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VII WORLD AVOCADO CONGRESS 2011
VII CONGRESO MUNDIAL DEL AGUACATE 2011

CAIRNS - AUSTRALIA

AUTUMN 2011

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Chairman's Perspective

How can words of inspiration come to this page when we are all haunted by those words in the poem 'My Country' by Dorothea MacKellar. She writes of her love of this sunburnt country, a land of sweeping plains, of rugged mountain ranges, of droughts and flooding rains... but I wish some of these things did not have to happen on the same day or for so long in each cycle. Enough about the weather; you all know the rest of the story.

In late February the Avocados Australia Board and the Avocado Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) met in Perth and Pemberton, Western Australia for this year's round of meetings. The Avocados Australia Board and IAC had the opportunity to meet with many local growers to discuss industry matters; especially the subject of promotion of avocado in the West Australian supply period. I do sincerely thank the growers who came for their attendance and for the vigor of their discussion. I, the board, and the IAC members certainly appreciated your input to these discussions.

On the long flight home I had time to reflect on these meetings and I see a similarity between the concerns of Western Australia and North Queensland. The current marketing programme concentrates at times partly outside the supply periods of each region. However, the consultants to the IAC have advised that the lead times for the type of magazine promotions conducted over the past five years takes one or more months to kick in. The aim is to educate the consumers over time and time again about how to use



avocado (any avocado variety from any region) everyday.

I do believe this campaign has been very effective. So effective in fact that we saw consumers buying avocados in the summer of 2009/10 at record high prices, even though supply volumes were good.

The New Zealand Industry also realized the success of this campaign and have chosen to follow our lead and add their marketing dollars to continue with the Australian-styled generic campaign. Yes, it is not about NQ, or WA or even a NZ avocado; it is about 'ADD AN AVO EVERYDAY'. The levies are pooled and spent on a campaign that will maximize the penetration of our message into the minds of consumers; the grocery buyer, the mother who prepares the meals.

The conflict that arises when retailers/merchants choose to stock one variety over another, or avocados from one region/country over another is something that can be best resolved by the commercial businesses in the supply chain with a better understanding of the market supply dynamics by all parties.

Our industry is better prepared than most by having Infocado to supply the industry with forecasts and supply details. However, this tool needs to be more accurate and growers/packers need to be more diligent with their entries. We all know too well how poorly the market responds to good information, but it will respond very badly to bad information and no amount of varietal or regional promotion effort will counter or solve this problem. The good work must start at the beginning of the season before the dust hits the fan.

Enough of the serious stuff. You are all invited to a party, a really big party, and I know you all need a break from the season behind you. You deserve a working holiday in Cairns, North Queensland (yes, we are still here) and you have to start planning right now. The VII World Avocado Congress 2011 is to be held in Cairns in September this year, it is in five months time so please come and enjoy the company of avocado growers from all over the world and Australia. You may make new friends, or even learn something new, but most certainly you will enjoy the warm, dry winter that Cairns in September can offer. Stay a few days longer and watch the full moon rising from the Coral Sea while you unwind before flying home.

You can fly into Cairns directly from Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. It is so easy to get here, but I warn you now, leaving will be more difficult.

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" or "Compass Labels" 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

Australian Avocados Are Down But Not Out!

Avocado growers are used to dealing with natural disasters; droughts, floods and fires. Growers of all tree crops dread the destructive power of winds that rip trees that have taken ten years to grow, and have a further twenty years of production, straight from the ground.

Cyclone Yasi has proven that good management and preparation can lessen the impact of a cyclone the size and power that has never been seen before in Australia.

"We have been talking to growers all over the Tablelands to get a picture of the impact of Cyclone Yasi" explained Mr Antony Allen, Chief Executive Officer of Avocados Australia, "growers have explained that there has been some loss from trees being pushed from the ground."

"There has certainly been fruit loss; preliminary estimates of around 10 percent to 20 percent of the crop is on the ground, this is the average across the North Queensland region" explained Mr Allen.

"Growers in the region are just starting their season, the majority of those growers had planned to start picking their fruit in two weeks time" said Mr Allen.

North Queensland produces 15 percent of the total national avocado crop, but more importantly, during February and March it supplies over 80 per cent of the avocados for Australian consumers. Western Australia and New Zealand are currently the main source of avocados, with Bundaberg being the region that begins to harvest in late March.

Australian consumers will most definitely still be able to buy avocados, and the industry's Infocado system, which helps manage dispatch and forecasting, will help even out the supply to ensure there are no large peaks and troughs through this period of supply."

"We ask that Australian consumers and retailers understand that some of the fruit from North Queensland will have scratches and wind marks on the outside skin, but these marks have no impact on the amazing and healthy flesh on the inside of the fruit, please keep buying and enjoying avocados" explained Mr Allen.

WA Avocado Growers Meet in Pemberton

The Avocados Australia Board held a Western Australian grower meeting in Pemberton, the heart of avocado production in the south west of Western Australia.

Each year the Board meets in an avocado production area; giving growers of each region the opportunity to meet and discuss issues from their own area. Of equal importance, the regional meetings give the Board members that are

from other areas a perspective and first-hand knowledge of key avocado production regions.

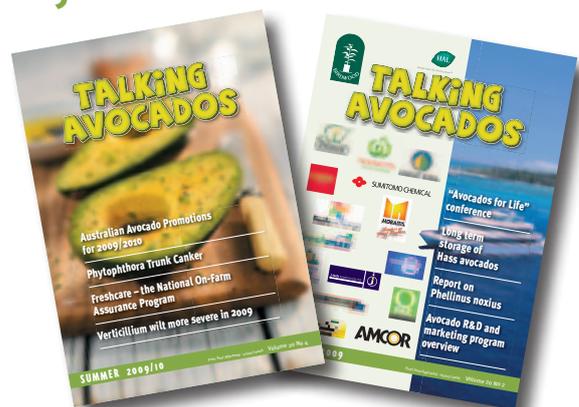
The Board and Avocado Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) met in Perth and Pemberton during the week-long visit to Western Australia. These meetings are a very important part of the strategic investment program for the avocado industry's R&D and Promotion program. The program for 2011-12 was determined during the week's extensive schedule of meetings.

As happens each year, an avocado grower meeting was held. Pemberton was the venue for over 60 avocado growers to meet to see and hear a full overview of the avocado R&D and Promotion program. The avocado program is extremely integrated, with key investments in avocado quality improvement, sustainability, rootstocks, crop data management and promotion.

"Growers were very enthusiastic to see where the industry's levies are invested and to understand the investment decision process" explained Mr Antony Allen, Chief Executive Officer of Avocados Australia, "the meeting was well attended and very interactive, which allowed everyone to explore all the issues".

The Avocados Australia Board also visited a number of key avocado orchards and packing houses, including Mr Neil Delroy at Jasper Farms, Stewart Ipsen at West Pemberton Avocados, and Mr Russell Delroy's Donnybrook-based packing house.

Talking Avocados Now Available Online



'Talking Avocados' is the Australian avocado industry's quarterly journal. Published for over 20 years, it continues to be the most effective communication tool for the industry. Talking Avocados is a clear and succinct magazine ranging between 36 and 48 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>

VII World Avocado Congress planning 'full steam ahead'

Planning is 'full steam ahead' for the World Avocado Congress 2011, the premier event on the world avocado calendar. Held every four years this amazing event is the only place where the world wide avocado industry comes together to meet, share and discuss all there is to know about the avocado industry.

"We are very busy organizing the social and scientific programs of the congress", explained Mr Antony Allen, President of the International Avocado Society and CEO of Avocados Australia. "We expect to cater for the interests of over 1000 delegates (plus their partners) comprising of avocado producers, wholesalers, food service providers, market traders, retailers and government representatives from over 15 countries around the world", outlined Mr Allen.

For an amazing day filled with genuine Aussie experiences the 'Field Trip and Cultural Activity' has been planned as a part of the Social Program for Congress delegates and their partners. Delegates and their partners will have the opportunity to visit working Australian avocado farms where they can explore vast avocado orchards. The day will also include a visit to the unique and eco-friendly tourist attraction Kuranda where delegates can participate in an 'Army Duck Rainforest Tours' that includes a visit to a Tropical Fruit Orchard, a 'Pamagirri Aboriginal Experience', and also visit Kuranda's largest Koala & Wildlife Park.

The Social Program also includes the 'Accompanying Persons Program', which has been designed especially for the partners of Congress delegates. While delegates attend the Congress, their partners will be busy experiencing the best North Queensland has to offer; relaxing beside the Great Barrier Reef at Cape Tribulation, exploring the breath-taking Daintree Rainforest, snorkelling the clear waters of Frankland Island, and shopping their hearts out in trendy Port Douglas.

To sign up to one or both of the great experiences offered in the Social Program, interested parties need to register as a delegate of the VII World Avocado Congress.

Registering now will not only ensure a place as a Congress delegate but those who register early can receive a discount of up to A\$400 on full registration prices.



The Scientific Program will offer delegates 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.

To register as a delegate please visit the VII World Avocado Congress 2011 website at www.worldavocadocongress2011.com

To automatically receive congress updates please become a fan of the World Avocado Congress Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WAC2011

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 and their partners will have the best of North Queensland at their fingertips.

Industry Matters continued

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. Those who register early will also receive a discounted ‘Early Bird’ registration price.

	Early Bird (on or before 6 May 2011)	Standard (on or before 5 Aug 2011)	Late/on-site (on or after 6 Aug 2011)
Fulltime member	\$650	\$850	\$1,050
Fulltime non-member	\$795	\$995	\$1,195
Fulltime student	\$500	\$600	\$700
Day registration*	\$300	\$400	\$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

Sponsorship and Exhibition Opportunities Now Available

Join some of our current sponsors and exhibitors:

Primor Produce, J-tech/Sinclair, Austsafe, Compact Sorting, Huhtamaki, Hydralada, Nufarm, Plant and Food Research, One Harvest... and many more!

Avocados Australia on behalf of the International Avocado Society 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.

- **Reach key national and international avocado growers, allied industries and government agencies**
- **Participate in the discussion about current issues and challenges in the avocado industry**

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.

- **Showcase your products and/or services on a multi-national scale**
- **Position yourself as a leader in the industry**
- **Be part of the most important event in the avocado industry**

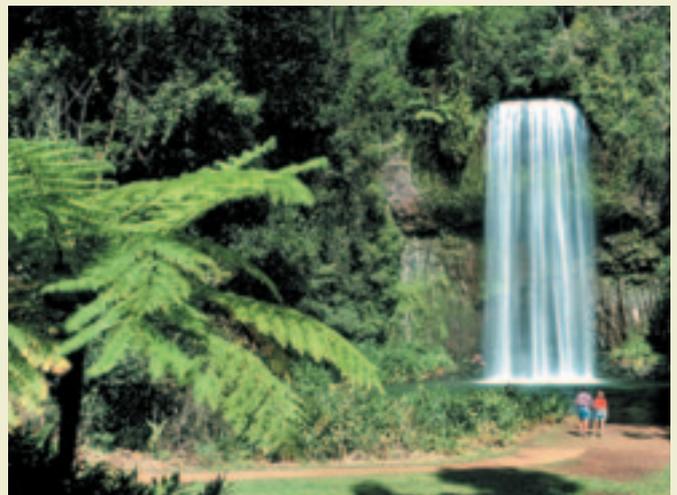
With key opinion leaders and decision makers present, the congress is the ultimate international forum for worldwide avocado and allied industry stakeholders to exchange ideas.

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

- **Sponsorship opportunities to suit all budgets**
- **Exhibition booths starting at AUD \$4140**
- **Book now at early bird rates and maximise your exposure**

For enquiries or further comment please contact:

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



Low pay blamed for shortage of agricultural science graduates

Australia's shortfall of new agricultural scientists is now running at about 4200 a year.

The Council of Deans of Agriculture says the country's universities produce about 800 graduates most years but there's a market for about 5000. Council president, Professor Rick Roush, says perception of agriculture as a declining or technologically backward industry is only part of the problem.

"Probably employers are aiming a bit too low in their salary offers, to shave their salary expenses a bit, but we estimate that starting salaries are about \$5000 a year too low to maintain agriculture as an attractive vocation." Source: ABC

Supermarkets urged to relax avocados standards amid shortage

The cost of avocados is set to rise, with far north Queensland crops severely damaged by Cyclone Yasi. Antony Allen from Avocados Australia says growers are lobbying the supermarket chains to relax their standards. Around 20 percent of the north Queensland crop was destroyed in the storm and up to 50 percent of crops were damaged. The main picking period starts this week and supplies 85 percent of the Australian market during the next two months. Mr Allen says they are in talks with the supermarket chains to accept fruit with skin damage.

"What we're asking consumers to understand is that fruit from north Queensland is perfectly acceptable," he said. "It's not going to make it into the store if it's damaged in any way that makes it inedible - it's just that outside appearance. We're trying to work with both Woolworths and Coles to reduce their QA [Quality Assurance] standards to allow a little bit more damage or fruit-rub and allow that fruit to be sold in the chains. They have pretty high standards normally and it means a lot of fruit gets knocked out." Source: abc.net.au

Beekeepers advised to prepare for Varroa mite

Farmers that rely on the free pollination services of wild honeybees in their crops are being warned to prepare for the potential threat of Varroa mite. Varroa mite could wipe out almost the entire population of wild honeybees if it gets to Australia.

Danny Le Feuvre, from Australian Bee Services, says farmers should look at working with beekeepers and managed hives to protect yields in the future. "Growers, particularly growers that are highly dependent on

pollination, should be starting a relationship with a beekeeper to ensure that once Varroa mite comes in and we do see this decimation, then they have this strong relationship there and are able to obtain those pollination services to ensure they are achieving maximum yield." Source: abc.net.au

A new member joins the Avocados Australia team... introducing Julie Petty

In January we welcomed a new member to the Avocados Australia team – Julie Petty. Julie was brought on board to relieve Joanna Embry while she is on maternity leave. Julie will be working on a range of things including Infocado, developing a transport guide for avocados, and a new grading guide (among other educational materials).



Julie Petty

Julie has spent the last four years working with Growcom as the Queensland Pineapple and Apple Industry Development Officer. Prior to that, she completed a Bachelor of Agribusiness through the University of Queensland.

"I'm excited to be working with Avocados Australia. Some of the projects Avocados Australia have initiated are the envy of many other horticultural industries and I am looking forward to the challenges this role will bring" she commented.

Julie attended the recent grower meetings in Western Australia and toured some of the orchards around Carabooda (north of Perth) and Pemberton to the south.

Should you have any issues with Infocado, wish to become an Infocado contributor, or you would like to know more about the educational materials under development please contact Julie on 07 3846 6566, 0458 004 198, or supplychain@avocado.org.au

Understanding the Western Australian avocado supply chain

As an introduction to the avocado industry I flew to Perth to meet some of the Western Australian growers and tour the wholesale markets. The trip was held in conjunction with the Avocados Australia board meeting and the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) meeting that were held to discuss industry matters and recommend activities for levy investment.

Industry Matters continued

I spent Monday helping our Perth retail survey assessor to collect retail prices from across the Perth so the data could be uploaded to the industry section of the Avocados Australia website. It was a great introduction to what the retail survey assessors do each week and helped me to understand the retail data gathering projects.

I also met up with representatives of the major avocado wholesalers at Market City, the Perth wholesale markets, on Tuesday and spoke with them about the importance of contributing to Infocado each week. All of the wholesalers were interested in ordering more point of sale materials to send out to their customers, so this will hopefully help to get more quick and easy avocado recipes in front of the Perth consumers.

As an addition to the existing education materials, such as the 'Avocado Colour & Ripeness Chart', over the coming months Avocados Australia will be working on developing a transport guide to spell out the recommended best practices for avocados. Agri-Sciences Queensland (ASQ) a division within the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) will also be working on this project to develop the recommendations for the guide.

With this project in mind, I caught up with Harris Refrigerated Transport, one of the main transport companies operating in Western Australia, to chat about the practices they use in transporting avocados. They were extremely helpful and gave me a good overview of the guidelines they operate under and how they prefer growers to pack and secure their pallets and trays.

During the trip I caught up with growers in the Carabooda (approx. one hour north of Perth) and the Pemberton regions (approx. four hours south of Perth) to tour some of the orchards and packing sheds in the area. Many of the growers were excited about the development of a transport guide and were keen to show off their orchards and packing sheds. The orchards around the Carabooda area seemed to mainly be grown in sand. Due in part to the sun reflecting off the sand, it was quite a warm area – several degrees hotter than Pemberton. The orchards and landscapes in the Pemberton and Manjimup areas to the south of Perth were vastly different and were grown in a red clay soil surrounded by karri forests. Cherries, apples, pears and walnuts are also grown in the area.



Barry Doran from Mercer Mooney



Avocados packed for transport

Orchards and packing sheds of Western Australia

Avocados Australia held a grower meeting in Pemberton during the trip which was a great opportunity to meet more of the local growers and understand more about the direction of the Australian avocado industry.

For more information about the education materials project please contact Julie Petty on 07 3846 6566 or supplychain@avocado.org.au

Protecting pollination in Australia

The Australian honeybee industry, the crops bees pollinate, and food security are threatened by a number of serious exotic bee pests and disease. One in every three mouthfuls of food we eat in Australia is brought to us by a bee. Most horticultural crops need to be pollinated by something, and honeybees are the most versatile and successful pollinators available.

The exotic threats to Australian honeybees include Varroa mite (*Varroa destructor* and *jacobsoni*), the mite *Tropilaelaps clareae*, tracheal mite (*Acarapis woodi*) and the Asian bees *Apis dorsata* and *Apis cerana*. Of these Varroa mite is viewed as the most serious threat to the Australian honeybee and horticultural industries; as Australia is one of the few countries in the world that does not have this major pest.

Based on overseas incursions it is predicted that should Varroa mite enter Australia it will eradicate all feral honeybees, thereby eliminating free pollination services, which are currently valued at one billion dollars per annum. The honeybee industry will not be able to meet the demand for pollinators due to a lack of resources. It is a small and aging industry, and maintenance of honeybee colonies in the presence of parasitic mites will require time consuming strategies. Experiences with mite incursions overseas have shown that the maintenance requirements often become prohibitive for many small, local beekeepers, which in turn increases the overall shortage of pollinators.

Australian beekeepers and the horticultural industry have been warned to watch for the potential invasion of the Varroa mite, a deadly parasite that has ravaged honeybee colonies around the world. The mite was already found in New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, the two most likely sources from which it could enter Australia. Once it has entered the country, just a single infected beehive would be enough to threaten the honey and pollination-reliant industries in Australia.

Varroa mite poses a threat to Australian horticulture and other plant and food industries. If Varroa mite enters Australia, horticultural industries will acutely feel the

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Industry Matters continued

impact of the loss of free pollination, as they rely on honeybees for the production of a broad range of crops. This is widely recognised by a number of horticultural and agricultural industries and demonstrated through their participation in the Pollination Australia alliance (Avocados Australia is a member).

The R&D program for horticulture – Stage 1

Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) has worked closely with the Rural Industries R&D Corporation (RIRDC), the Australian Honey Bee Industry Committee (ABIC), and the Pollination Australia alliance (Avocados Australia is a member) via the Pollination R&D Committee to develop the research and development, biosecurity risk management and education and training priorities. These have been incorporated in the Pollination Five-Year R&D Plan.

Previously the Almond, Apple and Pear, Avocado, Canning Fruit, Cherry, Dried Tree Fruits, Melons, Summerfruit, Vegetable, and Onion industries, supported the stage one program to protect pollination for the horticulture industry via mother project MT08016. HAL multi industry funded three ‘Protecting Pollination’ R&D projects as part of the stage one R&D program as follows:

1. Future surveillance needs for bee biosecurity
2. Simulation exercise for the pollination industries
3. Pollination aware – its importance to Australia

Protecting pollination for the Australian horticultural industry - Stage 2

More recently the Almond, Apple and Pear, Avocado, Canning Fruit, Cherry, Dried Tree Fruits, Melons, Summerfruit, Vegetable, and Onion industries, have indicated support for the stage two program to protect pollination for the horticulture industry via mother project MT09026.

This is the overall project for a levy and voluntary contribution funded program to develop and manage a number of R&D projects to ensure ongoing pollination services for the Australian horticultural industry. The R&D program is intended to assist horticultural industries, government, and scientific agencies to keep exotic bee pests out of Australia as a priority and, should attempts to eradicate an incursion be unsuccessful, prepare for the possible establishment of varroa (and other major bee pests) in Australia and the subsequent decline in the number of feral honey bee crop pollinators.



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The three year R&D program has been developed by Pollination R&D Committee in conjunction with the Rural Industries R&D Committee (RIRDC) Pollination Committee and HAL. The program will be designed to protect pollination-reliant horticultural industries, their market access and trade, sustainable production and Australian food security.

The program is primarily focused on the exclusion of exotic bee pests and diseases as its highest priority and will also seek to prepare industry for eradication, control, and management should pollination be threatened by invasive bee pests or disease.

The projects developed and underway are the following:

1. Preparation and submission of permit applications for three Varroa mite control products.
2. 'Bee Force' - improving surveillance and sentinel hive traps.
3. 'Bee Force' - developing the model for other regions.
4. Identifying chemical or non-chemical R&D for honeybee pests workshop.
5. Communications strategy for protecting pollination for the Australian horticultural industry.
6. Developing a honeybee and pollination CRC bid.

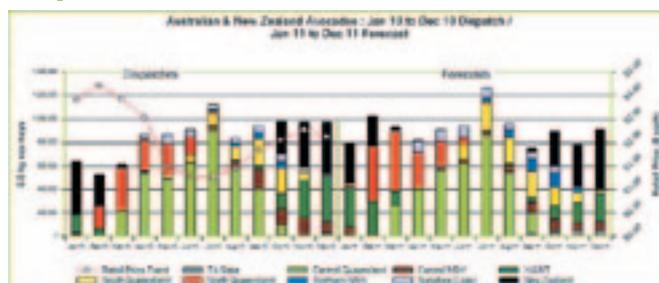
Infocado Update

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

As you can see from the below graph, volumes for the first half of 2011 were predicted to be slightly higher than the period in 2010. This was mainly due to the large crop from Western Australia. This report however was published before Cyclone Yasi hit Northern Queensland growers and that reduced their predicted crop volumes. The next Infocado Quarterly Report will reflect the crop losses for that area more accurately and will allow for recipients of the report to make adjustments to their harvest plan as they see fit.



Graph 1:



Current information indicates that growers on the Atherton Tablelands have lost up to 20 percent of their fruit and a further 30-50 percent of the fruit on the trees has been damaged.

Avocados Australia and Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) have implemented an Avocado Public Relations (PR) and Social Media program to help consumers to understand that 'skin' damaged avocados are still great to eat. The PR program will assist our supply chain partners to be able to sell fruit at the retail level that would normally be out of grade. It is anticipated that this campaign will help to move the slightly damaged fruit as it enters the market.



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Industry Matters continued

The Western Australian and New Zealand crops have now finished. Based off the information gathered to date, the New Zealand crop forecast was fairly accurate.

OrchardInfo

All Australian growers will receive both an electronic (if you have an email address) and a hard copy Orchard Profile form this year after your season finishes. These forms are used to collect orchard information, including tree numbers, tree age, varieties, rootstocks and overall production. Once collated, this information will give individuals and the industry a good understanding of how many trees of different ages are in the ground and therefore provide the information necessary to do long term forecasting for the industry. It will also give individuals a good idea of what varieties are being grown and where.

See below for an example form.

The image shows a screenshot of a spreadsheet titled 'Orchard Profile (Avocado)'. The spreadsheet has multiple columns and rows, with some cells highlighted in yellow. The columns include fields for 'Variety', 'Age', 'Rootstock', 'Production', and 'Location'. The rows represent individual trees or orchard sections.

You would have received these forms in the past, but this year there will be a very thorough follow-up program to ensure maximum participation and therefore optimum results. We would strongly encourage you to fill in the form to the best of your ability when it arrives.

All contributors of data will receive a comprehensive report of the aggregated data at the end of the 2010 growing season (once all regions have finished their season). For more information please contact Julie Petty on 07 3846 6566

Avocado Industry Green by Nature

An environmental investigation into the avocado industry proves that it's not just the avocados that are green.

"The Australian avocado industry understands and actively implements environmentally friendly agricultural practices" says Antony Allen, CEO of Avocados Australia, and confirmed in the environmental project 'Australian Avocados... Green by Nature? An environmental stocktake of the Australian avocado industry'.

Community attitude surveys suggest that for many people the implications for the environment in regards to fruit

growing is an area of concern. To secure their reputation as an environmentally sustainable provider of food for Australian consumers, the Australian avocado industry allowed a thorough environmental investigation of its agricultural practices by TQA Australia.

TQA Australia is a not-for-profit independent leader in developing, delivering, managing and promoting the uptake of contemporary food safety, quality assurance and environmental management systems to agribusinesses across Australia.

Avocado growers across the country happily answered e-surveys and mail-out surveys, participated in personal interviews, allowed on-farm verification visits, and even scientific analysis of their farms and fruit. The project investigated the environmentally friendly management of land and soil, chemical, nutrient, water, biodiversity, waste, air, as well as grower knowledge and understanding of environmental practices.

"The industry is committed to providing the Australian customer the 'greenest', most environmentally friendly, Australian avocado possible" said Mr Allen.

Avocado growers scored highly on a number of important environmental issues. Growers engage in extensive testing to maintain soil health; many packers capture and re-use rainwater; many growers use little to no pesticides/herbicides; and a majority of growers support protecting and/or improving areas of biodiversity, such as creeks and native vegetation located in and around their farms.

Despite the report's positive evaluation of the 'green' practices used to grow Australian avocados, the industry welcomes any recommendations with the understanding that responsible environmental management is only achieved through a process of continual improvement.

'Australian Avocados... Green by Nature? An environmental stocktake of the Australian avocado industry' can be accessed in the Media Resources section of the Avocados Australia website.

Australian avocados in season and in a store near you

To support the launch of the new avocado season Woolworths partnered with Avocados Australia to kick off a promotional campaign in all stores across Australia. The launch of the avocado season was also been promoted in the Woolworths 'Fresh Market Update' for 24-27 February 2011.

Avocados that are currently coming into the market from the Atherton Tablelands in far north Queensland may have some scratches and/or blemishes on the skin; this is due

to the devastation tropical Cyclone Yasi inflicted on the region. The damage to the fruit is only skin deep, the flesh is unaffected and is still of great eating quality.

“We are not asking consumers to reduce their standards as the fruit still tastes as good as always. We are urging them to understand that the appearance of the fruit is currently out of the growers’ control.” commented Mr Antony Allen, CEO of Avocados Australia. “Avocados are now in season, in store, and are of excellent quality, so try one today” said Mr Allen.

The launch of the avocado season also comes with the launch of the Australian Avocados Facebook page. Australian Avocados created a Facebook page to give consumers a place where they can freely share, comment, discuss, and engage in conversation about all things avocado-related.

Share your favourite avocado recipe ideas and tips today and ‘Like’ the Australian Avocados Facebook page at [Facebook.com/AustralianAvocados](https://www.facebook.com/AustralianAvocados).

Not on Facebook? Visit the Australian Avocados website at avocado.org.au to share your favourite avocado recipes, see what other avocado-lovers are making, and browse

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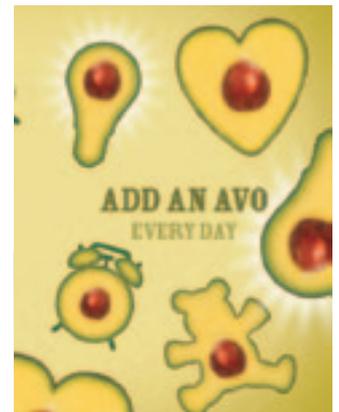
Coles and Woolworths tug of war intensifies

The verdict is in: Coles is cheaper for fruit and vegetables, but Woolworths is cheaper for some shelf products. As the supermarket war heats up, a Sunday Herald Sun investigation of current supermarket prices shows Woolworths has marginally lower prices for brand-name products. But it is Coles that wins on fresh produce.

As the Big Two scramble for top spot in the price-tag tussle, German discount grocer Aldi has also made a surprise bid to enter the fight, launching a new advertising campaign to woo shoppers. Fresh fish has become the latest battleground for Coles and Woolworths, with the chains launching sustainable fishing campaigns in tandem.

The Sunday Herald Sun analysis took in 34 brand-name products at the Coles and Woolworths stores in Brunswick, only metres apart in Sydney Rd’s Barkly Square Shopping Centre.

Nine products from the selection differed in price, with Woolworths coming out cheaper by a slender 92c. Of the 34 products, fresh produce was generally cheaper at Coles, where rockmelons were selling for \$1.98 - a dollar cheaper than Woolworths. Avocados were selling for \$1.98 at Coles - 50c cheaper than Woolworths.



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Industry Matters continued

But shelf items such as Cold Power washing liquid and Velvet Pure Soap were cheaper at Woolworths by \$2 and 16c respectively. About 74 percent of brand products surveyed were identical in price at the two stores.

A second analysis of this week's slash-priced specials at the stores showed Coles discounted its products by an average of 30 percent, while Woolworths discounted its on-sale products by an average of 26 percent.

The analysis included single-sale products with a brand name and excluded fresh food and bulk deals. A Schweppes 1.25 litre bottle of soft drink, on sale at both stores this week, was \$1.20 at Coles and \$1.19 at Woolworths - a minimal difference. The product would normally sell for \$1.77 at both stores.

The major stores last week drew a line in the sand over seafood, both pledging to source fresh fish more responsibly. Coles announced through its celebrity chef ambassador Curtis Stone, that it would partner with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to improve the sustainability of the fresh fish it sells. The policy will see the WWF advise Coles about where best to source fish to improve the health of fish stocks.

"Safeguarding vulnerable fish stocks now will also ensure that the Australian fishing industry can continue to thrive for generations to come," Mr Stone said.

On the same day, Woolworths also launched a fish campaign, promising new standards for its canned salmon and tuna, and consultations with fisheries experts to source fresh fish responsibly.

Shopper Karla Gough, of Brunswick, said she would be unlikely to switch supermarkets because she wanted to preserve a routine. "Normally I shop at Coles because I know where everything is in the store," she said. "I don't think there's a difference at all in prices between the two stores." Source: heraldsun.com.au

Avocados 'Spotted' on Shelf

Australian Avocados have been dealt a heavy blow by Cyclone Yasi, with 20 percent of the crop in North Queensland destroyed and a further 30-40 percent inflicted with scratches and blemishes to the skin. As cyclone affected, 'spotty' avocados reach supermarket shelves this week, consumers are encouraged to look beyond skin-deep.

Avocados Australia reported extensive damage to the crop when cyclone winds stripped fruit from trees. Any avocados that managed to remain on the branch have scattered blemishes or spotting, as a result of rubbing off each other. But appearances can be deceptive and this superficial, black spotting (known as Lenticel and 'Nodules') has no effect on the quality or taste of the fruit inside, which remains unaffected.

According to Antony Allen, CEO of Avocados Australia, "The industry estimates \$10 million in damage to avocado crops in North Queensland. Many growers face a long road to recovery, with some suffering significant losses of fruit and others reporting damage to their trees, which were blown to the ground. We are urging consumers to help them get back on their feet by continuing to buy avocados, despite their imperfect appearance."



Spotted avocado

Avocados Australia is working closely with retailers to ensure availability of cyclone affected avocados between

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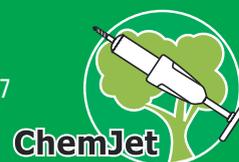


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late February and April. Woolworths and Coles have shown their strong support for the North Queensland growers to date, by reviewing their quality specifications and allowing some spotted fruit to shelf. Consumers are urged to show their support too by choosing to buy the fruit, regardless of its appearance.

Mr Allen said, "We are not asking consumers to reduce their standards as the fruit still tastes as good as always. We are urging them to understand that the appearance of the fruit is currently out of the growers' control. Supermarkets will continue to enforce strict quality control on all fruit and vegetables, ensuring any imperfections lie on the surface of the skin only."

As growers begin to harvest their crops this week, the full extent of damage will be determined. The Tablelands contributes approximately 17 percent to the nation's overall supply of avocados but accounts for 80-85 percent of supply in March and April alone.

Thankfully other regions in Australia have been unaffected by Cyclone Yasi. Mr. Allen commented, "It will take approximately 12 months for the North Queensland industry to recover and for supplies to return to normal. In the interim, we will rely heavily on supplies from Bundaberg. Some fruit will also come in from Western

Australia."

Consumers can expect to see an improvement in the appearance of the fruit when Bundaberg growers harvest their crop in April.

Top Tips for Farmers Following Floods

Farmers are being urged to consider biosecurity closely in the wake of recent natural disasters. No corner of Australia has been left unscathed by the extreme climatic events of the past few months, and many of Australia's \$41.8 billion agricultural industries have suffered the effects, with some severely impacted.

Effects have predominately been felt across our plant based agricultural industries, with livestock losses reported to date being relatively small in comparison. While it is still too early to source exact figures, national losses in grain production are estimated at around \$250 million, for fruit and vegetable production around \$225 million and approximately seven percent of total Australian cotton plantings (valued at around \$150 million) have been destroyed.

As the extensive clean up continues it is imperative farmers take biosecurity into account particularly when replanting and preparing for their next crop.

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Industry Matters continued

“It’s really important farmers keep thinking about biosecurity throughout the recovery process,” according to Rod Turner, General Manager, Programs with Plant Health Australia (PHA).

“Biosecurity refers to the steps we take to prevent the establishment and spread of unwanted pests and diseases and focuses on practices like inspecting crops and cleaning equipment. But with so much else going on around farms that have been impacted by recent wind, fire and flood water damage, there is a risk that biosecurity might take a back seat,” says Mr Turner.

Pests are an ever present threat to Australia’s plant industries, a large number of which could have devastating consequences if they were to ever become established. Natural disasters only increase this threat. Taking the case of flooding for instance, extra risks may arise from increased humidity and dead and decaying plant matter, which create conditions conducive to endemic pests.

To make matters worse, previously localised infestations may now rapidly take on regional significance as plant material and soils have been deposited over a wide area. “Inundated paddocks are a major concern as waters may have carried debris and waste from upstream and with it foreign weed seeds, fungal diseases and pests. Mindful of these heightened risks PHA is calling for producers to be extra vigilant,” says Mr Turner.

If a new, exotic pest becomes established on farm, producers may be affected through increased farming costs, reduced productivity, and loss of markets.

Top biosecurity tips to see farmers through the recovery process include:

1. Take notes about where water has run and/or lain

across your property and any trash it has left behind. This is so you can keep an eye on these areas in the future.

2. Keep an eye out for weeds germinating in any areas affected by water and floating debris and deal with them quickly.
3. Make sure any vehicle or equipment coming onto your property is cleaned down.
4. Keep records of contractors that come onto your property to repair any damage or undertake recovery work.
5. When replanting, ensure planting and propagation material is clean and certified to reduce the risk of introducing an exotic pest.
6. Let family members, employees, and visitors know their footwear and clothing should be free of soil and plant material before entering or leaving the property.
7. Recognise the prolonged wet conditions can cause stress in plants which may predispose them to disease.
8. If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.

For more information, or to arrange an interview, contact Sophie Winton, PHA, on (02) 6215 7711 or at swinton@phau.com.au.

Fresh Connections 2011 to spotlight resilience of Australasian produce community

The fresh produce industry in both Australia and New Zealand has been hit hard by recent unprecedented natural disasters, but hardest-hit Queensland is set to host international fruit and vegetable event Fresh Connections 2011 on 8-10 June to showcase to the region and the world just how resilient the Australasian fresh produce industry can be.

Fresh Connections 2011 will be the fruit, vegetable and floral industries’ premier networking and educational event and as the only international event in the region bringing the entire fresh produce industry together, it is well placed to showcase the Australasian region to the global fresh produce community and the general public.

“Despite these significant natural events, what we have is an extremely resilient industry producing high quality product, that bounces back very quickly and we need to emphasise that fact,” said Michael Worthington, CEO of PMA Australia-New Zealand. “We are very keen this year to show our support for the Queensland fresh produce industry following their devastating floods and use the

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event to promote the region and the recovery of the Queensland industry, six months on.”

This year, PMA Australia-New Zealand will be co-hosting the event with the Australian Fresh Fruit Company (AFFCO) and the Australian Chamber of Fruit & Vegetable Industries (representing the Australian wholesaler sector), and organisers have introduced new initiatives to attract as many delegates as possible from all sectors of the industry on both sides of the Tasman, as well as many international visitors.

Registrations for Fresh Connections 2011 will open on March 15. To register, and get the full information on the event and sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities, visit www.freshconnections2011.com

Australian Auspak Avocados ready for a bumper export season

Despite the recent and severe weather events that have occurred across Australia, “the supply and internal quality of Australian avocados is still in excellent condition” comments Mr Louis Grey, General Manager of the Australian

Export Company (AEC), trading as 'Auspak Avocados'.

The AEC was formed in May 2009 by a group of avocado growers, packers and marketers who represent approximately 50 percent of all avocado production in Australia. The company has successfully positioned itself as a market leader in quality, volume and year-round supply of premium Australian avocados to international markets.

On February 3 2011, tropical Cyclone Yasi devastated parts of far north Queensland. Avocado growers in the Atherton tablelands and Mareeba region reported a loss of 10-20 percent of their crop, with some fruit drop and scratches/ markings on the skin. However, the internal quality/flesh of the avocados remain untouched and in excellent condition.

Antony Allen, CEO of the peak industry body for the Australian avocado industry, Avocados Australia, assured consumers in a recently posted video on the Australian Avocados Facebook page ([Facebook/AustralianAvocados.com](https://www.facebook.com/AustralianAvocados.com)) that avocados in the market may be marked or scratched on the skin, but the flesh of “that fruit is still fantastic to eat”.

Avocado Growers



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Industry Matters continued

Growers are also “There is still a good supply of Shepard avocados, and the Hass crop is just as good as last year. The internal quality of our avocados is still great” said Mr John Walsh, Director of Simpson Farms.

The news that the internal quality/flesh of Australian avocados are still in excellent condition comes just in time for the launch of the Shepard season. Shepard avocados are produced in the warmer Bundaberg and Atherton regions, and are only available from February to April.

Shepard avocados are a buttery, green-skinned avocado variety that is ideal for entertaining; they're perfect for salads and dips because the flesh won't go brown once cut. Spread avocado liberally on your breakfast toast, add them to your sandwich at lunchtime or mix them into your salad or pasta for dinner.

Australian avocados are not only healthy and delicious in a variety of quick and easy recipes, but many are also grown using environmentally friendly „green agricultural practices. The Australian avocado industry are currently identifying and evaluating sustainable orchard management practices used by avocado growers across Australia with the objective of providing effective recommendations.

The AEC is “confident that we can supply a consistent, high quality, well supported product to meet your requirements and help you grow your business with avocados” commented Mr Grey. Source: Freshplaza

Update: Multi Industry Fruit Spotting Bug Project

The new research project on the Fruit Spotting Bug

(FSB) with Industry & Investment NSW (I&I NSW) and Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) is operational and underway. This project breaks new ground in that it includes:

- Multi industry support and funding
- Integrated approach to research
- The appointment of an independent project facilitator

Avocados Australia has been a key driver in ensuring that this initiative approach to managing FSB in a new and uncertain chemical access world. The potential loss of endosulfan had been a key driver to drawing the investor industries into a multi industry funded project to develop alternative options for the management of FSB. The planning and development of this project was well underway when the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) issued a withdrawal of endosulfan late last year, creating an even greater need and speed for the approach already underway.

Source: Avocados Australia

Talking Avocados Correction

In *Talking Avocados Summer 2010 Vol 21 No 4* a printing error occurred on pg. 29 in Figure 1 of the article ‘Five years of data collection for clonal and seedling rootstocks with ‘Hass’ as scion. Rootstock evaluation programme. Part 1.’ This article was written by Danielle Le Lagadec of Agri-Science Queensland of the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI). Please find the correct Figure 1 below.

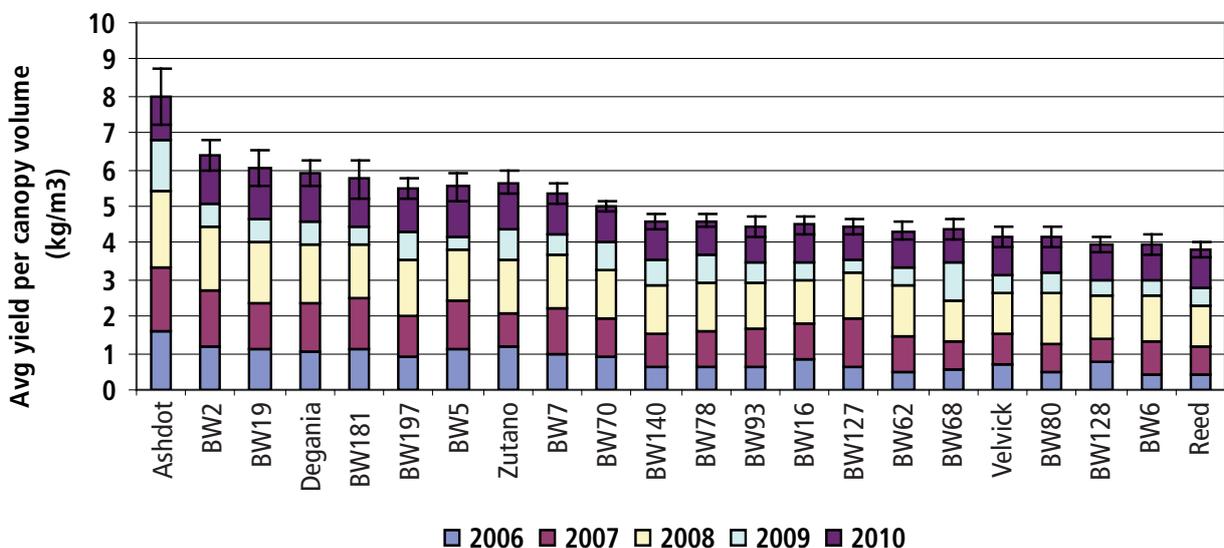


Figure 1. Average yield per canopy volume of ‘Hass’ on seedling rootstocks. Bars above the column indicate the standard error of the mean for the cumulative yield (2006 to 2010).

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Around Australia

Central New South Wales Report

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



Firstly let me express my sympathies for all growers affected by the horrific weather that has plagued the east coast this spring/summer. Central and northern New South Wales (NSW) growers suffered almost total loss of crop with the never-ending rain at flowering; southern and central Queensland experienced significant tree loss from waterlogged soils, and far north Queensland was subjected to the fury of Cyclone Yasi. Farmers operate on small margins at the best of times, so I dare say it will take a number of seasons to recover from these adversities. I wish all involved enjoy better times ahead.

Since my last report, the central NSW harvest season has drawn to a close with most late season orchards harvesting crops slightly larger than expected. Fruit quality was also very consistent, and combined with sound market returns it has provided most with a successful season.

With most orchards carrying very light crops in 2011, growers have had to make some difficult decisions in regards to their usual orchard management practices in crop protection and nutrient programs. While it is certainly the case that nutrient input can be reduced significantly, it is important that we continue to monitor the nutrient status of our trees in order to ensure they are in a balanced condition leading up to next flowering. The flower buds are developing right now, so the next few weeks are critical for the following year's crop.

On the crop protection front, the decisions are not so straightforward, but it is worth evaluating the cost of continuing a level of disease and pest protection against the reduced returns from lower quality levels, even on a small crop.

In regards to root disease protection, low fruit loads will give us a head start in maintaining tree health but it still needs to be a key feature of any program. The results that some local growers are achieving in this area, by promoting soil health, are very promising. Applying a microbial program to the soil to boost the natural defences to Phytophthora may potentially save against the cost of a conventional phos acid approach.

The Avocados Australia team has been working very hard to continue preparations for the World Avocado Congress in Cairns this year. It is a big trip for NSW growers to make and the September dates do make it a challenge in regards to harvest. However, I am confident that anyone that can manage to attend will experience an excellent event and an opportunity to hear the latest cutting edge

research from around the world, and I strongly encourage those that can afford the slight interruption to their usual program to make the trip.

The seasonal conditions over summer have been relatively mild with many weeks of showery weather, but at this stage most areas are still looking for that big rain event to recharge our water sources for the year ahead. I wish everyone a prosperous and enjoyable season in 2011.

Tamborine and Northern Rivers Report

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



Wow what a season! Who would have expected cars floating down the street in Toowoomba. Southern Queensland like most of Queensland has had a real battering from the rains of 2010/11. The rains we had up until the 10th January were bad enough, but the trees were coping. Once they got drowned with these huge rain events it took its toll on many orchards.

This season will show how important good drainage and Phytophthora control is in keeping trees healthy and alive. Just talking with growers I am hearing stories of soaks and water coming from places they have never seen before.

To use an Anna Blich quote "these are unprecedented times for most growers". Looking at all of this, it shows why we have an industry that is reasonably sustainable. Sure we would not want to see a run of these types of seasons, but unlike other industry's we can't replace these trees overnight and they can't be planted everywhere, so if you can hang in, there is light at the end of the tunnel.

I guess it may be a trying season in regards to fruit quality with all the wet conditions so whatever you already have done, or do from now on, will determine how your fruit holds up. Good spray programs I am sure will prove also to be money in the bank when you harvest this season's crop.

I would like all growers to really think about their holidays for this year. As you would know, Australia is hosting the VII World Avocado Congress and this will be a mammoth effort to pull off without the support of the local attendance; which is all Australian growers, packers, resellers, market agents, and whoever else relies on this great industry to make a quid. So please pass the word to everyone you can think to get on board and book in for this great event. Most of us will never get this opportunity to see this again in Australia in our lifetimes. It will be a fantastic event and for those who went to the Aust/NZ conference in Cairns the venue is world class.

Ok, I know what you are all saying; its right in the middle of picking etc. How about we all pick a little extra the week before and the week after, pull up stumps for the week of the Congress, and make this event a huge success. You can all book now and get the early bird rates, what are you waiting for? Ok enough of my sales pitch, but honestly without the support of the Australian industry it will be hard work, so your support is important.

North Queensland Report

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



It is hard to imagine a more difficult year for being in the farming game. We have had wet years before, but this summer has set new records and the greater concern is that we still have two months of normally wet conditions to come.

Certainly, this season will put all our knowledge about the culture of avocado to the test. On the avocado website is a link to all the back issues of Talking Avocados. It seems little is new and most our issues have been discussed many times over. Please dig through these back copies for information that may be relevant to your problem at <http://industry.avocado.org.au/Growers/Talking.aspx>

Tropical Cyclone Yasi came at us with the threat of total destruction, but it veered south slightly at the eleventh hour, literally, and spared the whole North Queensland (NQ) avocado industry. We sustained some serious stripping of fruit from the trees, some broken branches, some rolled trees, and heavy blemish on the remaining fruit from strong winds. This loss from external blemishes is yet to be realized as harvesting begins; growers will get lower returns as the higher reject rates are realized. On the positive side – we survived this one.

The major retailers, Woolworths and Coles, were approached by Avocados Australia CEO Mr. Antony Allen for their support of the NQ growers; by allowing a variation to their specifications that would allow a greater amount of blemish to pass. This has been approved and we all thank Woolworths and Coles for their understanding and support, and Mr. Allen for his efforts.

I will remind all NQ growers that the VII Avocado World Congress is right on your doorstep in Cairns in September this year, only in five months time! I recommend that you make your best efforts to attend and meet and greet the overseas visitors and those from other regions of Australia. You will make new contacts and friends that will in turn give you the opportunity to discuss avocado matters and travel to places where your new friends live.

Sunshine Coast Report

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



We love the weather! It's always interesting and sometimes very challenging. For the last four months it has been more than challenging – it has been frightening in its power and the significance of its impact on the farming sector. We have had around 1800mm in the last three months, which is our normal annual rainfall (if there is any such thing as normal!). There have been many reports of land slippages, especially in the western areas in our region. We have had very little sunshine, and there have been long periods of high humidity and overcast conditions. Farms are at risk of a high incidence of anthracnose, Phytophthora, and the impact of insidious oxygen deprivation for the trees. The wet season still has a while to run. I urge you to maintain appropriate mitigation processes for fungal problems that affect fruit

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Birdwood Nursery

Peter and Sandra Young
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Ph: 07 5442 1611

Turkinje Nursery

Peter & Pam Lavers
100 Henry Hannam Drive

Walkamin Qld

Ph: 0419 781 723



Around Australia continued

and tree roots, both immediately and into the future. I am told that after the 1974 floods, almost half the avocado trees in this area were so badly affected that they had to be replaced.

It's great to see that the two major marketing groups in this region (Nature's Fruit Company and Sunfresh Cooperative) are supporting growers with workshops and information sessions specifically relating to the impact of our prolonged wet season on avocado trees.

World Avocado Congress

As you are aware, Avocados Australia is hosting the World Avocado Congress this coming September. It is anticipated that in excess of 1000 delegates will come from avocado producing countries across the world. The Congress will be showcasing our industry and scientists, as well as a range of topics from many other countries. I strongly recommend that you register to attend this significant event, and hear about developments in growing avocados, both here and around the world.

Funding opportunity

The local association, Sunshine Coast Avocado Growers Association (SCAGA), has partnered with Avocados Australia and Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) to offer financial support to up to five local Sunshine Coast avocado growers to attend the conference. The funding is \$2000 per grower and is to be used towards travel, Congress registration, and associated Congress events. The Sunshine Coast region includes growers from Gympie, south to Caboolture, and to Belthorpe in the west. A ballot will be held to determine funding recipients, if demand is greater than funding available. If you would like to know more or to register your interest in this great opportunity, please contact me or Robert Price.

My phone numbers are 5442 1767 or 0409 261 461
 Robert's phone number is 0419329411
 Deadline for registering interest is 7 May 2011.

Tri State Report

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



They say that the best thing we can do to rest and recuperate is to take a holiday in the tropics. I cannot count the times that the boss has dragged me reluctantly off to Bali for some tropical respite, only to find that a little humidity and rain, constant warm temperatures, plus a bit of Bintang has seen me up and recuperated for another season. Well this year the tropics have come to the Tri-state region in a big way and at least for avocado growers the trees have responded well.

At Renmark, from mid January we have had in excess of our annual rainfall in a month. A local broadacre farmer has recorded the wettest December to February period in over 100 years of records on the property. In the Sunraysia region one rainfall event dropped up to 300mm in places. I know for many in the tropics these types of events are more commonplace, but here the topography is not designed to cope with these levels of events and there is often nowhere for the water to go except to the lowest part of the property. Growers have had to pump water away, even back into irrigation channels. Susceptible crops have seen tree loss due to water logging and the current wine grape harvest is a nightmare with bunch rots a problem.

Fortunately for avocado growers, our orchards are generally planted on the rises for frost control so excess water damage will be minimal at this stage. In a low rainfall climate most orchards have been developed without consideration of surface drainage, so if these conditions continue we may start to see some localised problems in patches particularly where subsurface drainage is an issue. I certainly have a few old trees that are suffering where clay layers are shallow.

The main result from the large flowering, tropical conditions, and lack of heat waves like the past three years is the best crop that the region has had in ten years. Fruit drop has been substantial, as it needed to be with such a heavy fruit set, with reports that a few patches have dropped excessively but overall crop levels are excellent. Fruit is sizing well with rain and moderate temperatures and given no damaging frosts through winter we are looking to supply arguably the best quality avocados in Australia to markets in much better quantities. The biggest limit to the resurgence of volume in Tri-state is the large number of trees that have been removed through the drought, but the recovery has started.

With tropical conditions comes increased risk of anthracnose, something we have little problem with because of our normally dry climate, but it seems that most growers have taken this into consideration and instituted control options. We have a long way to go but at this stage it is great to be able to write such a positive report especially when you look at the problems and damage in other areas of Australia



Western Australia Report

By Russell Delroy, Avocados Australia
Director for the WA Growing Area



Avocado harvest for Western Australia (W.A) is finally over. This season has been the largest harvest for WA; nearly 50 percent more than the previous highest yield and is indicative of future years as the WA industry steadily grows.

Orderly and steady marketing has maintained average values in the market place through out the season. However, competition from New Zealand (NZ) fruit for eastern states retail space and a lack of promotional support for Australian fruit resulted in a relatively weak market post-Christmas and significantly lower returns to Australian growers than was potentially achievable – this has flowed through into the commencement of the Shepard season.

This issue was discussed during a visit to the Pemberton region by the board of Avocados Australia and staff from Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) involved in the research and development (R&D) and marketing programs for our industry. The meeting was well attended by over 50 growers and the opportunity to discuss a wide range

of issues with our industry organization was appreciated. A significant objective of the industry's new five year strategic plan is the development of an 'Australian Grown' promotional strategy – consumer research is being undertaken this year to enable this strategy to be most effectively designed and targeted.

Fruit set for the 2011/12 season is generally very disappointing. Despite good tree health and an abundance of flower going into spring it would appear that the biennial bearing issue has impacted the industry again. Prolonged periods of lower than normal night temperatures associated with an unseasonably dry spring may be to blame – however this is undoubtedly a complex issue with many factors involved – there are some growers and blocks of trees that have set well despite the cool nights. The industry R&D project into biennial bearing is steadily progressing although discovering the solution to this problem may still be many years away – but the long journey has started with the first step.

Early forecasts for NZ's crop next year are at a minimum double this seasons volume. Even with a smaller crop from WA the total supply into the Australian market place for 2011/12 summer will be significantly more than the summer just gone. Many challenges remain ahead.

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Marketing avocados and selected subtropical fruits

Quality Surveys in Retail

Each month a team of retail survey assessors conduct fruit quality surveys in 16 stores across Perth, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. These surveys are vitally important and serve to measure performance against the industry's benchmarks of supplying fruit that will be between soft to soft ripe at the point of purchase and have less than ten percent internal quality defects. The team purchase a random sample of avocados each month to assess for blemishes including bruising, internal rots, vascular browning, diffuse flesh colour, and stem end rot.



The avocado survey team from left Yianni Varchnas, Patsy Appelbee, Blair Foots, Joanna Embry, Julie Petty, Johanne Appelbee and Carmel Carmichael. Joy Walker, Amanda Madden and Jan Cranny absent.

Gathering this data helps to build a picture of the frequency and severity of different blemishes found in the fruit and acts as an independent reference for the industry. The above mentioned benchmarks have been set based on previously completed sensory testing (as reported in the Talking Avocados Winter 2010 issue).

The surveys have been conducted for over four years to date and recently a Refresher Workshop was held with all the retail survey assessors to ensure consistency in the surveys is maintained. The assessors collect, cut, and examine between 100 and 240 avocados every month on a designated date.

The importance of identifying bruising vs. internal rots was discussed at length to ensure those blemishes are correctly identified. This data may prove to be vital in establishing the percentages of bruising and rots in the market at certain times of the year and therefore highlight what actions may need to be taken to improve quality at those times.

The retail survey assessors also collect retail pricing data every Monday in their respective cities. This data is uploaded to the Avocados Australia website every Wednesday and is published in the Infocado



The team of Retail Survey Assessors cut, examined and discussed how to identify a number of quality issues.

Weekly Report to give growers and wholesalers an overview of the prices for that week.

Last year a 'Supply Chain Training Program' was started in Brisbane aimed at educating retailers about how to best store, handle, and present avocados and therefore improve fruit quality. The program will be rolled out in stages in the other major cities in the coming years. In the last year Brisbane trainer, Carmel Carmichael, visited over 130 fruit retailers across the city. The retailers were given information packs with industry updates and copies of the Avocado Handling: Retail Guide, the Avocado Colour & Ripeness Chart, and The Little Green Book. Feedback to date has been positive with most retailers being keen to be involved in the program.

coming months and please contact Julie Petty on 07 3846 6566 or supplychain@avocado.org.au should you have any questions about the programs.

Stay tuned for further information in the

THE LITTLE GREEN BOOK THE ADVENTURES OF ALVIN



The Little Green Book

AVOCADO HANDLING: RETAIL

Look after your avocados! They're close to ripe and easily bruised.

Treat 'em right

Be Gentle

- Avocados bruise easily so minimise drop heights:
 - Rubbery to softening fruit: less than 10cm
 - Firm ripe to soft ripe fruit: less than 3cm
- Do not tumble fill displays
- Stack packages carefully for correct alignment

This avoids bruising and skin damage. This prevents package collapse.

Check Quality

- Ripeness test: gently press the stem end. Don't squeeze!
- Discard avocados that are dropped, over-soft, or have rots

Selling a bruised avocado will only guarantee disappointment.

Display 'em right

Display

- Optimise stock control, minimise storage and display time
- Do not stack fruit more than 2 layers deep
- Regularly check display and stock levels
- Rotate stock so the oldest or ripest fruit is displayed first

This avoids bruising and over-ripe fruit.

Helping Customers

- Display ripest avocados on top and towards the front
- Ideally, identify avocados that are "ripe for tonight" with separate display or stickers

Handle 'em right

	1	2	3	4	5	6
HASS	Hard	Rubbery	Softening	Firm Ripe	Medium Ripe	Soft Ripe
Precool Store Ripen	16-20°C		5°C		2 days	
	16-20°C until ready for sale		air temperature		5°C 2 days	
					Remove over-ripe fruit with red	

	1	2	3	4	5	6
SHEPARD	Hard	Rubbery	Softening	Firm Ripe	Medium Ripe	Soft Ripe
Precool Store Ripen	16-20°C		7°C		2 days	
	16-20°C until ready for sale		air temperature		7°C 2 days	
					Remove over-ripe fruit with red	

Retail Handling Poster (above) & Ripeness Poster (below)

Try a little tenderness

How do you know when we're ripe?

AVOCADO COLOUR & RIPENESS CHART

Where do we come from?

Colour Rating	1	2	3	4	5	6
HASS Look & Touch						
Firmness Rating	Hard Edible portion (kg?) - using 1 time tip	Rubbery 0.6kg	Softening 2kg	Firm Ripe 1kg	Medium to Soft Ripe 0.6kg	Soft to Over Ripe 0.6kg
GREEN SKINS Touch (Shepard, Sharwil, Wawa, Reed)						

Map 1: Apr-Jun, Sep-Feb, Oct-Jan

Map 2: Feb-Jun, Mar-Dec, Aug-Sep, Jan-Feb

Profile of the Australian Avocado Industry – 2011

Customers, Markets and Products

Product

Australian avocados are predominantly grown for the fresh market and are supplied year round. The peak in Australian production is during the autumn and winter months, with New Zealand imports during spring/summer to meet Australian market demand.

Hass is the dominant variety accounting for approximately 80 percent of the Australian production.

Fruit quality continues to be an issue, although the industry is investing in fruit quality programs to address this.

Consumers and Consumer Research

Typically avocados in Australia are consumed in salads, as a sandwich filling, as an accompaniment to meals, or as guacamole. Some processed product is consumed as dips.

Consistent fruit quality continues to be a barrier to increasing consumption in the domestic market. In spite of the quality issues, per capita consumption continues to grow - currently Australia consumes approximately 2.7 kilograms of avocado per capita (2009-10), an increase of more than 106 percent in the last decade.

The avocado industry has made significant investment in consumer research over the last five years to gain a better understanding of consumers and their purchasing habits. This research has helped guide industry research and development (R&D) and promotion.

2009 research shows that avocados are consumed throughout the day, avocados fulfil a range of different roles, quality continues to be an issue, and there is broad recognition of the health benefits of avocados.

Avocados and Quality

Through consumer research the industry has identified three key areas where industry performance needs to be improved - these are: internal quality, maturity, and ripeness. Through research, the industry has responded by developing guidelines in regard to premium grade avocados, recommending that:

- dry matter for Hass should be 23% or above,
- dry matter for Shepard should be 21% or above,
- ripeness levels should be between 0.65 and 0.45 kilogram force, and
- damage to flesh should not exceed 10%.

The industry is continuing to develop benchmarks and monitor and report on industry performance in regard to these criteria.

Markets and Trends

Most avocados are marketed as fresh whole fruit. Major sales segments include (based on 2010 figures):

- Supermarket – 51% (of retail 58.5%)
- Independents – 34% (of retail 41.5%)
- Food Service – 10% (estimate)
- Export – 4%
- Other – 1%.

Food service and export are emerging market segments that are becoming increasingly important value chains for the industry. Industry investment is supporting growth in these sectors. The market for processed product continues to be niche and driven by commercial entities.

Macro-trends impacting the sector include: population growth, changes in family structure, an emphasis on the health properties of food driven by an ageing population and increasing obesity levels. Consumers are becoming more discerning and demanding; showing interest in emotional, ethical, aesthetic, or ecological factors when purchasing food. New technology is facilitating the development of improved products that are better meeting consumer needs - for avocados, this includes fresh-cut/preserved and innovatively packaged products.

Marketing and Market Development

The objective of the industry promotional campaign is to increase consumer knowledge and demand for Australian avocados in line with increasing production. This is being achieved by changing the consumer's image of avocados from an occasional luxury to an everyday fruit.

Through the industry levy program there has been significant investment in integrated promotional activities – into independent retail, supermarkets and food service. Beyond levy investment, marketers and supermarkets also invest heavily in avocado promotion. Exporters are also undertaking specific in-country education and promotions activities to grow the export sector.

The industry has also invested in research to identify other potential value adding activities for the sector and to develop appropriate plans for realising these opportunities.

Competitors and the Nature of Competition

The Global Marketplace for Avocados

In both production and exports Australia is a very small player in the world avocado market, with around 2 percent of world production and less than 0.2 percent of world exports in 2007/08.

The Australian Marketplace

The only importer of avocados into Australia at this time is New Zealand. This product enters the Australian market from September to March. In recent years, New Zealand has marketed between 5000 and 13,000 tonnes of avocados in Australia per season.

Mexico and Chile have applications pending for access to the Australian market. These suppliers pose the most immediate possibility of decreasing wholesale prices. The other significant competitor to Australian grown fresh fruit is imported processed product. Avocado pulp products can be imported into Australia without restriction and the majority of processed product utilised through the food service market is imported Mexican product.

Operating Systems

Marketing Systems and Structures

Avocado producers are price takers. Although there are several major avocado packers, the majority of avocado production businesses pack their own fruit and market through the wholesale sector. Factors that impact the efficiency and growth of these supply chains have previously been identified as:

- Immature and inferior quality fruit.
- Inadequate production forecasting.
- Large volumes of small fruit.
- Lack of consolidation of fruit volumes.
- Lack of training of supply chain staff, particularly at retail level.



Table A

Australian Avocado Industry Production, Overseas Trade and Consumption 2003 to 2014

Year	Aust Production	Imports	Exports	Consumption	Population	Consumption (kg/person)
2003-04	28,196	5,024	419	32,801	20,250,000	1.62
2004-05	31,960	5,615	510	37,065	20,500,000	1.81
2005-06	34,515	12,988	600	46,903	20,697,880	2.27
2006-07	36,359	5,030	900	40,489	21,015,042	1.93
2007-08	45,286	10,930	1,000	55,216	21,500,000	2.57
2008-09	47,204	6,942	1,200	52,946	22,000,000	2.41
2009-10	45,808	10,609	1,679	54,738	22,197,335	2.47
2010-11	49,500	8,685	1,831	56,354	22,557,000	2.50
2011-12	52,500	15,000	2,000	65,500	22,900,000	2.86
2012-13	55,000	10,000	2,200	62,800	23,400,000	2.68
2013-14	57,500	16,000	2,500	71,000	23,900,000	2.97

Source: Customs, ABS, HAL, AAL

Profile of the Australian Avocado Industry – 2011 continued

Trends

Food manufacturing, distribution, and retailing are becoming increasingly dominated by a relatively small number of firms; globally and locally. As a consequence, marketing channel options for avocados are declining, particularly for small to medium-sized growers who are having increasing trouble in getting onto the radar screen of the bigger buyers.

Increasingly ‘value-chain against value-chain’ competition is driving innovation and competitive advantage. Subsequently there is a strong focus on productivity improvements along the supply chain.

New technologies are emerging that have the potential to revolutionise the way food is produced, who produces it, and the way business is carried out. The application of knowledge to products in order to increase their value and the customisation of product offerings for niche customers is also becoming more evident.

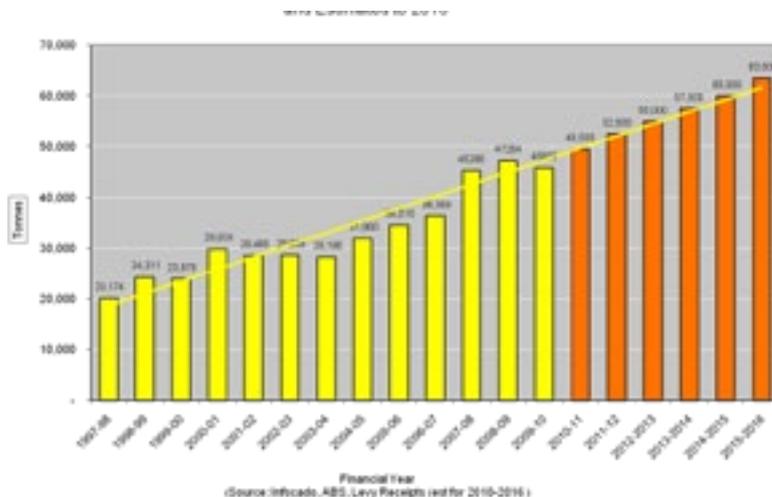
At the same time, governments are becoming more involved in issues relating to consumer protection.

Consumption

Consumption in Australia has grown significantly over the last 15 years, with imports also growing over the same period.

Graph A

Growth in Australian Avocado Production 1997 to 2010 and Estimated to 2016



Graph B

Australian Avocado Production per State per Year

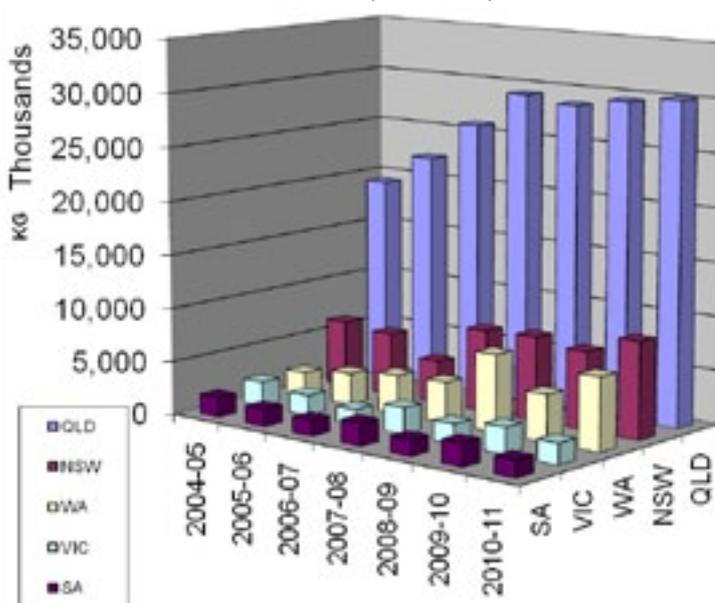


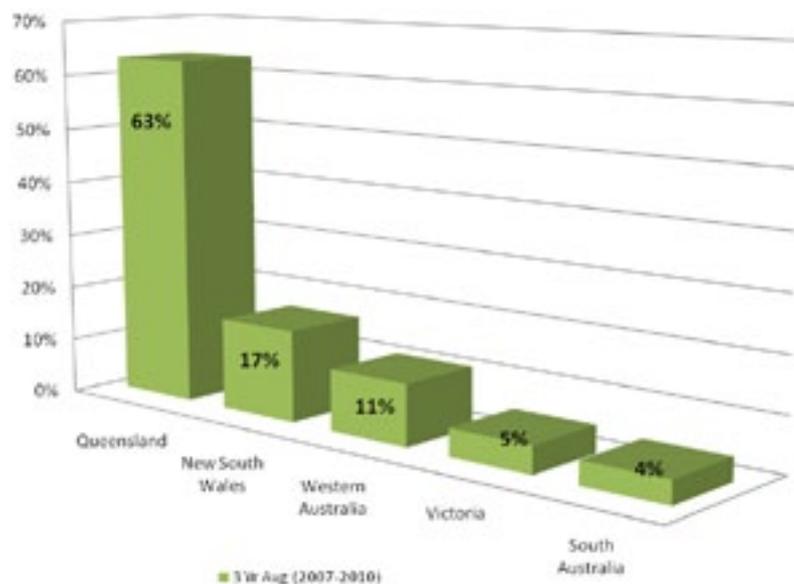
Table B

Australian Avocados Dispatches Jan 08 to Dec 08 (5.5 kg eqv trays)													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Hass	222,172	81,896	24,725	436,003	696,943	560,716	578,363	864,439	580,300	733,854	571,389	475,724	5,826,524
Shepard	6,151	255,970	498,044	208,719	9,507	74	144	0	0	0	0	0	978,609
Other	8,138	4,877	11,785	31,192	56,560	40,805	34,448	87,596	88,492	45,891	19,594	17,601	446,979
Total	236,461	342,743	534,554	675,914	763,010	601,595	612,955	952,035	668,792	779,745	590,983	493,325	7,252,112
	3%	5%	7%	9%	11%	8%	8%	13%	9%	11%	8%	7%	100%

Australian Avocados Dispatches Jan 09 to Dec 09 (5.5 kg eqv trays)													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Hass	484,852	234,967	128,825	199,684	938,855	862,619	941,507	889,526	517,123	448,567	339,979	204,245	6,190,749
Shepard	20,441	149,885	548,858	522,953	26,433	607	42	0	0	0	0	0	1,269,219
Other	25,273	5,236	12,092	45,100	60,744	31,786	22,876	33,347	39,161	25,695	7,353	16,504	325,167
Total	530,566	390,088	689,775	767,737	1,026,032	895,012	964,425	922,873	556,284	474,262	347,332	220,749	7,785,135
	7%	5%	9%	10%	13%	11%	12%	12%	7%	6%	4%	3%	100%

Graph C

Three Year Average (2007-2010)



strong alternate bearing over the last four years. The three year average, in Graph C, overviews the percentage split and removes seasonal variability to show the trend in production by state.

While understanding state production levels is one way of looking at the volume into the market, the more important information that affects grower returns is the volume supplied to the market on a monthly basis. Table B shows an overview of the 2008, 2009, and 2010 Australian production supply by month and the early estimate for the 2011 year.

Performance

The gross value of production of Australian avocados is approximately \$180m at farm gate and \$420m at retail level.

Industry Organisation and Performance

Volumes and Production

The industry has been undergoing significant growth for more than a decade – doubling in volume in the last 10 years, as shown in Graph A. Growth is on average over 8 percent per annum over the last 15 years. Current industry statistics indicate there are approximately 1000 commercial growers producing approximately 9.0 million (5.5kg) trays or 49,500 tonnes (2010/11). Plantings are estimated at 1.6 million trees.

Avocado production is spread across the major states of Australia. The increase in production has been spread across a number of states, with only small changes in the overall percentage split between the states over the last five years as seen in Graph B. Western Australia has had

Australian growers have over the period from 2002 to 2007 enjoyed robust wholesale pricing. This period resulted in significant growth in the production during the period from 2005 to now. The current growth cycle is set to continue and during 2010 there were increased plantings in the main growing regions.

Wholesale prices for Hass have continued to trend upwards over the last five years as can be seen in Graph D. The trend remains even when the prices for 2010 Hass are removed, as can be seen in Graph E. Perth, and then Melbourne, consistently deliver higher returns for Hass, while Sydney remains the higher volume market and Brisbane receives the majority of smaller growers fruit.

Wholesale prices for Shepard have trended upwards also, although with 2010 prices removed the trend

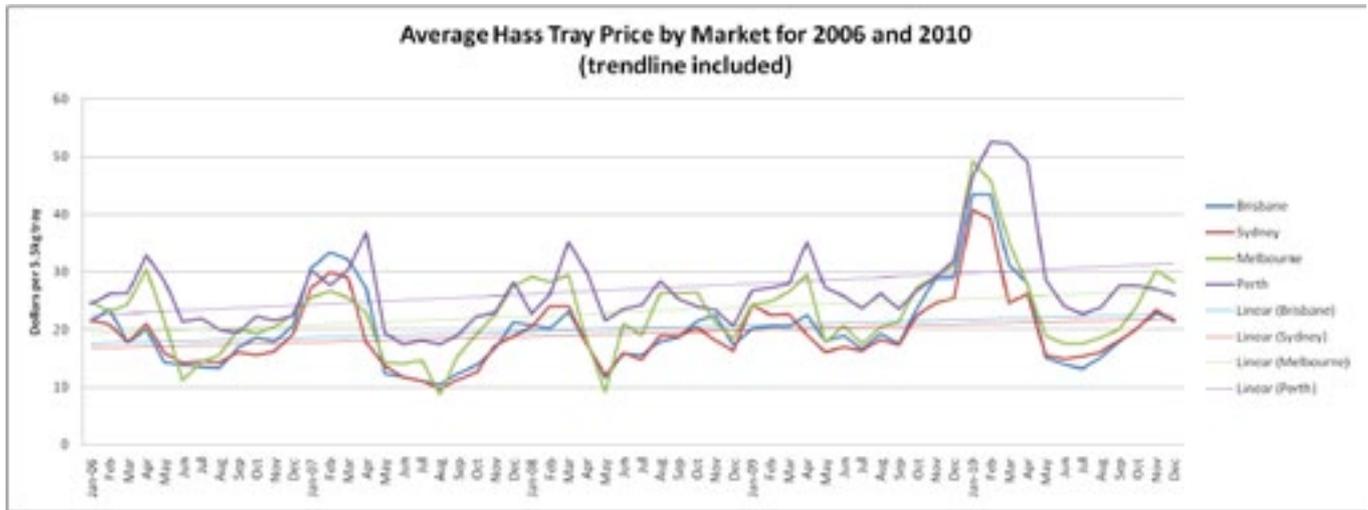
Table B - continued

Australian Avocados Dispatches Jan 10 to Dec 10 (5.5 kg eqv trays)													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Hass	184,859	66,084	7,261	250,163	685,301	881,839	1,084,985	753,852	756,443	669,374	577,072	526,686	6,443,919
Shepard	0	205,207	579,416	571,954	156,796	5,226	0	0	0	0	793	0	1,519,392
Other	18,953	1,498	7,860	45,488	25,136	28,535	42,216	82,699	185,946	37,226	18,018	11,648	505,223
Total	203,812	272,789	594,537	867,605	867,233	915,600	1,127,201	836,551	942,389	706,600	595,883	538,334	8,468,534
	2%	3%	7%	10%	10%	11%	13%	10%	11%	8%	7%	6%	100%

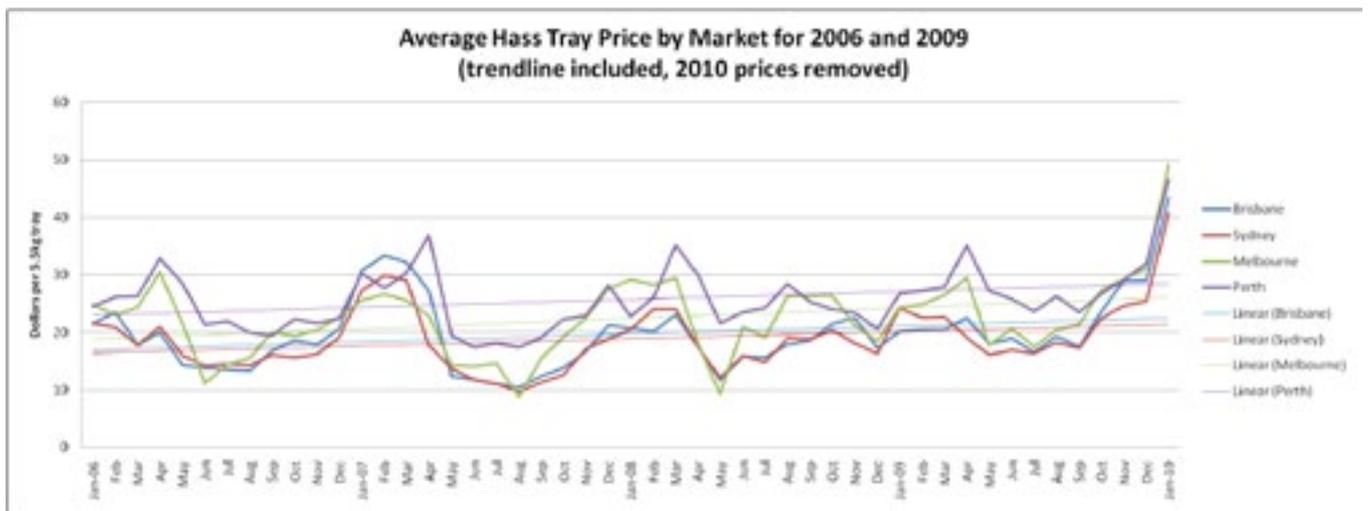
Australian Avocados Forecast Jan 11 to Dec 11 (5.5 kg eqv trays) AS AT DEC 2010													
	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	12 Mth Total
Hass	403,453	295,215	141,792	335,356	803,664	851,009	1,145,793	876,946	659,465	564,677	422,981	364,048	6,864,399
Shepard	20,000	467,647	717,277	399,061	49,877	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,653,862
Other	24,775	3,191	20,499	60,311	56,355	76,160	99,401	81,541	52,023	17,910	4,255	10,638	507,059
Total	448,228	766,053	879,568	794,728	909,896	927,169	1,245,194	958,487	711,488	582,587	427,236	374,686	9,025,320
	5%	8%	10%	9%	10%	10%	14%	11%	8%	6%	5%	4%	100%

Profile of the Australian Avocado Industry – 2011 continued

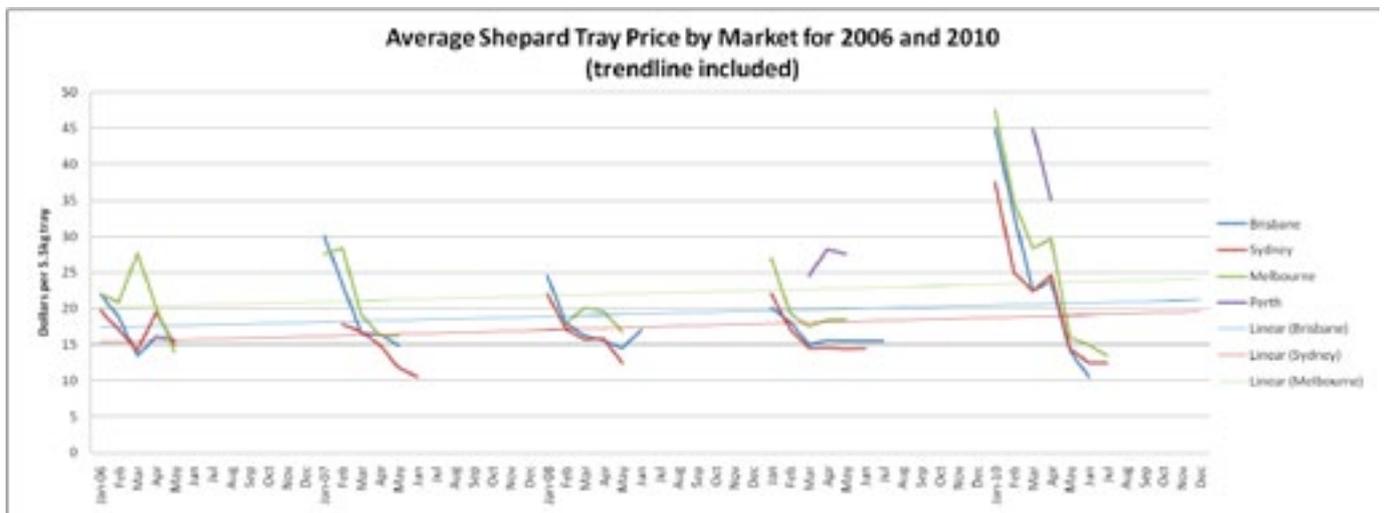
Graph D



Graph E



Graph F



Graph G



Graph H



is downwards. This is due to the increase in Western Australian Hass continuing for longer into the January, February and March period. Also New Zealand Hass is overlapping with both Shepard and Western Australian Hass; creating a three way challenge for avocado sales. Shepard prices also decrease from the start to the end of each season as the volume of Hass avocados grow.

Retail prices for both Hass and Shepard are relatively similar year on year, with the exception of the start to 2010 as seen in graphs G and H.

Supply & Demand Management & Infocado

In 2005 Avocados Australia introduced an industry data collection and dissemination system called Infocado. The information provided through the system provides intelligence to both individual businesses and the industry collectively. As a result, businesses are able to make better informed tactical and strategic decisions in regards to marketing and business investment. The industry is

able to utilise the data across a range of areas including monitoring industry investment, improving the focus of industry promotional activities, and monitoring the impacts of major weather events in local regions.

Industry Organisation

Avocados Australia is the peak industry body for Australian avocado producers. The organisation has provided strong leadership for the industry and has been successful in implementing an industry strategic plan over the last five years. As a result it is well supported by membership and recognised by industry as the peak representative body for the industry. Within its resourcing budget the industry continues to develop skills and capabilities of its stakeholders.

Alliances

Avocados Australia retains alliances and linkages with Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL), Plant Health

Profile of the Australian Avocado Industry – 2011 continued

Australia, the Australian Government, state governments, universities, other horticulture industry organisations and a number of research delivery organisations.

People

The industry is supported by a range of R&D service providers through the Queensland Government, Avocados Australia, and the private sector. The industry also has international R&D networks which it can access as required.

Funding

The industry finances its activities through levies, membership, and other initiatives.

Industry R&D and marketing activities are funded through an industry levy. The avocado levy is currently set at 16 cents per tray for R&D and 25 cents per tray for marketing. In 2009/10, the total investment of funds administered by HAL for the avocado industry was in excess of \$5 million. Industry levies are imposed, collected, and dispersed through Commonwealth legislation.

HAL is a not-for-profit industry owned company. Through accompanying regulation, HAL is charged with managing the expenditure of funds collected by the Australian Government on behalf of all levy paying horticultural industries, including the avocado industry. When expended on research and development, these funds are matched by the Australian Government. When funds are expended on marketing and promotion activities they are not



matched. HAL is responsible for all decisions relating to the expenditure of levy funds and has obligatory reporting arrangements and accountability to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) with respect to its investment decisions.

The Australian Government is increasingly seeking outcomes from its co-investment that demonstrably meet its National Research Priorities and Rural Research and Development Priorities.

Technical Information and Communication

Avocados Australia undertakes a broad range of communication activities to cater for the range of stakeholders and communication channels in the industry. These activities include:

- Publishing a quarterly magazine for all avocado growers
- Maintaining a comprehensive website targeting both consumers and industry stakeholders
- E-newsletters
- Co-hosting the Australia - New Zealand avocado conference every 4 years
- Hosting an annual R&D forum with industry researchers and key decision makers
- Conducting a national roadshow which visits key production regions (counter-cyclical to ANZ avocado conference)
- Conducting / supporting grower and stakeholder meetings when necessary to ensure the industry is informed on key issues.

Biosecurity

The avocado industry has had a National Avocado Industry Biosecurity Plan in place since 2007 and currently under review for a revised plan to be in place 2011.

The plan was developed with Plant Health Australia (PHA). PHA is a public company, with members including the Australian Government, all state and territory governments, and a range of plant industry organisations. The company was formed to address high priority plant health issues, and to work with all its members to develop an internationally outstanding plant health management system that enhances Australia's plant health status and the sustainability and profitability of plant industries.



Biosecurity planning provides a mechanism for the avocado industry, government and other relevant stakeholders to actively determine pests, analyse the risks, put in place procedures to reduce the chance of pests reaching our borders, and procedures to minimise the threat if a pest incursion occurs.

Ensuring the avocado industry has the capacity to minimise the risk of pests, and to respond effectively to any pest threats, is a vital step for the future sustainability and viability of the industry. Through this pre-emptive planning process, the industry is better placed to maintain domestic and international trade, negotiate access to new overseas markets, and reduce the social and economic costs of pest incursions to both growers and the wider community.

Community

Overall the industry has a favourable community image. Whilst some regions are experiencing pressure to reduce usage of chemicals, the avocado industry does not specifically have a reputation of environmental damage or unsafe production systems.



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Email: admin@superpak.net.au

* STANDARD 5.5KG TRAY WITH INSERT

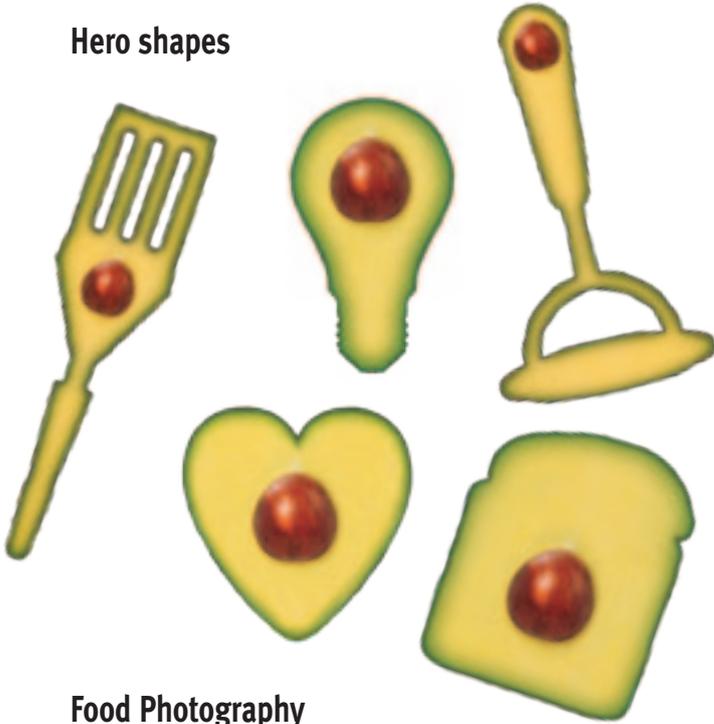


Australian Avocados Marketing Campaign continued

also helps provide a taste cue.

Magazines are an excellent platform to present key messages such as avocado is a 'useful ally in the kitchen' and 'clever ideas for your family'. These key messages continue to deliver on the brand essence of 'One fruit. Endless possibilities.'

Hero shapes



Food Photography



Online Advertising

While developing the online advertising schedule consideration was given to placing avocados within relevant women's lifestyle and family environments where mums actively seek out information, and from there drive them to the Australian Avocados website for further information.

Fairfax sponsorship in 2009/2010 performed well and they were the top referrer to the avocado website, therefore in 2010/2011 the sponsorship has been strengthened further. Consumers on the Kidspot Australia website (www.kidspot.com.au) had the opportunity to enter a competition promoting the use of avocados in their every day meals. Consumers simply submitted their everyday avocado recipes and the winner was chosen by the online community. The prize is a year supply of avocados. The competition was also promoted in editorial support promoting the benefits of avocados.

Results

Search

- Overall, Australian Avocados has delivered a strong position in online search with the keyword 'avocado' delivering the highest traffic to the website and resulting in an average 1.4 position over the campaign to date.

- September and October were the most responsive and most cost-efficient months with 1,653 and 1,527 clicks respectively at an average cost per click (CPC) of \$0.47

Display

- In total, there have been 1974 recipes downloaded from the Taste website with 'Avocado Scrambled Eggs' the most popular download.
- Taste display response rates hover around 0.01-0.02 per cent - updated messaging is recommended to help keep content 'fresh'.
- The Kidspot Australia web site's 'Awesome Avocado's Recipe Competition' has been extremely successful; generating over 5000 views and stimulating online discussion between Kidspot Australia members.
- Kidspot Australia's 'Awesome Avocados Group' generated online discussion through other social mediums such as Twitter and Facebook.

I ♥ Footy

Following on from the success of the 2009 NRL campaign, 'Add an Avo to Footy Entertaining' returned in 2010 (active from March to September) and was hosted on a custom-built 'I ♥ Footy' micro-site (www.avocado.org.au/HeartFooty).

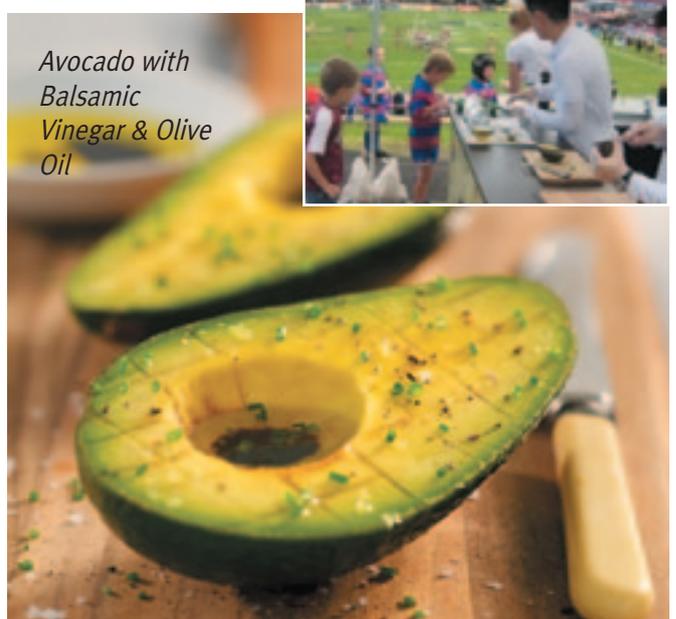
Australian Avocados partnered with individual NRL clubs, a number of which came from the ranks of first and reserve grades, allowing Australian Avocados to tap into large junior membership ranks.

NRL sponsorship activity also included placing avocado sampling teams at selected NRL games, with the objective to create a first-hand association

of avocados with the game. Trained promotional staff were placed at the 'Australian Avocados Booth' to speak on a one-to-one basis with interested footy fans about the diverse uses for avocado and distribute 'Add and Avo to Your Footy Party' recipe booklets. The recipe booklet offered simple footy snack recipe ideas supplied by NRL and Junior Rugby



The Australian Avocados Sampling Booth serving 'Avocado with Balsamic Vinegar & Olive Oil' to NRL fans



Avocado with Balsamic Vinegar & Olive Oil

Australian Avocados Marketing Campaign continued

League clubs and endorsed by NRL One Community club health ambassadors.

Footy fans were urged to nominate their team's favorite avocado recipes that were being featured in a season long on-line recipe competition. By doing so, fans could win tickets to the NRL Grand Final, a signed jersey from the winning team, as well as \$5,000 for their team's community and health programs.

The 'I  Footy' site featured a team ladder that tracked the votes for the best NRL team recipes. Public relations activity alerted local media to each club's ranking, and called on football and avocado fans to log on and vote.

'Add an Avo to Footy Entertaining' was put in place with a focus on grass roots and sports media and the objective to leverage players and the NRL club involvement to drive an association between football and eating avocado.

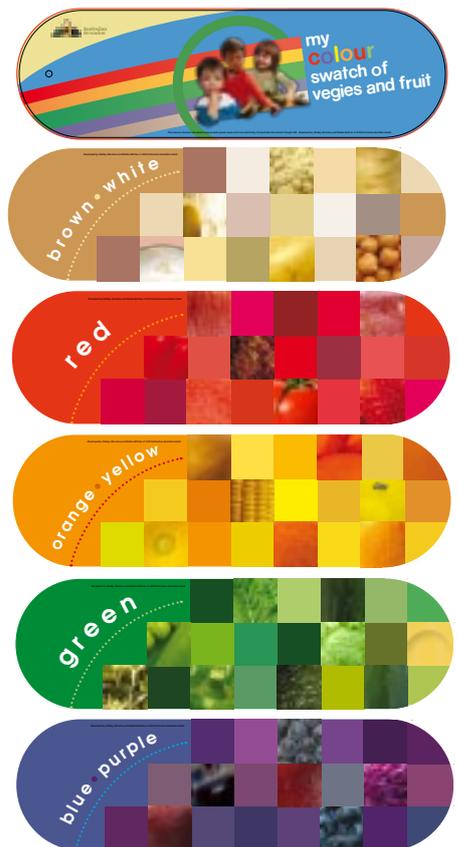
Long-lead media were targeted in May; magazine, newspaper and online food editors received information on why avocados are the perfect partner to half time entertaining. Affiliated NRL clubs supporting the Australian avocado industry promoted the competition to their members and databases.

Participating NRL and Junior Rugby League clubs did a fantastic job of promoting the avocado recipes as the best half-time snack. The Brisbane Broncos posted a video clip on their website's 'Bronco TV' where Health Ambassador Ben Te'o showed Broncos fans just how quick and easy it is

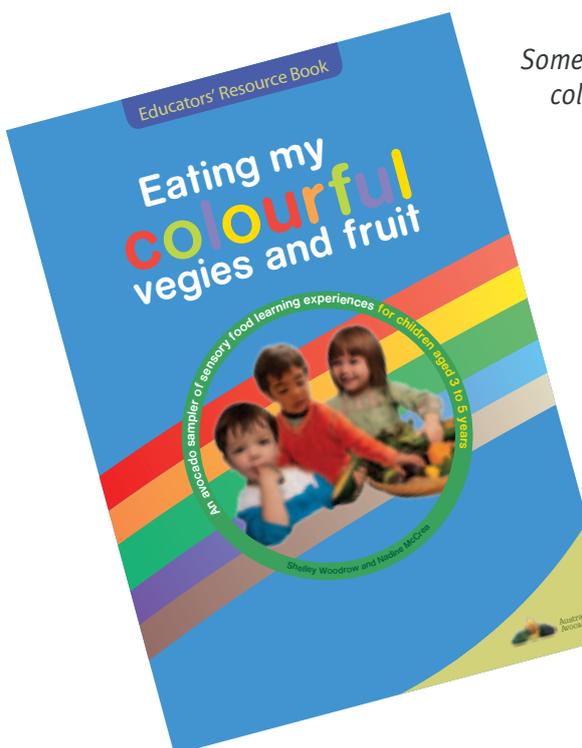
to make 'Broncos Surf Scrum Pizza'. In total there were 417 clips that were generated in 2010 NRL campaign, compared to 129 clips in 2009, and the total audience reach was 9,189,462 people.

Early Learning Program

A study completed in 2009 identified early childhood teachers and carers as being key influencers in child education settings. Identifying a key opportunity, the avocado industry initiated the 'Australian Avocados Early Learning' program to equip early childhood educators with knowledge and resources



Some of the colourful inclusions in the 'Eating my colourful veges and fruit' resource package.



about healthy eating and food learning with a special emphasis on avocados.

Using the expertise of two noted nutrition educators, Shelley Woodrow and Nadine McCrea (each with years of experience in school or early childhood education), an avocado-focused education resource package was developed with the title of 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit'. The package encourages young children to 'Eat the rainbow of colourful vegies and fruit', 'Try new foods', and 'Eat more green plant foods'.

'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' was launched at the KU Centennial Parklands Children's Centre on the 17 August, 2010. Directly after the launch, the first delivery of the program commenced which saw 72 early childhood centres sign up to the program. Each centre received the 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' resource package with a tray of avocados. The second delivery of the 'Eating my colourful vegies and fruit' program began in the second week of March 2011, with a third scheduled for July 2011 and onwards.

A new 'Early Learning' micro-site (www.avocado.org.au/EarlyLearning/) was created on the Australian Avocados website to introduce, promote and support the 'Australian Avocados Early Learning' program.

Food Service

While they are loved by consumers, avocados have not been widely adopted by chefs and consequently have limited visibility on restaurant menus. To seize this potent opportunity, the 'Avocados Australia - Fresh Avocados Chef Training Program' was developed with the objective to engage with the food service sector (restaurants, cafés, clubs, hotels, pubs) to increase the use of avocado on their menus.

Leading chef Víctor Pisapia, of Victor's Food, runs some of the avocado chef training classes. The masterclass gives an introductory insight into the history, world usage, global production, types and nutritional benefits of avocados. Chefs are also given the 'Fresh Avocados Masterbook for Food Service', containing information on seasons, handling, storing, purchasing, myths and tips. To date

2010/2011 has seen the 'Avocados Australia - Fresh Avocados Chef Training Program' launch in two new sectors and tested in two new states. Vegetarian masterclass sessions were held with commercial catering group Alliance in Western Australia, South Australia, and along the eastern seaboard. The program is also being introduced into the TAFE curriculum, accompanied by specifically developed educational materials.

The food service strategy will continue to be supported

by the 'Food Service' micro site (www.avocado.org.au/foodservice).

Education Program Targeting Fitness Professionals

Australian Avocados has partnered with the Australian apple and banana industry to develop a pilot education program targeting 200 fitness professionals on the benefits of eating and recommending the consumption of apples, avocados and bananas.

To achieve these aims, the industries have partnered with the SmartShape Centre for Weight Management and its Director, Matt O'Neill. Matt is a high profile Sports Dietitian and educator who specializes in delivering accredited education programs to the fitness industry.

Matt's 'Metabolic Jumpstart' (MJ) program provides an existing framework to design and deliver the campaign, without the need to reinvent many costly components. MJ has been very successful in harnessing social media (YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter) as educational tools and these elements will be heavily utilized in the campaign.



Participants engaged in discussion at the Nutrient Rich Fitness event and enjoying healthy Avocado Bruschetta.

Australian Avocados Marketing Campaign continued

The program was launched at the Woolcock Institute of Medical Research in Sydney on 29 March 2011. The event was publicised via online and social media channels reaching a total audience of up to 20,000 fitness professionals in Australia. During this period the event was promoted through:

- the Metabolic Jumpstart.com website & YouTube page,
- Fitness Australia eNews course listings and banner advertisements,
- Facebook and Twitter posts,
- SmartShape email alerts, and
- Metabolic Jumpstart email alerts.

Participants had the opportunity to hear the latest research about how to build a nutrient rich diet for superior performance, body shaping and well being. This included a timely update on the health and fitness benefits of natural, nutrient rich foods, including apples, avocados and bananas. Participants also enjoyed a sample of great food made by Michelin Star Chef, Alan Brown.

Summary data & comments:

- 228 fitness professionals registered to attend over the promotional lead-up. There was a capacity of 200, so activity alerted a wait list when people indicated they could not attend.
- 122 (66%) of the 186 confirmed fitness professionals attended the event.
- 112 (92%) of 122 delegates who attended completed the evaluation form on the night.
- 97% of respondents thought Matt O’Neill’s presentation was ‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’ and 94% rated Matt’s content as ‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’.
- 84% thought Alan’s presentation was ‘Very good’ or ‘Excellent’.

- 95% of delegates rated their overall satisfaction with the event as ‘Very good’ or ‘Excellent’. 70% rated overall satisfaction as ‘Excellent’.
- 97% would recommend this event to their colleagues

Some key quotes:

- “A pleasant surprise - a nutritious product pitch not an actual product”
- “Really enjoyed every minute of the presentation, excited to start recommending what I have learn tonight thank you”
- “Opening my eyes to more wholesome foods”
- “More fruit and veg sponsored events”
- “New ideas for old foods, creative ways to make fruit fun”
- “Invite more sponsors to highlight more nutrient rich foods”

The campaign is due to be finalised in July 2011. Once finalised, a complete evaluation of the program will be undertaken and a final report with the outcomes will be drafted.

Into the Future...

As the way people communicate evolves, so does the marketing campaign for Australian avocados. Since 2005, the brand equity created by the industry has been strong and the new strategy developed has only added to that. From a marketing perspective there are some exciting times ahead for the industry. Up until now the communication has been one way using mediums such as television, magazines and some two way dialogue through the website and online campaigns. In 2011 there will be a shift from one way to a two way dialogue; engaging the brand advocates through launching the industry’s social media campaign.



Update on Sustainable Orchard Management Practices

(AVo8020)

John Leonardi

Avocados Australia

One of the objectives of this project is to evaluate the effectiveness of a range of products and orchard management practices either being used by growers or recommended by various companies for use in avocado production. Several field trials have been established to test the effect of these strategies on tree health, fruit yield and quality compared with current industry practices.

Mulching trials

Trials investigating the effect of mulching on tree growth, fruit yield and quality established in Central Queensland in September 2009 are continuing. Filter-press, avocado woodchip and cane-tops were reapplied in September 2010. A grower treatment (inter-row slashings with a thin layer of filter-press of less than 2cm) was included for comparison.

Shoots were tagged prior to flowering and the effect of mulching on the length of the spring growth flush and percentage of shoots bearing a fruit was assessed on 10 shoots in seven trees for each treatment (Table 1).

Table 1. Effect of mulching on shoot growth and percentage of shoots bearing fruit in Hass avocado trees. Data are means from 70 shoots for each treatment.

Treatment	Shoot growth	% of shoots
Grower treatment	15.0	38.6
Filter-press	16.6	37.1
Avocado woodchip	15.6	55.7
Cane-tops	13.9	54.3

Results indicate that there was little effect of mulching treatment on the length of the spring flush. However a higher percentage of tagged shoots bore fruit in trees mulched with cane-tops and avocado woodchip.

The effect of mulching on summer growth flush and leaf nutrient levels will be determined in April 2011. Fruit yield, size and quality will be determined after harvest in June 2011.

Soil & Foliar treatments

Several trials to test a range of soil and foliar applied treatments have been established to investigate the effect on tree growth, fruit yield and quality in the 2010/11 cropping season.

Pyroligneous acid

Pyroligneous acid (PandA®) is an organic liquid derived from bamboo that has been reported to improve root, shoot and fruit growth; increase resistance to pests and diseases; reduce leaf fall and fruit drop; and improve yield and fruit quality.

Monthly foliar treatments of PandA® at 2 and 4 ml/L and in combination with copper fungicide applications (Norshield WG) commenced in January 2011. An untreated control was included for comparison. The effect of treatment on yield and fruit quality will be determined after harvest in June 2011.

Microbes

The application of microbes either to the foliage or directly to the soil has been suggested to improve plant growth, yield and fruit quality. Trials have been established to investigate one of these microbial products.

TwinN® is a freeze dried microbial product used for improving crop productivity. The microbes can be applied to the foliage or to the root system. After application these microbes multiply to exist within the plant foliage, stem, and roots as endophytes; they also colonise the soil zone in close proximity to the roots. The microbes are Diazotrophs which are able to fix atmospheric nitrogen into ammonia, a form available to plants. They have also been reported to promote plant growth, particularly root growth, which can allow the plant to take up more nutrients and reduce losses through leaching. Because of the ability of these microbes to fix nitrogen and improve the uptake of nutrients through increased root growth, it has been suggested that applications of TwinN® can maintain productivity with reduced inputs of nitrogen fertilisers.

A trial investigating the effect of foliar and soil applications of TwinN® on tree growth, fruit quality and yield was established on 3.5 year old Hass trees in Central Queensland. A grower nitrogen program and a reduced nitrogen treatment were included for comparison.

Microbes were rehydrated and mixed in water prior to treatment. Foliar treatments were applied at a rate of 5 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.

Three applications of TwinN® will be made during the cropping season. The first application was made in August 2010 (floral buds were at cauliflower stage at this time).

Update on Sustainable Orchard Management Practices continued

Note: this treatment may have been better applied at fruit set. A second treatment was applied in November 2010 at the maturity of the spring growth flush. A third application will be made at the maturity of the summer growth flush and prior to floral bud development in April 2011.

The effect of treatment on root growth was assessed using 'root windows'. Windows were installed by scraping back any mulch, leaf litter and about 1cm of soil and placing a clear perspex sheet (500 x 500 x 2 mm) on the soil at one site under the tree canopy 30cm from the trunk. The perspex sheets were covered with black foam (5mm) to prevent light penetration and the soil and mulch replaced. The length of the visible non-suberised roots (usually white to light brown) were measured by removing the mulch and black foam, and tracing the outline of roots visible at the soil-perspex interface onto plastic sheets with a black permanent marker. These root tracings will be scanned and the total root length determined by computerised image analysis.

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® compared with the untreated trees (Photos 1 and 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 2011.

The effect of TwinN® treatment on shoot growth and leaf nutrient levels will be determined in April 2011. Fruit yield, size and quality will be assessed after harvest in June 2011.

Branch scoring trials

Trials investigating the effect of branch scoring on fruit size and yield were harvested in October 2010 in Central New



Photo 1:

Root growth three months after soil applied TwinN®



Photo 2: Root growth in untreated trees

South Wales and in December 2010 in South-West Western Australia. Scoring involves cutting a groove around the branch to sever the phloem using a knife or pruning saw. Branches are scored in the autumn to reduce vegetative growth and increase flowering and fruit set the following spring.

Central NSW: A single branch was scored in four year old Hass avocado trees in May 2008. The procedure was repeated in May 2009 and 2010 when more branches were scored. The effect of branch scoring on the number of fruit, fruit size and yield was assessed in 15 trees in October 2009 and October 2010 (Table 2). Fruit yield assessments were made on the scored branch and a similar non-scored branch within the tree. Total fruit yield in each tree was also collected.

At this site scoring significantly increased yield in branches the following year. However, in the second year after scoring there is less fruit on that branch. Branches scored in May 2008 averaged 56 fruit in 2009 compared with 23 fruit in the 2010 harvest.

Table 2. The effect of branch scoring on the number of fruit, fruit size and yield

	No. of fruit	Fruit weight (kg)	Mean fruit size (g)
2009*			
Scored branch	56	15.4	277.0
Unscored branch	4	1.1	286.8
Total Tree	136	39.2	287.5
2010*			
Scored branch (2008)	2	6.7	299.6
Scored branch (2009)	73	19.9	274.6
Scored branch (2010)	46	12.9	280.1
Total Tree	329	91.9	279.6

* Trees were 5.5 and 6.5 year old at the time of harvest in October 2009 and 2010

South-West Western Australia: A single branch was scored in 2.5 year old Hass avocado trees in April 2009. The procedure was repeated in April 2010 when another branch was scored. The effect of branch scoring on the number of fruit, fruit size and yield was assessed in 10 trees in December 2010 (Table 3). Fruit yield assessments were made on the scored branch and a similar non-scored branch within the tree. Total fruit yield in each tree was also collected.

At this site scoring significantly increased yield in the branch the following year. Branches scored in April 2009 averaged 40 fruit at harvest in December 2010 compared with 11 fruit on a similar non-scored branch. Scoring in April 2010 increased fruit size in those branches harvested in December 2010 with a mean fruit size of 260.7g compared with 217.9g in unscored branches with a similar yield.



Table 3. The effect of branch scoring on the number of fruit, fruit size and yield

	No. of fruit	Fruit weight (kg)	Mean fruit size (g)
Scored branch (2009)	40	9.0	228.0
Scored branch (2010)	13	3.3	260.7
Unscored branch	11	2.4	217.9
Total Tree	82	19.1	234.8

* Trees were 4 year old at the time of harvest in Dec 2010

Warning: Branch scoring is still experimental and may not necessarily work under your growing conditions. It is important to note that these trials were conducted on vigorous, healthy trees. In some situations yellowing of leaves and leaf drop may occur which can expose fruit and branches to sunburn. Also due to the increase crop load on the scored branch, fruit size can be reduced.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all growers who have assisted in conducting trials, O'Grady Rural for providing the pyroligneous acid (PandA®), 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 Limited (HAL).

APMS paid growers the highest prices seen in 15 years

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News from Around the World

Avocado shipments to the U.S. continue to grow

Even though the Michoacán avocado was introduced to the United States market 13 years ago, exports to that nation have been increasing. During the 2009/2010 season, shipments accounted for just over 31,000 tonnes.

Regarding the European market, the Michoacán avocado faces hard competition from Israel, South Africa and Peru; according to official data from the Association of Producers, Packers and Exporters of Avocado of Michoacán (APEAM).

Accusations regarding a bug in the Mexican avocado, that would damage U.S. crops in California, kept this product under an 81 year embargo; it could not enter the States. After the embargo was lifted in 1997, the first shipment of avocados from Michoacán left for the U.S. from the central plaza of Uruapan; the only kind that is exported from the country to the United States.

In that time, 6032 tons of fruit were sent to the United States, during a period of four months. 13 years later, during the 2009-2010 season, when shipments already got their revenues for the entire year, to all the states of the northern neighbour; shipments of the fruit that have brought fame to Michoacán amounted 270,215 tonnes.

However, this figure was 31,333 tonnes less than the previous season, 2008-2009, when shipments sold accounted for 301,548 tonnes. From 1997 until the last day of 2010, shipments of avocados from Michoacán to the American Union amounted to 1,478,577 tonnes. Source: Cambiodemichoacan

New head for the New Zealand avocado industry

Tauranga's Jen Scoular has been announced as the new chief executive of the avocado industry. NZ Avocado Growers' Association and Avocado Industry Council chairman John Schnackenberg says the board welcomes Jen to the role and is looking forward to working with her. She started her new role on 7 February 2011. Jen says she is looking forward to her new role leading the avocado industry during its next phase of growth and is eager to meet the growers and stakeholders in the sector. Source: sunlive.co.nz

Avocado will be exported to U.S. if cold treatment is lifted

Peru achieved a health protocol to enter the U.S., but requires a cold treatment for the Mediterranean fruit fly problem. That does not guarantee consistency of the fruit. We are trying to lift that together with the unions and Senasa. Due to characteristics of the shell, the Hass

avocado does not host the pest. The Senasa study that proves it has been submitted to the U.S. authorities to lift the requirement.

The problem is that there are Californian industry interests again. However, we are expecting the U.S. to give us a year trial period and for the cold treatment requirement to be lifted. That will generate a large export opportunity. No one will risk sending the fruit this year with this treatment. Avocado may not arrive in good conditions and that would affect the country's image. So we prefer not to export until the protocol has been lifted.

This year there will be a shortage of avocado in the U.S., because neither Chile nor California had good volumes. This would be the perfect time to export. About the Alliance with the Spanish group Riberebro, "we have the opportunity to use their brand, parallel to that, we are going to integrate the supply of asparagus and piquillo pepper in the portfolio that they already have for Spanish and French chains". Source: Elcomercio.pe

Mexico may accept significant share of avocado to the FTA with Peru

Mexico could accept that a significant quote of Peruvian avocados may enter its market during the term of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that is being negotiated with Peru, the Ministry of Agriculture (Minag) informed today.

"This is important if we consider that the Mexicans are major producers of avocado and can open its market for the product", said the Head of the Department of Agribusiness of the Minag, Pedro Canales. He said that this is a topic on which there was more progress during talks held by technicians of both countries last week. "Hopefully now we have good news too for the case of greenbeans, which just as an important issue as avocado", he added. He said that negotiators from both countries have interest in closing the FTA negotiations.

He pointed out that Mexico is a major importer of food but it is also very closed to allow the entrance of other products from the world, including Peru. "I hope that in a very short time we have better news on the negotiations with Mexico", he said after participating in the announcement of the exhibition 'Peru Agritech 2011' to be held in Lima from 4-6 May 2011. Source:MINAG

APEAM swears in new board of directors in Mexico

The new board plans to keep improving every aspect of the Mexican avocado business. The reigning 2011/2012 Board of Directors for the Avocado Producers and Exporting

Packers Association of Michoacán (APEAM) were recently sworn in by the Mayor of Uruapan, Antonio González Rodríguez during a gala event in Uruapan, Mexico.

Rodríguez credited APEAM for making Uruapan and the state of Michoacan, a benchmark leader in the global production and export of avocados, and acknowledged the association for its organizational skills, market vision and commitment to future leadership. The event was also attended by the Secretary of Agriculture, Francisco Javier Mayorga Castañeda and the Ministry of Rural Development, Maria del Carmen Trejo Rodriguez.

The new Board of Directors Chairman Ricardo Vega, highlighted planned projects for 2011, among which is a continued investment in consumer demand for avocados from Mexico as well as research programs that would increase productivity, and allow phyto-sanitary alerts to be issued prior to the occurrence of pests to prevent the outbreak of pollutants.

“I am honored to serve as the new Chairman of APEAM and plan to do everything to contribute toward the continued growth and success of the world’s finest avocados,” says Vega. Source: APEAM

Chiquita rolling out the red carpet for Rio



Chiquita Brands International (NYSE: CQB) today announced a unique marketing partnership with Twentieth Century Fox to promote Rio, a 3D animated motion picture from the creators of Ice Age, the highest grossing animated film franchise of all time. This month, Chiquita is rolling

Machines purpose built for avocados..

HYDRALADA

More and more avocado growers are realising the potential HYDRALADA Machines have to increase productivity and provide a better return for their dollar.

The Maxi Series reaches working heights of up to 12 metres and with an automatic failsafe braking system, the machine can be safely operated on sloping country of up to 20 de-

- tandem 4WD • telescopic boom
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News from Around the World continued

out the red carpet in the produce aisle and online for consumers, offering them the opportunity to bring home Rio characters through fun, healthy Chiquita-branded products, online games, delicious recipes, and multiple chances to win prizes, including a trip to Rio de Janeiro.

“This is a unique opportunity for Chiquita consumers to experience the magic of Hollywood,” said Tanios Viviani, president, global innovation and emerging markets and chief marketing officer. “We’ve built an interactive playground for our consumer families to have fun, explore the movie Rio, and earn samples of our delicious and nutritious Chiquita-branded products.”

At retail, consumers will find Rio versions of Chiquita’s iconic stickers on Chiquita® bananas and Chiquita Fresh & Ready avocados. Additionally, starting in April, there will be collectible mobile phone stickers available on select Chiquita Pineapples featuring Rio characters Blu, Jewel, Luiz, Raphael, Nico and Pedro, as well as Rio themed packaging for Chiquita Minis.

Unlike traditional sweepstakes, consumers who visit www.chiquita.com/rio will find a progressive sweepstakes that incorporates community “badging.” The more one interacts with the website, the more virtual badges and chances to win one receives, and the more badges the site’s community of registered users earn, the bigger and better the prizes get “unlocked” for winning. Prizes include exclusive digital downloads, one-year supplies of Chiquita-branded products, Rio swag provided by Twentieth Century Fox, and a grand prize trip to Rio de Janeiro provided by American Airlines Vacations. The promotion will be open to consumers through Tuesday, May 31, 2011. Source: Chiquita

Tree-killing disease found in Florida

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has positively identified the presence of a destructive disease that affects avocado trees and other trees in the laurel family. State and federal agriculture experts say laurel wilt disease has been detected on three swamp bay trees in Miami Dade County.

The fungal disease is spread by the redbay ambrosia beetle. If the disease spreads, it could potentially harm Florida’s avocado industry, which represents nearly \$13 million to the local economy, with more than 6773 production acres in Miami-Dade County, with some acreage in Collier County. Source: miamiherald.com

German market is being developed for Hass avocado

The Hass Avocados Committee of Chile brings together

about 85 percent of exporters and producers of Hass avocados in the country. The main purpose is to promote the Hass avocado and develop new markets for Chilean exporters.

In 2010, for the first time they made a promotion in the German market, as says Adolfo Ochagavía. “We are very pleased with the results and hope to repeat the experience again this season”. There is great potential in Germany and they hope to develop the market in the next three years. In addition to promoting avocados in Germany, they are now for the sixth year in the UK, the fifth year in Spain, the fourth year in Argentina, and the third year in Denmark and Sweden. They also make deliveries to Asia, sending lower volumes.

The 2009-2010 season, was a record season of approximately 194,000 tonnes of exports. However, this year it will be much lower, the season which is not yet over but they expect it to be around 85,000 tonnes of exports. In terms of weather, there is a drought in some valleys and they are dealing with it, whereas last year was a little rainy.

Producers and exporters who are part of the Hass Avocado Committee of Chile are prepared for any market. They have the EurepGAP certification and HACCP certification, which guarantees the quality of their product. Source: Freshplaza

The many shades of Indian fruit import

Keith Sunderlal of SCS Group presented an interesting report on the Indian market of imported fruit. The SCS Group is a consulting company specialised in food marketing, international trade and communication strategy related to agricultural products. It is a pioneer in the marketing of food and drinks in India.

The import trend of fruit from India has been grown for many years. In the 2009/10 season, imports amounted about 140,000 tonnes of fruit, more than \$120 million. In the first place there was apple imports in the 2009/10 season; 100,000 tons with a value of \$ 90,000. Other major fruit imports are recorded for citrus (\$ 15,000), kiwifruit (\$ 10,000), grapes, pears, plums. Very limited in volume are peaches and nectarines.

The demand of imported fruit is linked to economic factors (as a result of India’s economic growth in the first place), geographical and demographic aspects (as a young population) and consumer behaviour, more and more careful to have a healthy lifestyle.

The import involved products with specific characteristics such as counter-seasonality, domestic availability, shelf life, nutritional profile and physical differentiation. But the preference of Indian consumers takes into account familiarity, exoticness, price, taste profile, and usage

pattern (decorative, ornamental, gifting, auspicious).

The major fruits imported to India are apples, grapes, kiwis, pears (Eastern and Western varieties), citrus and plums. Low demand is recorded for cherries, tropical fruit (rambutan, mangosteen, dragon fruit, guava, tamarind), peach, nectarine and berries. Surprisingly, among the imported fruits there are mangoes, litchi, limes, lemons, melons and avocados. Unlikely then are foreign imports of banana, pineapple and pomegranate, as India has great supplies nationwide.

In conclusion, Sunderlal gave some advice to foreign operators interested in the Indian market, reminding them that the commercial target is not represented, as you might think, over a billion Indians; primarily because only a portion of the population has the means to buy imported fruit and then because the structure of the fruit trade in the country is very fragmented and there are no mass channels (such as supermarkets), capable of bringing a particular product to all.

Moreover, India is a market only if you develop it and invest in it. "There is life beyond the modern retail", Sunderlal concluded. "Therefore you must remember the

three words: Enter, Establish, Persevere." Source: SCS Group

Exporting annually 380,000 tonnes of avocado

The Secretary for the Rural Development, María del Carmen Trejo Rodríguez, assured that Michoacán presently exports 380,000 tonnes of avocado per year, being the main agricultural product in the state and which allowed in the last years an important growth in number of jobs.

The state workers underlined that the great productive and commercial performance made by the 17,500 workers in this activity in the country and in Michoacán, with which, the cultivation is kept as one of the most successful food chains in Mexico.

She highlighted the importance of all parts in this productive chain to get updated, due to the fact of having in their hands the production, distribution and commercialization of 1,230,000 tonnes of avocado, being produced in 129,000 hectares of cultivation.

"Of that amount, 380,000 tonnes were exported, our main destination being the United States, adding to the growing

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News from Around the World continued

sales to Japan, Europe, Canada and Central America, and the market gets bigger and we're reaching other latitudes".
Source: OEM

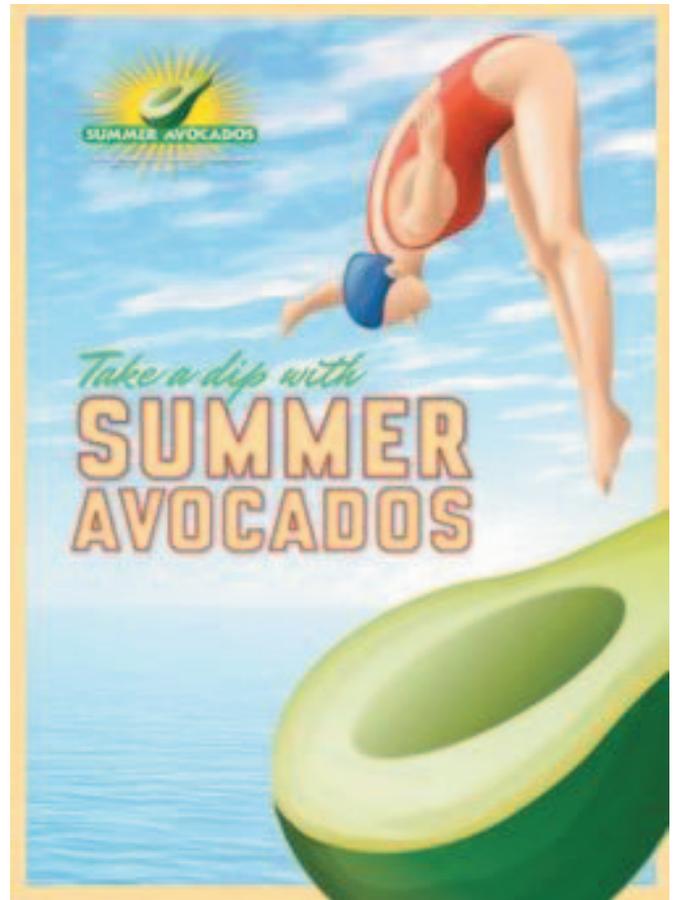
Halls South African avocados hit Europe

Week 12 sees the first Halls South African Fuerte avocado hit the European shores. The Halls offices will be distributing their finest Fuerte across Europe from the week 12 onwards.

Paul Devlin said the company hopes to ship 7000 tonnes in total (both varieties) by the end of the season. He said quality is good and sizes 8-22 for Fuerte and 12-32 for Hass. The total South African volume is likely to be down by as much as 30 percent this year due to severe hail storms earlier in the growing season, Paul says this will result in the European market being under supplied this year. The Fuerte shipments will be followed with the key Hass arrivals which are due to begin in May. Source: Halls



South Africa: SAAGA unveils 2011 campaign focus



'Take a Dip with Summer Avocados' is the over-arching theme for this year's South African Avocado Growers' Association (SAAGA) promotion in the UK, including an intensive public relations (PR) campaign and in-store marketing activity.

'Take a Dip with Summer Avocados' aims to build on the success of last year's theme, 'A Super Bowl for the Big Match', which emphasised guacamole and recipes to share during the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa. This year's promotion will develop the idea of dipping and sharing into a general summer lifestyle campaign, with various recipes and tips for guacamole, barbecues, picnics, and al fresco dining; all highlighting avocados as the essential complement to summer living.

The South African Avocado Information Service will undertake extensive media relations activity from May onwards, to educate food writers and influencers about the health benefits of Summer Avocados. The campaign website, www.summeravocados.com, will also be updated to reflect the 2011 theme and retailer activity is now being planned.

Rob Metcalfe, managing director of PR and marketing agency Richmond Towers Communications, which

organises the campaign, said: "This is probably the longest-running campaign ever in fresh produce and our 16th consecutive year working with SAAGA."

"Back in 1995, avocado sales in the UK stood at around £13 million and the fruit was seen as a winter product. Now sales are at £43m, which even allowing for inflation represents incremental sales of £25m a year. It's a testimony to the positive response from the UK trade and consumers."

Due to hailstorms in key growing regions last autumn and an 'off' year in the cyclical production of avocados, this year's South African export crop will be roughly 35-40 percent down on last year's, with an early-season estimate of 7.5m cartons against 12m in 2010. The variety split is set to be similar to last year, at 55 percent Hass and 45 percent greenskins.

The first product is set to arrive on UK shores from South Africa in late April, with the season peaking in May and June. Source: Richmond Towers Communications

Mission Produce expects good quality, good size, lighter volume for California season

The good news about the avocado market in the United States is that consumer demand is "going through the roof," according to Ross Wileman, vice president of sales and marketing at Mission Produce Inc. in Oxnard, CA. The current challenge is that for the next few months, there will not be enough supplies available to meet that demand.

"As I try to explain it to people, last year we [as an industry] moved on average 23 to 30 million pounds a week in the United States," he said. "This year, the summer months could be 16 to 19 million pounds, so it is at least 30 percent off, and you have an emerging global market that is wanting fruit as well."

Japan, South Korea, and Europe are all growing markets for avocados that might otherwise be sold in the United States, and "Canada is increasing in their volume all the time," Mr. Wileman said. "So that puts undue pressure on the market."

As a result, "we are in trouble," purely for want of supplies, he said. "We have just come out of a season where Chile, because of a freeze, had much less fruit than they normally would." Moreover, Chile had "a very good European market, so they elected to send whatever they had mostly to Europe, as opposed to the United States."

California's 2011 avocado crop will be about half the size it was in 2010, he said. "Mexico has tried to fill the void," but because of the resulting increase in shipments "is starting to slow down on their volume."

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
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 Key political issues
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Grower Member Application Form continued

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News from Around the World continued

The main Mexico season typically comes to an end about the middle of May, "and then they would go into what they call the 'flora loca' season, which is their off-bloom fruit," he said. But this year, the flora loca "appears to be very light," so California growers are anticipating "that markets should be extremely good in June, July and August this year." Because of that, "they have no desire to pick early," and those growers who are picking "are probably doing it for cash flow or cultural reasons."

Because of tightening supplies, "we have seen in about a two-week period the market go up about \$20, from \$30 to \$50," Mr. Wileman said March 7 2011. "And that is not the peak, from what I anticipate."

On the positive side, "quality will be excellent," and sizing should be above normal just because of the light crop, he said. And from a supply situation, "there is light at the end of the tunnel." Beginning in September, Chile will come in with what is projected to be a larger crop. Also, "Mexico will have a larger crop" that will be coming into the market around the same time. And the 2012 California crop is expected to return to normal.

For the current California crop, the northern districts appear to be "a little better off" than the southern districts, Mr. Wileman observed. Among other things, growers in the south "have their own problems with the water issues, "which has caused some growers to take out some avocado acreage. By contrast, "there are plantings going in" in the northern districts, although "it will take some time to bring them into production," he concluded. Source: The Packer

Peru: The rising cost of avocado

Good conditions on the foreign market for the consumption and industry avocado motivate Arequipa farmers to stop with traditional crops and plant this product. Those who were engaged in the cultivation of alfalfa, hay, and even paprika, are changing them for avocado seedlings.

According to member of the Business Unit of Agroideas, Marcos Ceballos, the price of Hass avocados in domestic markets is between 2- 2.5USD, while in foreign markets, a kilo of Hass avocado is worth five dollars.

"Before I planted pumpkins, tomatoes, alfalfa, corn and now I have left it; but now I am going to dedicate myself to cultivate avocados, especially Hass. It is true that you have to invest and wait at least three to four years to see gains, but it is worth it because there are fixed foreign buyers", said the president of the Pracimex Ferdinand Benavente Association. Source: Larevista aqpsoluciones

Mexico: Increased exports of avocado to the U.S.

Three months before the ending of the 2010-2011 avocado export to the U.S. market, the sector reported an increase of more than 8 percent compared to the previous period. According to expectations, prior to the last cutting in June, it is anticipated that the closing may be between 270,000 and 290,000 tonnes of the so-called green gold.

Alberto Ayala Aceves, manager of the Association of Producers and Packers Exporters of Avocado of Michoacán (APEAM), said that according to the latest report from the association dated last Sunday, Mexico would have sent 211,000 tonnes of the fruit, while California sold 144,000 tonnes and Chile 52,000 tonnes of avocado.

In total, U.S. consumers bought 407,000 tonnes of the fruit. He explained that last season, on these same dates, producers had only sent 194,000 tonnes of avocados.

He urged farmers to use pesticides, fungicides and insecticides approved by the association and stay within safety margins. As a guarantee, APEAM performs random sampling in the 19 municipalities.

According to information from the local agricultural association of avocado growers, the price of the fruit in orchard to domestic market in couples in 2.36USD per kilo, while in the U.S. market, in large sizes is 3USD and in small sizes is 2.8USD per kilo. Source: Laopinionde michoacan



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