relatively similar in recent seasons. However, the least happy part is that these cycles may generate a series of problems to supply the markets continuously, making it difficult to keep customers and logistics that holds this business.

In the case of avocados, the lower production of the 2010/2011 season was caused by factors such as alternate bearing of trees after a very productive season, and drought in the region of Valparaíso, the main production area, which joined the local market with a very attractive price level and to the end of season with a reduced supply.

Manuel José Alcaíno, agronomist and president of Decofrut said, under the Fruit and Vegetable Growers Meeting held in the city of La Ligua, that this problem has reduced “about 1000 hectares”, and its effects “should be overcome in three to four years”.

However, one of the most relevant points for the expert is associated with the effect of drought on the calibers, which in his view, “has not been worked” enough. “From the point of view of the calibers, work has been highly uneven. It has always been relatively easy, if one counts the amount of avocados per tree, multiply the number of trees per hectare, to have a fairly close idea of the number of kilos harvested. Today that it is more difficult due to the impact of smaller calibers”, said Alcaíno, who, nonetheless, hopes for the 2011-12 season an increase of 47 percent in export volume from 88,398 to 129,782 tonnes, off course, as a first estimate.

“The projections for next season are certainly an increase in export volumes, which has not been easy to estimate because of the theme of the calibers and also the uncertainty that represents the good momentum of the

domestic market. This estimate could drop as a result of these two factors”, the president of Decofrut said. Source: FEDEFRUTA

California Avocados and Downtown Disney

Celebrate the first-ever California Avocado Week at Downtown Disney by sampling delicious dishes featuring California avocados prepared by some of the top Downtown Disney executive chefs. The fruit, in season now, will be at the center of the daily guacamole contests where guests will have the chance to receive a \$100 Downtown Disney gift card and \$85 California Avocado gift pack. There will be chef special menu items featuring California avocados at the Downtown Disney restaurants and avocado mini facials at Sephora. Source: CAC

Mexican farmers demand changes to Peru trade pact

An organization representing Mexican farmers is urging senators to refuse to ratify a trade treaty with Peru until Lima agrees to exclude more than a dozen agricultural products from the pact. “Mexico has more than 50 TLC (free trade treaties) that have only benefited foreign companies,” CNC leader Gerardo Sanchez Garcia said in a statement. The accord with Peru, signed April 6 and still awaiting ratification by Mexico’s Senate, “constitutes a great risk for Mexican agriculture,” Sanchez said. Among the products the CNC wants excluded from the trade deal are chilies, beans, bananas, onions, avocados, oranges, lemons, grapefruit, potatoes, mangos, garlic, grapes and several seafood items.

Previous trade deals have made Mexico increasingly dependent on food imports, according to the CNC, an organization linked to the main opposition Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI. The country currently relies on imports for around 30 percent of consumption of the main staples of the Mexican diet: maize and beans. Mexico’s agricultural trade deficit grew by more than 450 percent between 2000 and 2008, from \$1.24 billion to \$6.8 billion, the CNC said. Days after the Peru treaty was signed, 100 members of the Mexican lower house wrote an open letter urging their colleagues in the Senate to reject the trade accord. They blasted President Felipe Calderon’s administration for opening “sensitive” areas of the Mexican agricultural sector to imports from Peru.



The granting of those concessions “creates a precedent” for future trade negotiations with other countries, the Congress members said in a letter published in Mexico City dailies El Universal and La Jornada. Mexican agriculture has been “the big loser” in a trade-opening process that has included 19 bilateral and multilateral accords involving more than 50 countries, the lawmakers said. Trade between Mexico and Peru amounted to \$1.4 billion in 2010, according to figures from the Peruvian government, while Mexican firms have invested \$3.7 billion in the Andean nation. Mexico’s total foreign trade is around \$620 billion annually. Source: laht.com

Giumarra Agricom opens new avocado packing facility

Giumarra Agricom International is pleased to announce the opening of its new avocado packing facility in Ventura, Calif. The facility was designed to better service Giumarra’s growers in the northern growing region of California, and will lessen Giumarra’s carbon footprint by reducing the transfer distance of the product from the fields to the packinghouse.

The facility will be managed by Tom Vaughn, business development manager, and John Schaap, sales/operations. “Relationships and partnerships are an integral part of agribusiness,” says Vaughn. “We want to be a strong part of the northern avocado growing community, and having a facility in Ventura allows us to interface with our growers.” Additionally, the packinghouse will benefit Giumarra’s customers.

“Having a facility in Ventura, in conjunction with our packinghouse in Escondido, allows us to provide logistical flexibility to our customers,” says Bruce Dowhan, general manager of Giumarra Agricom.

Giumarra Agricom will continue to operate its packinghouse in Escondido, California.

“We are committed to servicing our growers in the San Diego and Riverside counties,” says Dowhan. “We have relationships, partnerships and friendships spanning three decades with the southern avocado grower community. We will maintain these with our Escondido facility and continue to cultivate the grower relationships in the south that are so vital to our business.” Source: Giumarra

Mexico: Drought affects 100,000ha of avocado

The total of the sown area of avocado, some 100,000 hectares, could be devastated due to high temperatures and drought. This situation would affect some 7700

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 circle)?

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

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

- 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:

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

Grower Member Application Form continued

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Credit card (please circle):

MasterCard Visa

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News from Around the World continued

producers. As 70 percent of such producers are small owners with planted areas smaller than 5ha, damage will hit harder on those with less economic capacity.

Moreover, due to the fact that 80 percent of lands are in rainy areas and 20 percent in areas with irrigation, each day without rain augments the danger. It's a quite stressing situation in the orchards as fruit from December flowering are dehydrated and the ones from the March blossoming are still small and may not progress.

Octavio González Villanueva, avocado producer in Tancítaro and Tacámbaro, spoke to "Cambio de Michoacán" about it. "This year's temperatures are higher than previous years, and originates a lack of humidity and a fast drought in avocado orchards".

Saying that 80 percent of the orchards are in rainy areas and "just about 20 percent are in irrigated areas. As consequence, fruits have 'stress', so the worrying about this lack of humidity in the fruits can provoke their non production".

Adding that "if it doesn't rain in the next coming days, the problem will get worst, week after week, so we hope the situation changes about the rain, because the drought will be devastating and let's see how it goes next year". Source: Cambiodemichoacan

NZ: Bumper avocado crop expected

John Schnackenberg is a little hesitant to put an exact figure on this season's predicted record avocado harvest - and the weather is one of the reasons. "We are looking at a harvest which could be as big as four seasons ago or bigger but as soon as we make that prediction, in come the westerly gales," he said. Strong winds can damage fruit and trees, potentially making a dent in the final crop, but even so Mr Schnackenberg says the 2011-2012 crop could be between 5.4 million and 5.8 million trays, of which 3.5 million to 3.7 million trays will be exported, well up on last season's 1.7 million export trays. In 2007, the last record crop year, the total was just under 5 million with 2.6 million trays exported.

"With an expectation of a 'cleaner' crop, due to our AvoGreen pest control programme and better spray programmes by growers due to crop size and the potential export value, it is possible that fruit left on shore will be around two million or less with possibly 500,000 trays or so going to oil and processing," he said. That's good news for growers because it is export trays that yield the best returns. "I believe this is the largest crop ever on our own orchard and I know it is the same for many growers," said Mr Schnackenberg, who has an orchard near Katikati. Avocado trees tend to produce a high crop only every

second season so some growers have been without an income for at least one year, meaning they are looking forward to good returns this time. Despite the significant increase in volume, Mr Schnackenberg has no doubt the industry can cope. "The harvest is likely to begin in September, four to six weeks earlier than normal, which will spread picking and packing over a longer period. Every single post-harvest facility can handle more volume. In the last couple of seasons, many did not pack every single day."

Exporters were also prepared for a bumper harvest. "In the last two years, 85 to 90 percent of our exports have been to Australia but this season it is possible 25 percent or more will go to Japan, Asia and the US." Kiwis will also enjoy a taste of new season's avocados but growers are hoping most of their crop will go for export rather than to the local market. Processing is another aspect of the industry with avocados used to make high quality oil and now being processed fresh by new company Fressure Foods which uses ultra-high pressure technology to give the fruit a longer shelf life. The company produces an avocado spread and guacamole made from New Zealand avocados. Source: bayofplentytimes.co.nz

Mexico eyes Australian fruit market

Agricultural ministers from Australia and Mexico met in Paris in June to discuss trade opportunities between the two countries, in line with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in April 2010.

A Mexican Government release reported a trade mission to Australia would likely take place in November, while the country's avocados were still undergoing analysis with Australian authorities. Mexico is looking to export pre-cut mangoes to Australia, along with fresh fruit including Hass avocados, apples, peaches, plums, pomegranates, limes and table grapes.

Mexico's Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) Francisco Mayorga Castañeda, told his counterpart Mike Kelly the two countries could share their experience in the genetic improvement of livestock. The pair were joined by Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) director for agriculture Ken Ash. Source: freshfruitportal.com

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