

Talking Avocados

Roadshow 2003

SPRING 2003 ISSUE

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AUSTRALIAN AVOCADO GROWERS' FEDERATION

ABN 95 810 689 086

PRESIDENT

Rod Dalton
r.dalton@aagf.org.au 07 5466 1316

INDUSTRY MANAGER

Antony Allen
Fax: 07 3213 2480 07 3213 2477
PO Box 19, Brisbane Markets Qld 4106,
Email: a.allen@aagf.org.au

FEDERATION DIRECTORS

Queensland

Colin Cummings, Mareeba
c.cummings@aagf.org.au 07 4095 8121

Lachlan Donovan, Bundaberg
l.donovan@aagf.org.au 07 4159 7670

Rod Dalton, Grantham
r.dalton@aagf.org.au 07 5466 1316

Henry Kwaczynski, Nambour
h.kwaczynski@aagf.org.au 07 5442 1767

New South Wales

Chris Nelson, Stuarts Point
c.nelson@aagf.org.au 02 6569 0881

South Australia

Colin Fechner, Ramco
c.fechner@aagf.org.au 08 8541 2819

Western Australia

Wayne Franceschi, Pemberton
w.franceschi@aagf.org.au 08 9776 1332

STATE ORGANIZATIONS

Atherton Tableland Avocado Growers' Association

President
Merrilyn Land 07 4093 2206

Secretary
Sue Christensen 07 4086 6056
Fax: 07 4086 6057
Email: jarks@tpg.com.au

Bundaberg & District Orchardists' Committee

President
Geoff Chivers 07 4153 3007

Secretariat
Fax: 07 4153 1322 07 4153 3007
Email: bfvq@interworx.com.au

Sunshine Coast Avocado Growers' Association

President
Henry Kwaczynski 07 5442 1767

Secretary
Ursula Starkovsky, 07 5493 0605
Fax: 07 5493 0608

West Morton Avocado Growers' Group

Convenor
Rod Dalton 07 5466 1316
Fax: 07 5466 1497

Tamborine Mountain Local Producers' Association

President
Bruce Bartle 07 5545 1527

Secretary
Bev Buckley 07 5545 2617

New South Wales Avocado Growers' Association Inc.

President
Chris Nelson 02 6569 0924

Secretary/Treasurer
Alison Tolson 02 6569 0872
Fax: 02 6569 0885
Email: tolson@midcoast.com.au

South Australia Avocado Growers' Association

President
Colin Fechner 08 8541 2819

Secretary
Greg Liebig 08 8541 2174
Fax: 08 8541 2174

Avocado Growers' Association of Western Australia

President
Alan Blight 0417 179 127

Secretary
Eleanor Press 08 9776 1332
Fax: 08 9776 1332

TALKING AVOCADOS

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Produced by: Marketing Line Consultancy, PO Box 58, Sydney Markets NSW 2129 - Phone: 02 9648 0136, Fax: 02 9648 0135, Mobile: 0407 589 445, Email: colscotney@bigpond.com, Delivery Address: First Floor, Suite B12, Sydney Market Plaza Building, Sydney Markets, Flemington NSW 2129. (AUF Office - off Paramatta Road)

Editor: Col Scotney - Marketing Line Consultancy, PO Box 58, Sydney Markets NSW 2129 - Phone: 02 9648 0136, Fax: 02 9648 0135, Mobile: 0407 589 445, Email: colscotney@bigpond.com

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

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President's Perspective



Avocados Australia Ltd. (AAL)...

The AAGF Board decision to approve the formation of AAL and wind up the AAGF marks a significant development for this industry. The proposed change had been endorsed throughout the consultation phase, although there were some concerns raised by some in New South Wales.

The AAGF structure has served the industry well and enabled the industry to develop a truly national approach, particularly with the introduction of the national R&D and marketing levies in the early 90's. The formation of AAL will provide all Australian avocado growers with an opportunity to influence the industry's national direction.

Each levy payer will be able to register as a grower member of AAL and have the right to:

- Stand as a candidate for election as a Director of AAL.
- Elect Directors of AAL.
- Propose and vote on resolutions put before general meetings of the company.

The first Board of AAL should be in place by the time you read this, having gone through the appropriate legal process. That Board will be making the decisions on Board size, growing area boundaries and membership fees and I look forward to having all details finalized so that the membership drive can begin in early November.

I commend this change to you and look forward to all growers having input into how our industry is advanced.

Roadshows...

The "Roadshow" programme, to date, has been a great success. The attendance at all venues has been excellent and all involved have found it a very worthwhile programme. I look forward to the final two events in SA and WA in November.

I particularly want to thank Antony Allen for pulling the logistics of the programme together, the growers who have made their properties available as venues, the speakers who have committed their time to travel and present and the large number of growers who have participated in the discussions. A special **thank you** to Graham and Viv Anderson who went the "extra mile" in organising the day on their property.

Marketing...

In the winter edition of TA I discussed a number of issues associated with avocado marketing in Australia and I expressed my concerns on the lack of communication within our industry at packer/marketer level and the strong negative effect fruit age can have on consumption and thus demand.

I understand that all East Coast markets have struggled to move the volume of fruit available over the last two months (July-August). I believe a major contributing factor of this

problem has been the average age of the fruit that has been offered to the consumer has been far too old. Thus consumer satisfaction levels have dropped and so has consumption. The advent of warm/hot weather is now helping to raise demand. Why has there been so much old fruit in the system? The frosts which affected growers in a number of areas in early July resulted in a sudden influx of fruit into the markets. There was little communication within the industry to slow the harvest in the unaffected areas so the coldrooms throughout the system quickly filled. Good quality fruit was held over while fruit from frosted areas was moved through the system. Unfortunately the good fruit was 4-6 weeks old in some cases before it was presented at retail level and was no longer always "good" fruit.

A priority for me in the next 12 months will be to try and improve our communication at packer/marketer level so that we might minimise the damage that is done to consumption and thus our profits by poor fruit volume management. I would appreciate a call from anyone who has ideas on how we might manage the issue.

New Zealand Fruit...

The advice is that NZ fruit will be arriving in Australia earlier than normal this year due to the expected reduced volumes available from the late producing areas in Australia. The NZ crop is below early forecasts and they may well struggle to supply the demand over the summer. This should be good news for the WA industry, which with another good crop should do well. If the NZ crop flows as planned the opening of next season with Shepards should also be a positive.

The NZ industry is very conscious of the quality problems that have been seen in their fruit in recent years. They have tightened their export protocols, as far as fruit age is concerned. They will also be doing market outturn reporting in Australia throughout the season.

Thanks Wayne...

On behalf of the industry I would like to thank Wayne Prowse for his contribution to our industry particularly in the areas of marketing and promotion. When Wayne joined the AHC and started working with avocados the relationship between the AAGF and AHC was "less than ideal". Wayne worked with industry to progress the relationship and the productive relationship which developed between the AAGF and AHC and latterly HAL is due in no small part to Wayne's efforts. Wayne was always prepared to attend grower meetings and we thank him for the effort.

Under Wayne's guidance, the industry has moved from one that relied on in-store demonstrations for promotion to now using the power of targeted TV advertising as part of a balanced promotion programme. Wayne has been promoted at HAL and now has responsibility for export development so we will still be working with Wayne with export.

Thanks Wayne and look forward to working with you on export development in the future.

By Rod Dalton

From Your Federation

By Antony Allen



The AAGF has completed its six monthly round of committee meetings and Peak Industry Body (PIB) meetings. It has been a busy 12 months in the AAGF organisation. The R&D Roadshow, organisational restructuring, changes to Horticulture Australia Ltd and staff and Board member changes have all filled in the time for the one person office that is AAGF.

Constitutional Change Approved...

The Board of AAGF with a vote of 6 "for" (including 1 proxy) and 1 proxy "against" has gone ahead with the change to a new organisational structure. Within two months we will have moved from a Federation of state organisations to a direct grower member organisation.

The AAGF Board sees this as a momentous change that shows leadership and a willingness to increase the transparency that we operate within.

We will, at the next AGM in September 2004, have a greater number of growers participating in the decision making processes of the new organisation. I look forward to seeing you all there or counting your proxy vote - which ever way have your say. I will outline this further in this issue of Talking Avocados.

R & D Roadshow 2003...

Wow, what a response! We really have hit the mark with this one! Over 500 attendees at the first five Roadshows with Renmark in South Australia on the 25 November and Pemberton in Western Australia on 27 November still to go.

These one day events have received an enormous amount of feedback. The overall success of these Roadshows will determine if the industry goes ahead with another round in the future.

The next scheduled round will be in 2007 so don't miss your opportunity to attend in Renmark and Pemberton.

Avocado R & D Workshop...

The 2003 AAGF R&D Workshop was held in Brisbane on 28 August. The day was attended by all currently funded avocado researchers, the AAGF R&D Committee and the AAGF President, Rod Dalton. Presentations on each currently funded project were given.

The idea behind the day was to update all in attendance and encourage forward thinking to allow the next phase of research to be brainstormed. The day was used by researchers and the Committee to plan future projects and to ensure that we are all looking at the complete picture, not just our own individual specialist research areas.

AGM in Northern NSW...

The AAGF combined Board of Directors meeting, AGM of the AAGF and the Annual Avocado Levy Payers meeting of the Avocado Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) were all held in Northern NSW on September 9-11.

The Board was returned with Rod Dalton continuing as President, Henry Kwaczynski being elected to the position Vice President and Treasurer and Antony Allen being returned as Secretary.

AAGF BOARD

Rod Dalton
Henry Kwaczynski
Colin Fechner
Chris Nelson
Wayne Franceschi
Colin Cummings
Lachlan Donovan

The membership of the AAGF committees stands as;

Varieties Committee

Rod Dalton (Chairman), Allan Ross, Graeme Thomas, Chris Searle, Peter Young (Nurseryman), Graham Anderson (Nurseryman), Tony Whiley (Technical Advisor), Ken Pegg (Technical Advisor), Registrar: Antony Allen (Industry Manager).

Marketing Committee

Colin Fechner (Chairman), Ron Simpson, Gary Poole, Graham Chartres, Rod Dalton, Trudy Gosney (HAL), Antony Allen (Industry Manager).

R, D & E Committee

George Green (Chairman), Peter Molenaar, Graeme Thomas, John Dorrian, David Peasley, Alan Blight, Tony Whiley, John Tyas (HAL), Antony Allen (Industry Manager).

Directors' Portfolios

Export -	Henry Kwaczynski
International Linkages -	Henry Kwaczynski
Communications -	Chris Nelson
Marketing -	Colin Fechner
Research & Development -	Wayne Franceschi
Supply Chain -	Wayne Franceschi
Industry Levies -	Colin Cummings

Horticulture Australia Ltd...

Wayne Prowse, John Tyas and Trudy Gosney from Horticulture Australia made presentations to both the Board and Levy Payers Meetings, giving a complete outline of the marketing and R&D programs to date and directions for the next 12 months.

The highlights were, from the marketing program - the TV advertising campaign for Australian avocados, a first for our industry, and a campaign that will continue for the next 12 months and, from the R&D program - the "Canopy Management Review" report that provides a base of reliable information with which to approach canopy management for Australian avocados.

In this issue you will receive a copy of the 2002-2003 Avocado Industry Report that includes a summary of completed major projects and an investment summary for the Australian avocado industry. If you would like a complete copy of any of the R&D final reports please contact Horticulture Australia on 02 8295 2300 and they will be happy to forward it to you direct.

The other news that has come from Horticulture Australia is that Wayne Prowse has been promoted to Export Development Manager at Horticulture Australia after over

seven years as the Avocado Industry Marketing Manager. Wayne has contributed enormously to the Avocado industry in Australia and will be greatly missed.

We look forward to working with his replacement Trudy Gosney who comes into the job with many years of marketing experience in varied industries, including horticulture.

Thank you to Wayne for his conscientious efforts. We wish you the best with your future position.

World Avocado Congress...

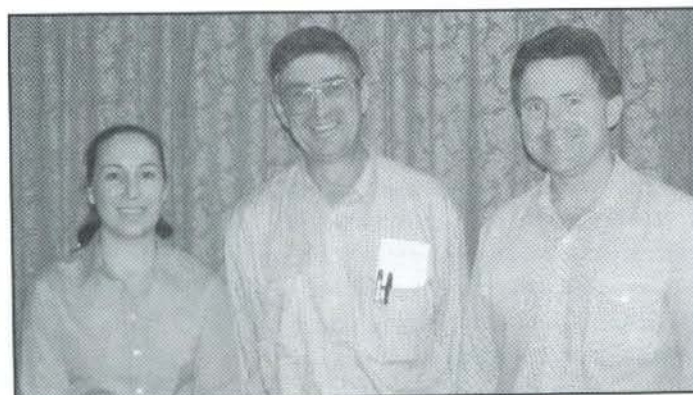
The World Avocado Congress from 19 to 24 October 2003 in Granada-Malaga Spain is here. For those already booked to go, have a great trip, learn as much as you can and make as many new contacts/friends as possible in the week of the Congress.

For those of you who are travelling on the AgTours study tour to South Africa and Spain led by Simon Newett, we look forward to your report on both countries' industries. Anyone attending be sure to go to the session from our own Australian researcher, Jay Anderson, who will present the work of the Avocado Disease Management Team. She will be grateful for your support.

If you are still able to pack up and go, for further information visit www.congresomundialaguacate.org. This site is in both Spanish and English. It is the best and easiest way to access the latest information. I encourage you to attend the Congress, if you can. You will gain knowledge of what is happening internationally in your industry and enjoy great Spanish hospitality.



Ed Hamacek presenting non-chemical Quarantine treatment research to the R&D Workshop 2003.



L to R - Trudy Gosney the new HAL Avocado Marketing Manager, Colin Fechner Chairman of the AAGF Marketing Committee and Wayne Prowse HAL.



The AAGF R&D (L to R) - Jonathan Cutting (NZAGA), Peter Molenaar, David Peasley, Alan Blight, Tony Whitley, John Tyas (HAL), Graeme Thomas, George Green (Chairman), John Dorian.



AAGF R&D Workshop 2003

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AUSTRALIAN ROUNDUP...

Atherton Tablelands ...

Production figures for the 2003 season are showing a variance of some -5% from 2002 with Shepard figures down significantly and Hass up. This variance equates to around to 50,000 trays.

We should see a leap in production for 2004 given the plantings over the last 2-3 years and a "normal" Shepard crop.

The *Roadshow* at Masasso's farm provided the largest turn out of growers and associates we have seen with over one hundred people in attendance. This is the sort of interaction we need in the interest of the advancement of our businesses.

We now need to transfer that interest to supporting our local association to ensure that our future can be linked more closely to the national scene with a strong cohesive grower group. Individual growers of the size we have on the Tablelands cannot exert the *clout* needed for good outcomes in negotiations with suppliers and buyers.

Where should we head!!!

The Bulletin of August 26, page 11, Quote "*Howard's perfect union*" *The PM wants small business to flex their individual muscle. Howard is examining ways to enhance the ability of small businesses to collectively bargain to win better trading deals in highly concentrated markets such as supermarkets.*

Can I suggest you get a copy of this document and talk to your local member.

This leads onto another issue raised in the same edition. "*Average wages increase of 6.3% at the end of the June quarter*" That's the fastest increase since 1991.

Have your returns kept pace!!! We need vertical integration to keep our businesses viable and a strong grower body group. Support the A.T.A.G.A. Call me for further information.

Col Cummings

West Moreton

A meeting was called recently at Crows Nest of avocado growers in the region interested in forming an avocado growers group. An excellent rollup of growers from the Blackbutt, Hampton, Ravensbourne, Toowoomba and Lockyer areas supported the formation of such a group. A Steering Committee was elected to progress the issue. The group will formalise the West Moreton group which was established in the early days of the AVOMAN project and which has been largely inactive for sometime.

The Steering Committee has been seeking input from all interested growers on their expectations of such a group, possible names for the group and what they would be prepared to contribute to such a group. They have also been in contact with other regional groups in an effort to learn from their experience.

The group will provide an avenue for the local Avocados Australia Ltd. Director to communicate on a regular basis with the growers in the region and encourage better communication on a wide range of issues within the region.

Rod Dalton

For further information local growers should contact Daryl Boardman at suunyspot@bigpond.com

Western Australia

The start to the West Australian season has been slow due to the amount of East Coast fruit on the markets however, it seems to be clearing up and some growers are picking again. Volumes out of Perth are down due to a poor fruit set and some severe winds in August that knocked a large amount of fruit off.

The South West season looks to be a good one with some growers up by 100% last year. There have been some reports of fruit loss due to the high winds but nothing substantial.

AGAWA have commissioned an R & D project to look at the effects of temperatures at the time of harvest in relation to fruit quality. This project will start this season.

There has been a good response from growers to attend the *Roadshow* that has been travelling around Australia.

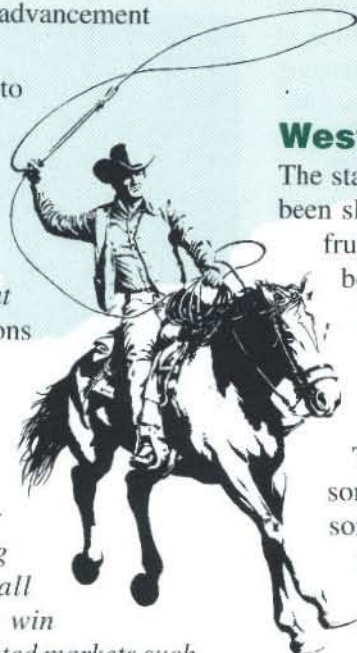
Wayne Franceschi

New South Wales

Harvest is in full swing in the northern areas, with prices steady at this stage. Yield is very good in areas not affected by either the hail or drought. Cooler area growers are hoping for a price rise in September to coincide with lighter supplies to market.

The weather is the main problem of concern, with either the drought, frost, hail, or wind affecting most growers. Frost affected many areas in the mid and north coast in early August. These areas received the worst frost for many years, even decades; which 'burnt' small and some large trees in low-lying areas. Just to top it all off, the winds came in late August, causing some fruit loss to a few growers.

If you're a grower that has not had any of these weather problems, consider yourself lucky! The continued fine weather has been good for harvesting, with very few days



unsuitable for picking. Flowering looks very promising in most orchards at this stage, with some of the new plantings coming into production next season.

The *Roadshow* arrived in August and received good attendances. The sharing of information between the growers and 'gurus' was well worthwhile and attendees were impressed by the presentations.

A big **THANK YOU** goes to all the organisers and especially the hosts for the 2 days - Graham and Vivienne Anderson on the Northern Rivers, and Marcia, Robyn and Drewe of Cares Avocados on the Mid-North Coast.

The Holiday Coast Branch of NSWAGA is planning a growers' study tour to W.A. in early May 2004. They will be visiting areas around Perth and the South-West. More details soon!

Cheers,

Chris Nelson

South Australia

We have had a cool to cold winter with only a little rain. We are also faced with a 35% restriction on allocation of water for this year. At the time of writing this report, the restriction has been lifted by 10% but this still puts a great deal of pressure on growers as to how to manage their water allocation and still hold a good crop.

Flowering is looking like it will be strong and, given favourable weather, there should be a good crop for the next year.

ROYAL ADELAIDE SHOW...

The Show went well this year with good crowds - in excess of 640,000, with the Yellow Brick Road Showbag having an all-time record of 21000.



Avocados on display at the Royal Adelaide Show

**Talking
Avocados**

We sold/gave away 290 cartons of count 25 and 310 cartons of volumes. It is pleasing to see the amount of young people who come and buy avocados and say that they eat them on a regular basis. The main question out there is still, "**How can I tell a good avocado?**"



Avocado Tastings at the Royal Adelaide Show

The fruit quality started out very good when the fruit was just ready to eat but when it got a day or two riper, the internal quality went downhill fast. Some of the avocados had been held for 5 and 6 weeks. This shows that the fruit has to move through the chain quicker when it has been held for more than a couple of weeks.

Colin Fechner

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A New Peak Industry Body For Australian Avocados

Over twelve months ago, the Board of the Australian Avocado Growers' Federation Inc set in motion a review of the current structure for the Avocado Peak Industry Body (PIB) and of the possible models for the future.

The Federation model has served the industry well for over 25 years. It has allowed for the growth from a new and small industry through to today's Australian industry of over \$65 million in gross value of production.

The need to have a strong and cohesive PIB has been important over the years.

In the last eight years the Board has made a number of moves to amend the structure, without completion. The current corporate governance and transparency issues that exist in the commercial world have had an equal impact upon the "Not for Profit" sector to which grower bodies belong.

Movement to direct grower membership...

In this period of time a number of grower bodies, Summerfruit Australia Limited, Apple and Pears Limited even Horticulture Australia Limited have moved to a direct grower membership base within a company limited by guarantee structure. This structure allows for greater participation in the organisation by member growers and equally allows for direct communication between growers and its Board, not in the least by growers voting in their own Board representatives.

The process ...

The process to change has not just happened at Board level, it has involved professional guidance for the CEO, Executive and Board, and most importantly a full grower consultation across the country.

The draft Constitution has been available on our website for all to examine. Feedback from consultations and the draft Constitution have been worked into the Final Constitution that was approved on 10 September 2003 in Northern NSW.

This is truly an historic period for the Avocado PIB. The move from the Australian Avocado Growers' Federation Inc to Avocados Australia Limited (AAL) means your time has come to have direct input into your organisation.

THE KEY DATES IN THE FUTURE:

November 2003	Membership launched
May 2004	Nominations for New AAL Board
Elections	
June 2004	Voting for New Board
July 2004	New Board Announced
September 2004	The AAL AGM all grower members welcome!!!!

Share the Future - Share the Success

R&D Roadshow Update

With five of the Roadshows successfully completed, the Avocado R&D Roadshow 2003 has continually satisfied the needs of the Avocado Growers on the East Coast and will soon travel west to South Australia and Western Australia. From the Roadshows, researchers have received a constant stream of follow up phone calls and emails from growers who have attended and are wishing to know more.

The concept of a national Avocado R&D Roadshow was first developed by the AAGF Board after the Bundaberg conference in 2001. The Board saw the need to give the growers a chance to travel short distances to a regional day that would also allow the researchers an opportunity to see the regions across the country.

Avocados are the first Australian industry to undertake a national R&D Roadshow. There have been industries that have undertaken one or two field days, but none that have put together an R&D field day at seven locations across Australia. The Roadshow has included reports from the major R&D projects funded by the industry, along with industry reports on marketing and the organisational structure.

The Australian Avocado industry is very lucky to have committed team of R&D people who have given up a large amount of personal time to travel the great distances that are necessary to cover all major regions. We at the AAGF would especially like to thank their families who have allowed them to commit to the program of seven Roadshows.

It is hard to talk generally about the Roadshows so far, each one had the same content and presenters, but each region added its own feel to the day.

Some photos from the days to date are included with this report. A list of all the people, venues and sponsors will be included in the next issue of Talking Avocados.

See you in Renmark and Pemberton!

SA & WA Roadshow REMINDER

RENMARK - SA
Tuesday 25 November

PEMBERTON - WA
Thursday 27 November

Phone: 07 3213 2477

Email: roadshow@aagf.org.au



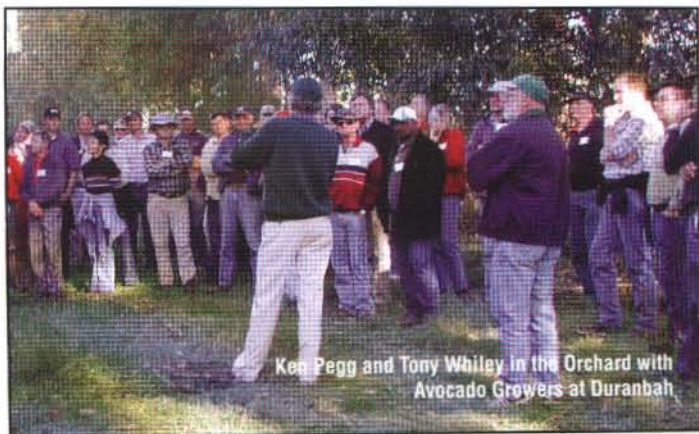
Duranbah Trade Show



The Avocado R&D Roadshow Team, at the back Vivian and Graeme Anderson orchard and nursery owner that hosted the Duranbah Roadshow. L to R the Team - Antony Allen, Jay Anderson, Rod Dalton, Ken Pegg, John Leonard, Tony Whitley, Simon Newett.



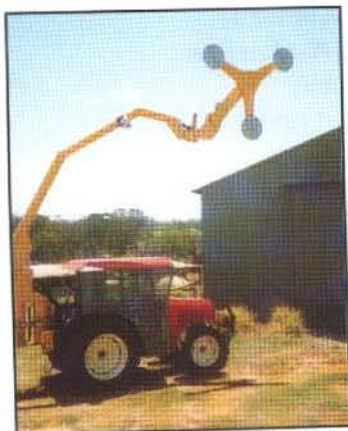
The Panel of Wisdom, Q&A of all the presenters.



Ken Pegg and Tony Whitley in the Orchard with Avocado Growers at Duranbah

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How would you like to notify 10 or more neighbours every time you sprayed?

The NSW Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is under pressure from an environmental group, the Total Environmental Centre (TEC), to place the responsibility on growers to notify their neighbours whenever they spray.

Lawrie Greenup of Fresh Produce Watch says, "Previously, Fresh Produce Watch as part of a representation to the EPA, thought it was successful in having the onus placed on the neighbour to be asked to be informed, rather than the grower having to do it. This was included in a draft set of guidelines 'Pesticide Use in Agriculture and the Notification of Neighbours'. However, the recent move by the TEC has reignited the debate."

"What an impossible situation to impose on vegetable and flower growers in or adjacent to built-up areas," Lawrie said. "Many growers have up to 20 or more neighbours, use only knapsack sprayers or small units, spray small areas and may use several different pesticides each day.

"All this information would have to be given to the neighbours whether they want it or not. If neighbours want to be kept informed, as is their right, then the onus should be on them to come to some agreement with the grower about notification. Besides, many neighbours are just not interested," he said. He warned that whilst this was a NSW matter, other state pesticide legislators would be watching and waiting to see what occurs. "If the move by the TEC is not strongly opposed then it could happen to you."

A copy of the EPA's draft material is available from:-

Lawrie Greenup, Fresh Produce Watch

Ph: 02 9746 3685

Mobile: 0408 233 716

Email: producewatch@ozemail.com.au

What is Fresh Produce Watch?

Fresh Produce Watch was established as a number of years ago as a Project of the Australian United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association Ltd or AUF. As part of AUF, Fresh Produce Watch is based at the association's National Office at the Sydney Markets. Lawrie Greenup is engaged as a consultant to Fresh Produce Watch. The industry 'watch dog' is supported by a growing number of national and state bodies through sponsorship. Fresh Produce Watch Sponsors are as follows-



- **Apple & Pear Australia**
- **Australian Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Industries Ltd** comprising - Brismark, Chamber of Fruit & Vegetable Industries of Western Australia, Fresh State, NSW Chamber of Fruit & Vegetable Industries, Newcastle Chamber of Fruit & Vegetable Industries, South Australian Chamber of Fruit & Vegetable Industries
- **Australian United Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Association**
- **Australian United Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Association - NSW Branch**
- **Australian Vegetable and Potato Growers' Federation**
- **Adelaide Produce Markets Limited**
- **Association of Banana Wholesalers**
- **Brisbane Markets**
- **Melbourne Market Authority**
- **New South Farmers Association**
- **Perth Market Authority**
- **Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers**
- **Summerfruit Australia**
- **Sydney Markets Credit Service**
- **Sydney Markets Limited**

ATTENTION AVOCADO GROWERS

For the best results and a personalized service

Consign your fruit to

W ARKELL & SONS

12 Brisbane

Established since 1892

Proudly serving Australian growers for more than 100 years.

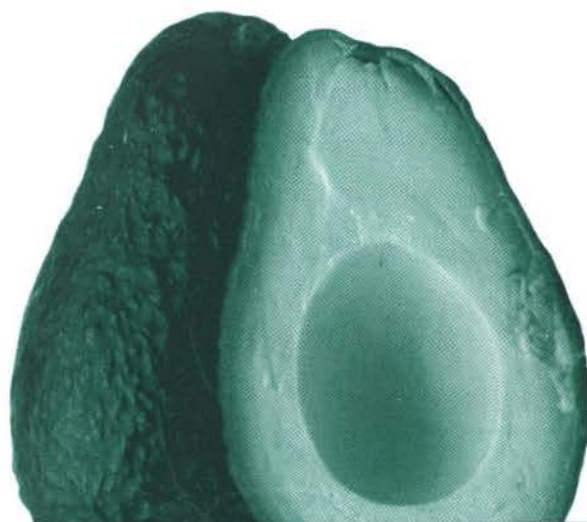
Contact Les Hartley (proprietor)

Phone 07 3379 8122 (work)

07 3371 6087 (a/h)

Facsimile 07 3379 4158

Mobile 042 757 1097



drumMUSTER Collection reaches Four Million

drumMUSTER has reached a significant milestone, with over four million empty, cleaned chemical drums collected from Australian farms since the program's inception in 1999.

Millmerran Shire Council in Southern Queensland has collected the four millionth container at its weekly *drumMUSTER* collection on Thursday 28 August 2003.

"Since our involvement in *drumMUSTER*, Millmerran Shire Council has collected over 59,000 chemical drums, with over 96 tonnes of waste sent for recycling," says Millmerran Council Environmental Health Officer Mr Peter McCashney.

"Millmerran Shire Council is committed to recycling and to protecting the environment for all Australians. We are proud supporters of *drumMUSTER* and encourage all farmers and other chemical users across Australia to participate in the program," he says.

The four million drums collected by *drumMUSTER* equates to over *six thousand tonnes* of material that has been removed from the waste system and re-directed into the Australian recycling stream.

"This is a significant achievement for *drumMUSTER*, and confirms the importance of the program for farm chemical users, Council recycling programs and the Australian environment," says *drumMUSTER* Program Manager Mr Vernon Keighley.

"Farmers and other chemical users throughout Australia should be congratulated on their commitment to cleaning and recycling their used chemical containers."

"The *drumMUSTER* program has managed to collect four million containers because it provides a safe, reliable, responsible and cost-effective solution for the disposal of used chemical containers that were previously dumped in landfill or illegally burned or buried on farms."

"The assistance and involvement of Councils such as Millmerran Shire Council in providing a convenient and reliable service for farmers and other chemical users is the key to *drumMUSTER*'s success, and without them the program would not be possible," says Mr Keighley.

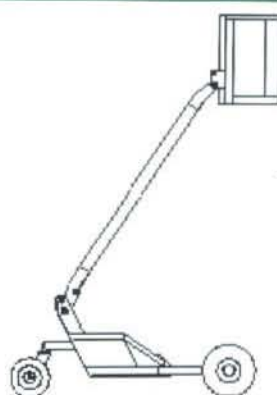
drumMUSTER is the national program for the collection and recycling of empty, cleaned, non-returnable crop protection and animal health chemical containers.

Farm chemical users pay four cents per litre or kilogram levy when purchasing eligible chemical products. The levy goes to the *drumMUSTER* program and is then used to reimburse Councils for the costs involved in setting up and running collection centres.



drumMUSTER

rinse them out, round them up and run them in.



NEW MODEL

With lots of
improved features

OZZY 200

3-Wheel Power Ladder

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Built to Australian Standards AS1418-10

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Increase in fruit quality.

Reduction in fruit waste.

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Freshcare moves to Annual Certification

As from 1 July 2003, *Freshcare* began the move towards a single annual date for the issuing of certificates. This will replace the current situation where *Freshcare* members have their own individual certification anniversary.

Under the new system, certificates will be issued annually to all certified *Freshcare* members on the 1 March and will be valid for a period of 12 months. Members becoming certified for the first time will be issued with certificates valid until the following March, when a new annual certificate will be issued.

Annual certificates will be issued to all financial members with a valid annual audit record and current MRL test (conducted within the previous 12 month period). Annual audits MUST be conducted each year during the harvest.

For *Freshcare* the system will be easier to manage, with all certificates being issued on a single date. It will also allow for easier monitoring of who is either 'out of audit' or 'non financial', keeping the *Freshcare* database fully up to date.

EC drought assistance rules change to include dead trees

Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers (QFVG) has condemned the Federal Government for once again changing the rules for eligibility for drought assistance which now require growers to count the number of dead fruit trees.

QFVG Chief Advocate Mark Panitz said the eligibility criteria was now including the number of dead trees and excluding some horticulture commodities.

"The Burnett region has been deemed eligible, but citrus growers cannot apply, and perennial horticulture producers can only apply if they have lost a quarter of their trees in 2002-2003.

"Where is the logic in that decision?" he said.

"Tree crop growers can suffer the impact of drought with reduced crops yields for a long time before their trees die.

"Our citrus growers did not suffer a severe financial downturn so they did not require assistance, but vegetable growers are unfairly being excluded.

"The system once was that if a region was ruled to have suffered severe rainfall and financial downturn, then people were eligible to apply to the Federal Government for assistance.

Mr Panitz says it now depends on what type of primary producer you are, the crop you are growing and then you have to count how many trees have died during the last financial year.

"This is a clear indication that the Federal Government has no understanding of horticulture and is an example of why there needs to be a complete overhaul of Federal and State drought assistance programs.

"The decision was a worrying signal with applications for EC assistance for four more Queensland regions soon to be assessed by the Federal Government," he said

The Stanthorpe, Lockyer, central Queensland and Mackay regions are currently or being assessed in the near future.

"The drought is alive and biting even harder" – many producers are into a third drought season while some are in a fourth. It's been a dry winter and forecasts are for a hot, dry summer," Mr Panitz said.

Federal Agriculture Minister Warren Truss recently announced that primary producers in the Burnett region, and in the northern, central and southern Darling Downs have been granted Exceptional Circumstances assistance.

Producers in the regions covered by the declaration are now eligible to apply to Centrelink for two years of income support payments and for interest rate subsidies on new and additional loans of up to \$100,000.

Growers are urged to contact the National Drought Hotline on 13 23 16 to discuss their eligibility for assistance.

ANVAS Accredited Nurseries

ANVAS accredited trees can be purchased from the following nurseries:

Anderson's Nursery

Graham and Vivienne Anderson
Duranbah Road, Duranbah NSW
Phone: 02 6677 7229

Batson's Nursery

Merv and Pat Batson
Schulz Road, Woombye Qld
Phone: 07 5442 1657

Birdwood Nursery

Peter and Sandra Young
71 – 83 Blackall Range Rd, Nambour Qld
Phone: 07 5442 1611

Rainforest Nursery

Ron and Joan Knowlton
25 Reynolds Street, Mareeba Qld
Phone: 07 4092 1018

SA & WA Roadshow REMINDER

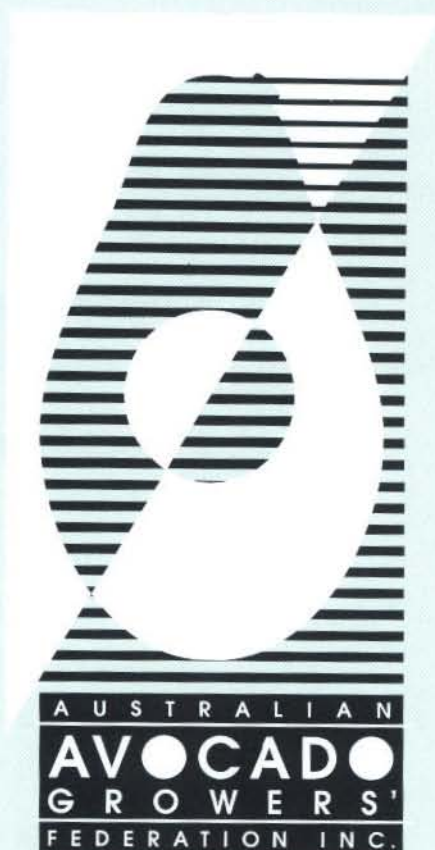
RENMARK – SA
Tuesday 25 November

PEMBERTON – WA
Thursday 27 November

Phone: 07 3213 2477
Email: roadshow@aagf.org.au

Australian Avocado Growers' Federation Inc.

**ANNUAL REPORT
2002-2003**



Australian Avocado Growers' Federation Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT 2002-2003

Federation Particulars

Membership

Membership of the AAGF remained unchanged:

- Avocado Growers' Association of Western Australia,
- South Australia Avocado Growers' Association,
- New South Wales Avocado Growers' Association Inc.,
- Queensland Fruit and Vegetable Growers Limited.

Victorian Growers wound their association up in 1995/96 and are now represented by SAAGA.

Board of Directors 2002-2003

One director resigned during the year and one new director joined the board.

Mr. Rod Dalton	QLD
Mr. Chris Nelson	NSW
Mr. Ian Tolson	NSW
Mr. Peter Molenaar	NSW
Mr. Allan Ross	QLD
Mr. Colin Fechner	SA
Mr. Wayne Franceschi	WA
Mr. Russell Proudfoot	QLD
Mr. Henry Kwaczynski	QLD
Mr. Col Cummings	QLD
Mr. Lachlan Donovan	QLD
Mr. Antony Allen	CEO

Resignations

Mr. Russell Proudfoot QLD

Board Changes

During 2002-03 the number of Directors reduced to seven with the following Directors becoming Observers.

Mr. Allan Ross	QLD
Mr. Peter Molenaar	NSW
Mr. Ian Tolson	NSW

Registered Office

Brisbane Market Sherwood Road, Rocklea Qld 4106

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 19
Brisbane Market QLD 4106
Phone – (07) 3213 2477
Fax – (07) 3213 2480
Phone – 1300 303 971
Fax – 1300 303 972

Committees of the Board

Five committees operated during the year 2002-03:

1. Executive Committee
2. Varieties Committee
3. R, D & E Committee
4. Marketing Committee
5. Export Group

President's Report

The 2002-03 year has been a period of important developments for the AAGF. The appointment of the Industry Manager, the development of the "Road Show" concept and the finalization of the Partnership Agreement with HAL were major achievements in a very positive year for the AAGF.

Administration.

Antony Allen was appointed to the position of Industry Manager in September and has provided professional leadership in that difficult dual role of Executive Officer and Industry Development Manager. Considerable time was spent recovering from several months when the position had been vacant.

The position was independently reviewed as to its effectiveness and the difficulties associated with the dual role. The report was supportive of continuing the position with some improvements recommended to the management of the position.

South Africa

The AAGF President and Industry Manager attended the South African Avocado Growers Association (SAAGA) annual Research Symposium in February. The opportunity was also taken to meet with the leadership and management of SAAGA and visit a number of orchards. A closer working relationship with the South African industry is being encouraged as we share many of the same challenges at the production level and the Australian industry can learn much from their experience in exporting to Europe.

Barcode

The AAGF launched a generic barcode fruit sticker system which enables packers to use one barcode sticker for both major supermarkets and provides traceability for individual fruit back to the packhouse. The initial release was for use on Hass with the system being extended to other cultivars in the near future.

Constitution

The AAGF Board commenced a process to review the AAGF constitution at the 2002 AGM. The existing constitution had not been updated for many years. Due to changes in production in recent years the Board membership has been adjusted to reflect that stipulated by the constitution. Thus the current Board membership, as listed elsewhere in this report, comprises 4 delegates from Qld and 1 from each of NSW, SA and WA. The Federation structure was considered to be inappropriate for the future. A proposal to form Avocados Australia Ltd., a limited liability company with individual avocado growing enterprises being the members, was prepared. Following consultation with growers throughout Australia in July/August 2003 this proposal will be considered by the AAGF Board at the 2003 AGM in September.

Roadshow

The development of the concept of the "RoadShow" was a highlight of the year. The concept was to take the R&D experts and Industry leadership to the major growing regions. Provide a one day interactive format which provides the opportunity for growers to be updated on the latest developments in their industry and for Industry leadership to be made aware of issues of concern at regional level.

Promotion Programme Highlights.

Considering the reduced crop that was forecast for the 2002 season the use of TV advertising was limited to Sydney in July and then in Brisbane followed by Sydney and Melbourne in April 2003. The other promotional activities such as point of sale material, Retail education and Public relations were continued to underpin the efforts of the industry to increase domestic consumption.

Avocado R&D Review

During the year the industry commissioned an independent review of the R&D program. The reviewers looked at the last 10 years of Avocado R&D projects, the researchers and institutions that undertake the research and the committee structure that manages the program. Whilst the industry is constantly reviewing its own performance, the need for an independent check is essential. The review's main recommendation was instrumental in the development process for the R&D Roadshows. The industry is pleased with the outcomes of the review and will work to implement them over the coming year.

Finance

General

AAGF Board of Director's work within a tight budget. The Federation's financial position remains healthy with net assets in the region of \$146,068. Reserves are in place for contingencies and each committee contributes to administration costs as well as funding its specific activities. AAGF continues to operate within its budget constraints. The Audited accounts are presented in full at the end of this report.

Varieties Committee

The Varieties Committee operate on a user pays basis and returned a comfortable profit of \$3171.77. The Audited accounts are presented in full at the end of this report.

Committee Reports

Varieties Committee:

Chairman	Mr Rod Dalton
Members	Dr Chris Searle Mr Allan Ross Mr Graeme Thomas
Nursery Advisers	Mr Graham Anderson Mr Peter Young
Technical Advisers	Dr Tony Whiley Mr Ken Pegg
Registrar	Mr Antony Allen

The ANVAS nurseries are now to be inspected and samples taken twice annually. This helps the nurseries to detect pathogens and correct hygiene problems in their early stages. The procedures will be conducted in March and August each year - when the new trees are potted and again before they leave the nursery. The committee meets when required and continues to work efficiently.

R&D Committee

Chairman	Mr George Green
Director	Mr Peter Molenaar
Members	Mr Alan Blight
	Mr John Dorrian
	Mr Graeme Thomas
	Mr David Peasley
	Dr Tony Whiley
Observer	Dr Jonathan Cutting
CEO	Mr Antony Allen

The R&D Committee is funded from the R & D Levy. The Committee met twice during the year, in September and February. To assist the Committee and researchers keep up to date for issues for avocados the second annual R&D workshop was held in Brisbane in September. In keeping with our commitment to form closer working relations with New Zealand, Jonathan Cutting is invited to attend R & D meetings where appropriate. The initiative is reciprocated by New Zealand. The R&D Committee continues to operate efficiently.

The Current R & D Program

Aims of the program:

- Improve fruit quality through the availability of high-quality root-stocks which will boost productivity, disease resistance, dwarfing and uniformity.
- Improve productivity, pest disease management and fruit quality resulting from better practices.
- Improved water use efficiency, productivity and fruit quality.
- Provide the ability to optimise fruit size, yield and quality through management of tree nutrition.
- Improve management of phytophthora root rot through availability of efficient, cost-effective and registered control methods.
- Improve FSB control through use of integrated control strategies which minimise disruption to beneficial orchard organisms.
- Improve avocado quality in the marketplace through adoption of a package of measures to manage post-harvest diseases.
- Improve productivity through the use of effective control strategies that minimise disruption to integrated pest management practices.
- A demonstrated improvement in the internal quality of avocados at retail level.

Current Projects funded by levies:

- AV00013: The role of rootstocks and nutrition in the quality of 'Hass' avocado
- AV01004: New strategies for the control of avocado fruit diseases
- AV01006: Advancing Avoman
- AV01007: Improvement of rootstocks
- AV02002: Fruit spotting bug management
- AV02003: Development of a non-chemical treatment system for avocado against QFF for interstate trade
- AV02009: Optimizing the post-harvest qualities of Hass avocado through improved calcium nutrition
- AV02019: Off label use of methomyl

New Projects:

- AV02006: Avocado Canopy Management Review
- AV03002: Marker assisted breeding of rootstocks
- AV03003: Avocado canopy and orchard floor management (extension)
- AV03006: Extending the outcomes from avocado R&D through regional field days

Projects completed:

- AV00004: Avocado Industry Communication Management
- AV01013: Developing Crop Estimates for the Avocado Industry
- AV02014: Review Effectiveness of the R&D Program
- AV02015: Evaluation of Bruising of Hass Avocado from Harvest to the Consumer
- AV02016: Investigation of Market Opportunities for Australian Avocados in Hong Kong

Marketing Committee

Chairman - Mr Colin Fechner – Director in charge of Domestic Marketing

Members - Mr Rod Dalton – AAGF President

Mr Gary Poole – Wholesaler

Mr Ron Simpson – Grower/Exporter

Mr Graham Chartres – Marketer

Mr Antony Allen – AAGF CEO

Mr Wayne Prowse – HAL Marketing Manager.

TV Advertising

Television continued to be the major plank of the Promotion and Marketing program. For this year the industry began in July with a Sydney TV campaign and finished the year with the beginning of the next program of TV ads that kicked off with Brisbane in April and Sydney/Melbourne in June. This program will continue in length and will include Adelaide into the next financial year.

Point of Sale

Our new point-of-sale recipe leaflets focused on winter recipe ideas. The recipes have been developed to inspire consumers to try new serving ideas and to promote greater consumption in winter months.

An educational POS display was developed for in store to assist the consumer to select the correct ripeness for their needs. "Choosing a Hass is No Hassle" was rolled out to retailers of avocados across Australia.

Public Relations

The public relations program generated an impressive \$806,000 in publicity. The material supplied ranged from information on the variety relevant to the season.

In March we held the "three yearly" Avocado Media Day. This event targets the pre-eminent food writers and media people from across Australia. The day was held at an avocado orchard north of Sydney at Peats Ridge and included a farm walk, a cooking demonstration by a high profile chef and a gourmet lunch using avocado extensively.

Magazine Advertising

The magazine advertising was targeted to reach young female consumers who are health conscience and want convenient, easily prepared food. Woman's Day, Better Homes & Garden, New Woman, Cosmopolitan, Cleo and Who Weekly regularly carry a one-third page advertisement showing avocados as nutritious, healthy, convenient and sexy.

In addition, two niche markets were targeted - new and expecting mothers and patients with cholesterol worries. The Baby Care and Pregnancy annual publication is distributed to at least 95% of new mothers through the hospital system. Our research has confirmed that this strategy is working because consumption of avocados in families whose children are under 6 is greater than for families with older children. The other niche publication was the Heart Smart journal which is distributed to over 100,000 heart patients or those who have their cholesterol checked.

Retail Education

Through Horticulture Australia's Retail Development Officers the AAGF has an avocado merchandising program and it has proved to be very successful. The program is shared with a number of other commodities and focuses on the retail fruit shop. A team of product specialists visited over 600 retail outlets during May, July and September (January in W.A.) and assisted retail staff to handle and display avocados so that they reach consumers in the best possible condition. The merchandisers cover issues such as temperature control to reduce chilling injury, identify and remove fruit that was over mature and encourage display in original trays to avoid bruising damage. The merchandisers also complete a survey at each store that helps the AAGF to gain a picture of the fruit quality being offered to consumers.

Directors Portfolios

Outlined below is a list of the portfolios designed to advance specific areas of the industry strategic plan.

Export	- Mr Henry Kwaczynski
International Linkages	- Mr Henry Kwaczynski
Statistics/Industry Data	- Mr Peter Molenaar
Communications	- Mr Chris Nelson, Mr Alan Ross
Marketing	- Mr Colin Fechner
Research & Development	- Mr Russell Proudfoot, Chris Nelson
Supply Chain	- Mr Wayne Franceschi

Service Providers

Horticulture Australia Limited

Horticulture Australia is a company limited by guarantee that is owned equally by the Horticulture Peak Industry Bodies with national levies.

The Board of Horticulture Australia is required to provide effective leadership, supported by a strong corporate governance framework. The Board has been appointed and is focusing on building liaisons with industry representatives and gaining insight into issues and expectations.

The responsibilities of the Board are to:

- develop the company's desired outcomes and strategic direction;
- establish benchmarks, performance indicators, policies and operating procedures;
- ensure the company acts responsibly and legally under corporations law and fulfils the requirements of the Deed of Agreement;
- ensure effective allocation of resources;
- review progress in achieving R&D and marketing outcomes.

An Overview Of The Australian Horticultural Industry

The Australian Horticultural Industry has a gross value of production (GVP) of \$5.5 billion (1998/99). The farm gate value of production was \$4.74 billion, which comprised vegetables (\$1.53b) fruit and nuts (\$2.56b) and nursery production (\$0.65b).

The statutory levy paying industries that are managed by Horticulture Australia represents approximately 62% of the industry GVP.

Total horticultural exports for the 1999/00 were \$720 million made up of fruits \$394m, vegetables \$193m, nuts \$100m and nursery \$33m. The top three fruit export products were: citrus \$153m, grapes \$74m and apples \$37m. The top three vegetable export products were: asparagus \$45m, carrots \$36m and cauliflowers \$23m. For nuts macadamias (\$76m) represent 76% of total nut exports and cut flowers (\$31m) represent 91% of nursery exports.

Total horticultural imports for 1999/00 was \$93m (fruit \$73m; vegetables \$20m) which was an increase of 20% on the previous year.

Australian horticulture has been one of the success stories of the past decade growing by 142% and representing 18% of agricultural production. It is a major regional force employing 80,000 people with a further 11,200 employed in processing. There are approximately 21,000 farms engaged in the industry.

Conclusion

The Australian Avocado industry continues to expand with significant new plantings occurring in a number of our production regions. The current reliance on the domestic market to handle all but a small percentage of our production must be of concern to all involved in our industry, with the possible exception of our consumers. Fortunately the balance between supply and demand has been maintained for most of the past year. However lack of communication and coordination at the supply side and the limited opportunities to influence demand means the industry is vulnerable to major impacts from brief periods of oversupply/lack of demand.

The industry has not been challenged by possible imports in recent years and the AAGF must remain vigilant, to ensure that the Australian industry is not exposed to unacceptable disease/pest risks, which may be associated with potential fresh fruit imports into Australia.

The proposal to form Avocados Australia Ltd., which will be considered by the AAGF Board in September 2003, will, if accepted, provide growers with the opportunity to have direct input into their industry. It should also provide opportunities to further the development of our industry, to the benefit of all Australian growers. It will also provide a limited capacity to provide a higher level of input into agri-political issues.

On behalf of the industry I thank all who have contributed their time to the industry including the Directors, committee members, HAL support staff and the Industry Manager. Antony Allen has provided the industry with a level of professional management which has been appreciated by all.

I look forward to the coming year confident that the AAGF has the capacity to provide the leadership needed in the industry and looking forward to greater involvement from growers in **their industry**.

Rod Dalton

President.

AAGF

September 2003



Chotais

Chartered Accountants

5th Floor,
41 Sherwood Road,
Toowong,
BRISBANE, 4066
Correspondence:
P.O. Box 1030,
Toowong,
BRISBANE, 4066

Tel: +61 7 3371 7633
Fax: +61 7 3371 4602
e-mail: chotais@chotais.com.au

19 September 2003

To the Members of the Management Committee, Australian Avocado Growers Federation Inc
Australian Avocado Growers' Federation Inc

Scope

We have audited the attached special purpose financial reports of the Australian Avocado Growers' Federation Inc (including Conference Account) and ANVAS for the period 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003, comprising the profit and loss statements and balance sheets. The Committee is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial reports and the information contained therein, and have determined that the basis of accounting used is appropriate to the needs of the members. We have conducted an independent audit of the financial reports in order to express an opinion on them to the members. No opinion is expressed as to whether the basis of accounting used is appropriate to the needs of the members.

The special purpose financial reports have been prepared for distribution to the members for the purposes of fulfilling the Committee's accountability requirements. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on these reports or on the financial reports to which they relate, to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which they were prepared.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our procedures included examination on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial reports, and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial reports are presented fairly in accordance with the accrual basis of accounting.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion the financial reports of the Australian Avocado Growers' Federation Inc (including Conference Account) and ANVAS presents fairly the financial position at the 30 June, 2003, of the Australian Avocado Growers' Federation Inc (including Conference Account) and ANVAS for the period then ended.


Chotais Chartered Accountants

Date: 19/09/2003

Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2003

ASSETS

Current Assets

Current/Savings

ANZ-Current A/c (AAGF) 132,351.99

Investment A/c - FPBS 55,925.96

Total Current/Savings 188,277.95

Accounts Receivable

Accounts Receivable 1,125.67

Total Accounts Receivable 1,125.67

Other Current Assets

Undeposited Funds 99.00

Total Other Current Assets 99.00

Total Current Assets 189,502.62

Fixed Assets

Computer Hardware 11,217.37

Total Fixed Assets 11,217.37

TOTAL ASSETS 200,719.99

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities

Other Current Liabilities

Sundry Accruals 27,115.16

Payroll Liabilities

Superannuation Employer 3,234.80

PAYG Tax 9,737.00

Total Payroll Liabilities 12,971.80

Tax Payable 14,565.32

Total Other Current Liabilities 54,652.28

Total Current Liabilities 54,652.28

TOTAL LIABILITIES 54,652.28

NET ASSETS 146,067.71

EQUITY

Opening Bal Equity 84,626.34

Retained Earnings 12,004.13

Net Income 49,437.24

TOTAL EQUITY 146,067.71

Profit & Loss

July 2002 through June 2003

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

Interest	3,792.70
Membership	3,844.00
Project Funds	304,385.75
Reimbursed Expenses	2,707.50
Sales	574.92
Talking Avocados	35465.28
Total Income	350,770.15

Expense

Total Roadshow Project	2,337.30
Bad debt/error	1,415.87
Total IAC costs	2,564.23
Project Travel	1,424.90
Total Project Funds Expense	57,242.40
Total Marketing Committee	4,506.13
Total Bank Service Charges	868.22
Total Board Costs	35,199.68
Computer/Software	391.64
Dues and Subscriptions	7,733.05
Total Executive Committee	18,300.41
Gifts and Donations	53.14
Insurance	5,135.51
Office Supplies	2,722.56
Postage and Delivery	687.50
Printing and Reproduction	1,620.75
Total Professional Fees	17,159.25
Total R, D & E Subcommittee	15,130.79
Secretariat	
Total Payroll expenses	62,692.92
Operating Costs	21,929.92
Total Secretariat	84,622.84
Total TA Publishing expenses	42,216.74

Total Expense	301,332.91
----------------------	-------------------

Net Ordinary Income	49,437.24
----------------------------	------------------

Net Income	49,437.24
-------------------	------------------

ANVAS
Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2003

ASSETS**Current Assets****Current/Savings****ANZ-Current Account**

27,600.55

Total Current/Savings

27,600.55

Accounts Receivable**Accounts Receivable**

(676.00)

Total Accounts Receivable

(676.00)

Other Current Assets**Loan to AAGF**

9,967.90

Total Other Current Assets

9,967.90

Total Current Assets

36,892.45

TOTAL ASSETS

36,892.45

LIABILITIES**Current Liabilities****Other Current Liabilities****Tax Payable**

223.75

Total Other Current Liabilities

223.75

Total Current Liabilities

223.75

TOTAL LIABILITIES

223.75

NET ASSETS

36,668.70

EQUITY**Opening Bal Equity**

32,139.99

Retained Earnings

1,356.94

Net Income

3,171.77

TOTAL EQUITY

36,668.70

ANVAS Profit & Loss

July 2002 through June 2003

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

ANVAS-Baiting	60.00
ANVAS-Inspections	395.00
ANVAS-Membership	7,015.80
Bank Interest	117.95
RTS-Label Sales	500.00
RTS-Registration	1,086.00

Total Income	<u>9,174.75</u>
--------------	-----------------

Expense

ANVAS

Inspections	<u>2,527.72</u>
-------------	-----------------

Total ANVAS	2,527.72
-------------	----------

Bad Debt	676.00
----------	--------

Bank Service Charges

A/c Keeping Fee	180.00
-----------------	--------

Debits Tax	<u>12.90</u>
------------	--------------

Total Bank Service Charges	192.90
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Registered Tree Scheme

Indexing	<u>1,600.00</u>
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Total Registered Tree Scheme	1,600.00
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Secretariat

Meeting Costs	188.00
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Operation Costs	360.00
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Travel Costs	<u>458.36</u>
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Total Secretariat	<u>1,006.36</u>
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Total Expense	<u>6,002.98</u>
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Net Ordinary Income	<u>3,171.77</u>
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Net Income	<u><u>3,171.77</u></u>
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Fruitspotting Bug Management using Hotspots for targeted monitoring and control

By Geoff Waite - Principal Entomologist, Maroochy Research Station

Three commercial avocado orchards situated at Goodwood (cultivars Hass, Wurtz and Shepard), Woombye (cultivars Hass, Sharwil, Wurtz and Fuerte) and Glasshouse (cultivar Hass) were monitored weekly for fruitspotting bug infestation (measured by visible fruit damage) for the duration of the 2002-03 season.

In the Goodwood orchard, prior experience and records had allowed hotspots to be identified in advance. These were monitored intensively, with random assessment of trees throughout the whole orchard being conducted as a check.

Fruitspotting bug movement into the orchard was observed in the hotspots only and a couple of applications of endosulfan were made only to these areas. The mid-season assessment of bug damage to fruit from these hotspot areas showed that damage was negligible with minimal control effort expended.

At Glasshouse, despite the orchard's location adjacent to typical fruitspotting bug habitat, infestation levels were light and little damage to fruit was observed during routine monitoring so that only one spray was recommended. This contrasts with fruitspotting bug control practices carried out on the rest of the farm in previous seasons.

In the current season, ten endosulfan sprays were applied on a schedule to the whole non-trial orchard, with no bug checking being carried out.

Harvest assessment of the trial block conducted during May 2003, confirmed the picture obtained from monitoring. Only 2% of reject fruit was damaged by bugs, and at final harvest only 0.1% of the total harvest had been damaged by fruitspotting bugs.

Most fruit was rejected because of rub (91.8% of rejects) and caterpillar damage (8.1% of rejects), the latter more prominent in this instance but still of little consequence, because of the lack of fruitspotting bug sprays.

This orchard consists entirely of cv Hass in which it is often difficult to detect bug damage, especially in the field. If the hotspot strategy is to work, then finding damage as it is inflicted in Hass fruit is of paramount importance so that control decisions can be made with confidence. Alternatively, there is the option to use indicator trees such as Fuerte (see accompanying report).

In contrast to the former two orchards, the Woombye orchard proved to be a particularly susceptible location and suffered moderate and consistent attack from fruitspotting bugs.

Weekly monitoring showed that the potential existed for significant damage to result. The orchard has a mix of Fuerte, Hass, Wurtz and Sharwil, with minor plantings of a few other cultivars such as Reed and Pinkerton. Weekly checks of the Fuerte trees were used as the basis for making control decisions. Low levels of damage were recorded during October when fruit were 1-3 cm long. There was little damage to the Sharwil and Wurtz and none on the Hass at this stage. A low level of damage continued in the Fuerte, and endosulfan sprays were applied as required to suppress immigrant bug populations and to eliminate nymphs that had hatched from eggs laid by these immigrants. Eight sprays, five endosulfan and three β -cyfluthrin, were applied for the season.

At harvest the Fuerte was found to have suffered 1.9% FSB damage. Fruit from Wurtz trees situated beside a neighbouring neglected guava plantation suffered 4.3% damage, and Pinkerton, Hass and Sharwil in non-hotspot areas suffered 0.5%, 0.09% and 0.1% damage respectively. Because this is a relatively small orchard, when sprays were deemed necessary the whole area was treated, even though fairly distinct hotspots were evident. As confidence in the strategy increases, then the hotspot areas alone can be treated.

Results...

Results from this first season of the project indicate that it is possible to monitor for fruitspotting bugs albeit on the basis of damage, and that concentrating monitoring effort on hotspot areas gives a useful impression of what is happening in the rest of the orchard. These data combined with the results of the trap/decoy tree study suggest that a proactive, rather than a reactive fruitspotting bug management system can be developed, through exploitation of the bugs' host finding behaviour.

It is most likely that it is plant chemistry that plays a critical role in the bugs' ability to find a suitable host on which to feed and breed. If the attractive compounds initiating such behaviour could be identified, then behaviour modification using lures, which could be more extensive and intensive than a reliance on attractive host trees, might be possible.



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Trap trees as decoys for fruitspotting bugs

By Geoff Waite - Principal Entomologist, Maroochy Research Station

Various known fruitspotting bug hosts were considered for assessment as possible trap trees for monitoring purposes. Mock orange, *Murraya paniculata*, is very attractive to both species of fruitspotting bug. However, fruit needs to be present on the plants to attract bugs and individual plants fruit inconsistently. On the Sunshine Coast at least, *Murraya* does not carry a significant fruit load after October and so although it is very attractive to adult bugs in winter and spring and may act as a local focal point for early season breeding, it does not attract bugs for the major part of the avocado season.

The most consistently attractive and convenient bug host would be a fruit crop that is more attractive to the bugs than are others, and in which the damage is easily detected as it is inflicted. The avocado cultivar Fuerte is an obvious candidate for this role along with Pinkerton and Wurtz. Using the same tree species as the main crop for the decoy means that no major management changes have to be made in the orchard.

For the initial assessment of the strategy in a commercial situation, the Fuerte trees in a mixed cultivar orchard at Woombye on the Sunshine Coast were used. Unsprayed Fuerte, Pinkerton and Hass at Maroochy Research Station (MRS) were also compared for the timing and intensity of fruitspotting bug attack. At Woombye, observations of damage on the trees indicated that Fuerte did indeed suffer much more damage than Sharwil or Hass, and although the damage was also easier to see on the thin-skinned Fuerte, the difference was real and not just apparent. Wurtz fruit tended not to show bug damage as clearly, and it was manifest at harvest mostly as dimples rather than the cracks or craters that develop in Fuerte. A row of Wurtz trees immediately adjacent to a stand of wild guavas also proved to be a major hotspot in this orchard.

In the mixed, unsprayed orchard at MRS, Pinkerton was the first to set fruit and so was the first to be attacked by bugs. Eight fruit on one of two Pinkerton trees were damaged on 8 October 2002. This increased to 23 and then 32 over the next two weeks. By 18 November the two Pinkerton trees carried 102 damaged fruit while two Fuerte trees nearby had a total of 11 damaged fruit. By then

the Hass fruit was at a stage that was attractive to the bugs and 15 fruit were damaged on two trees adjacent to the Pinkerton trees.

As the season progressed, some of the damaged Pinkerton and Fuerte fruit developed anthracnose and fell off, but it remained clear that both these cultivars suffered much greater damage from the bugs, and attack continued through January, February and March. In contrast, damage on the Hass trees did not increase significantly after the initial period of attack in November and December (Table 1).

Over the past decade, avocado growers in south east Queensland have tended to remove Fuerte from their orchards because of the amount of damage that was caused by fruitspotting bugs. This damage resulted despite frequent applications of insecticidal sprays. Since the bugs will attack all cultivars, the action of removing the most attractive cultivar merely removed the distraction that Fuerte trees formerly provided, allowing the bugs direct access to cultivars such as Hass, Sharwil and Wurtz.

These data support the proposition that rather than culling Fuerte trees from orchards because of their susceptibility to fruitspotting bugs, they should be retained precisely for that reason, to act as a decoy for the pests and so reduce the damage that might be inflicted on the more highly regarded cultivars. In this role they may act as trap trees that can be sprayed intensively if required, to limit their dispersal through the rest of the orchard.

The time interval between sprays on trap trees will need to be less than that employed with respect to normal orchard sprays, to ensure bugs that do congregate in these trees do not have a chance to disperse through the rest of the orchard. There may also be times when extremely intense fruitspotting bug attack on these trees indicates that treatment of the whole block might be warranted.



Though white sap residue is not present on all fruit damaged by fruitspotting bugs, it is common on Fuerte and the lesions are usually obvious.

Table 1: Maroochy Research Station fruitspotting bug trap tree assessment, 2002- 03. No. damaged fruit per tree. All trees were un-sprayed – no insecticides or fungicides!

Date	Pinkerton 1	Pinkerton 2	Fuerte 1	Fuerte 2	Hass 1	Hass 2	Hass 3
8 Oct	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
14 Oct	23	0	0	4	0	0	0
21 Oct	32	0	0	0			
4 Nov	51	5	4	4	0	0	0
18 Nov	74	18	8	4	0	6	9
29 Nov	124	63	14	8	8	22	11
10 Dec	124	63	48	14	8	22	11
24 Dec	124	63	48	14	8	25	21
7 Jan	124	72	14*	30*	8	31	44
Final assessment – 2 April 2003							
Total FSB damaged fruit on each tree							
	138	88	56	169	11	31	44
Total fruit on each tree							
	168	160	104	181	90	151	182
% FSB damage on each tree							
	82.1	55.0	53.8	93.4	12.2	20.5	24.2

*severe anthracnose infection resulted in significant fruit drop

New solution to Anthracnose and Stem End Rot

Syngenta Crop Protection's application to extend the registration of AMISTAR® WG FUNGICIDE into avocados has been granted by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).

This new registration adds to the current Australian AMISTAR® label, which includes control of various fungal diseases in grapes, potatoes, tomatoes and cucurbits.

Anthracnose and Stem End Rot are the major post-harvest diseases affecting the Australian avocado industry. Copper is the major product currently used in the field to control these diseases.

However, there has been increasing environmental and consumer concerns regarding the build up of copper in soils and visible copper residues on the fruit. As a result, alternative fungicides have been keenly sought by the industry.

Australian trial results submitted to the APVMA with the application for registration clearly demonstrated AMISTAR®'s ability to effectively control Anthracnose and Stem End Rot.

When applied at the now registered rate of 40g/100L, the level of disease control achieved with programs incorporating AMISTAR® was in most cases superior to current commercial programs relying mainly on repeated applications of copper.

Improved disease control often resulted in an increase in the percent of marketable fruit over the untreated and standard programs.

Syngenta recommends for best results, growers should apply AMISTAR® in a preventative program that contains fungicides from a different chemical group.

For the reason of managing potential resistance development, they should apply no more than three AMISTAR® sprays per season, and no more than two consecutive AMISTAR® applications.

The disease control program should commence with an approved fungicide (from an alternative chemical group) and the first AMISTAR® spray should be applied during early fruit set.

This should be followed with applications of an alternative approved fungicide group.

Two final applications of AMISTAR® at 28-day intervals, with the final AMISTAR® spray applied seven days prior to harvest will achieve the best result.

When using this program, Syngenta recommends growers DO NOT start the following years disease control program with AMISTAR®.

For resistance management, AMISTAR® contains the active ingredient azoxystrobin. Azoxystrobin belongs to the strobilurin group of fungicides and is a Group K Fungicide.

AMISTAR®'s withholding period for avocados is just 7 days.

For further information on AMISTAR WG, growers can visit the Syngenta Website at www.syngenta.com.au or call the Syngenta advice line on: 1800 067 108.

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Duranbah Road, Duranbah NSW
Phone: 02 6677 7229

Batson's Nursery

Merv and Pat Batson
Schulz Road, Woombye Qld
Phone: 07 5442 1657

Birdwood Nursery

Peter and Sandra Young
71 - 83 Blackall Range Rd, Nambour Qld
Phone: 07 5442 1611

Rainforest Nursery

Ron and Joan Knowlton
25 Reynolds Street, Mareeba Qld
Phone: 07 4092 1018



Promotions Report

By Wayne Prowse - Marketing Manager, Horticulture Australia.

We have just completed the largest single TV advertising campaign for avocados in Australia and perhaps the world!!!

Commencing in April with a Brisbane program, and continuing with Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide through to August, the four month "seamless" TV advertising program invested a combined \$500,000 drawn from two budget years. No other country to our knowledge has invested such funds in promoting avocados on TV although there are several impressive website programs and retail driven promotions world wide.

Is investing \$500,000 to promote Australia's \$75m avocado industry worth while??

A few statistics worth noting. Australia enjoys one of the higher values per kg return to growers of countries producing avocados. Australia's per capita consumption of Avocados at approx 1.6kg p.p. is also among the highest in the world. Our production growth is still significant with large plantings still yet to yield fruit in Western Australia and Bundaberg (Qld).

The aim of the TV promotion, supported by in-store promotion, public relations and other media advertising has always been to change the consumer image of avocados from an occasional luxury to an everyday staple. Apart from the higher volumes generated from everyday staple foods, the price elasticities are also less, which means that consumers will have a higher propensity to buy avocados at whatever price they are offered rather than consume heaps at low prices and few at high prices. A steady demand at viable prices is the goal.

Recent research by Horticulture Australia has shown that the consumer attitudes have moved towards this "everyday" positioning which is good news that the strategy is working.

Statistics reported by Ausmark Consultants show average prices in Sydney for SL trays of HASS Avocados for June and July 2003 were up to \$2.00 higher than the same period in 2000.

Although precise volumes are difficult to obtain we know from production data that volumes have increased showing a clear trend towards stronger demand.

Generating significant export volumes will remain difficult with Australia being a minute supplier in the world market and made even more difficult when growers believe that they can generate better returns on the domestic market with less risk. Whilst this attitude prevails Australia should not expect to generate any significant export demand beyond the niche areas currently being developed.

The Australian avocado industry should therefore remain focused on developing further domestic demand as each dollar spent on increasing demand in Australia is likely to have a better return on investment than promoting with the same dollar in another market where we have much less influence.

Another angle to be aware is that we do compete in a global market, however sheltered we are. Our market here is the reason other countries want to export TO Australia and share our success.

Once again the importance of continuing to develop domestic demand is important, and where possible explore the opportunities of co operative promotion with import suppliers as we have with New Zealand.

To come back to the question about the value of investing \$500,000 in promoting avocados in Australia, perhaps the question should be - 'Is \$500,000 enough?'

Thank you...

Finally this is my last column as Horticulture Australia's Marketing Manager for Avocados. I am moving to another position in the company and would like to introduce Trudy Gosney as successor to the role that I have thoroughly enjoyed for the past 7 years.

I would like to thank the AAGF and Avocado Marketing Committee, particularly Rod Dalton, Antony Allen, Colin Fechner and Mary Ravello for their support and guidance that has ensured effective use of your marketing levy funds to help develop a strong and viable industry.

I wish you all every success and continued growth.

Wayne Prowse



Amistar® – now registered for use on avocado

Jay Anderson, Tony Cooke, Sonia Willingham, Lindy Coates, Ken Pegg, Peter Langdon,
Jan Dean and Dean Beasley - Queensland Department of Primary Industries,
Agency for Food and Fibre Sciences, Horticulture - Jay.Anderson@dpi.qld.gov.au

As part of a previous project examining field management of avocado postharvest diseases (HAL project AV97001), we tested a number of fungicides including fungicides from the new class of strobilurin fungicides. The aim of the work was to provide industry with additional fungicides that worked just as well or better than the current industry standard copper fungicides.

After trials with a number of fungicides on 'Hass' and 'Fuerte' we found Amistar® to be promising (Figure 1). Subsequent trials showed that Amistar® (when inserted into a copper program) was effective in controlling anthracnose, stem-end rot, sooty blotch and pepper spot on 'Hass'.

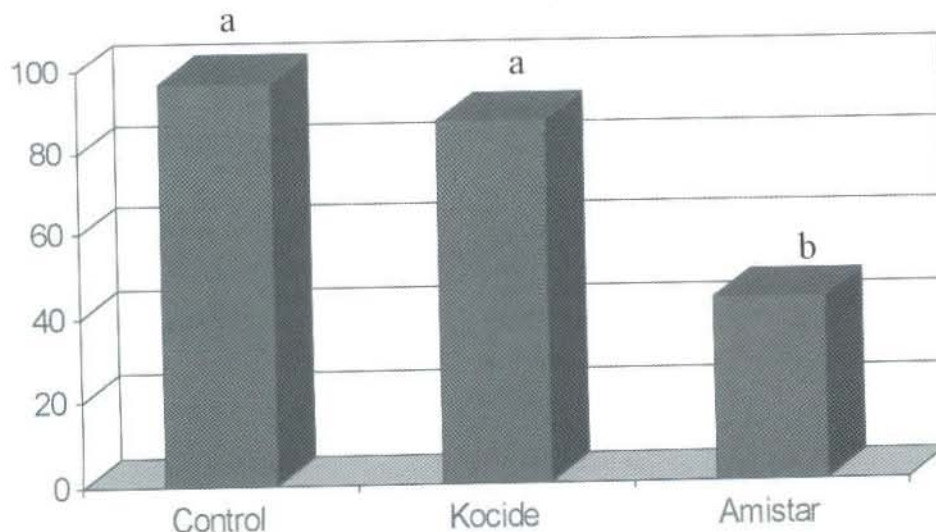
In this article we give results from one of the spray trials we conducted, discuss how to use Amistar® in an anti-resistance strategy to ensure it is available for years to come, and list some of the benefits of using Amistar®.

Amistar® needs to be used in an anti-resistance strategy ...

Amistar® has a highly specific mode of action. It blocks the electron transfer system in the mitochondria of the fungus which means that the fungus is unable to convert its food source into energy and starves to death. All that is required for the fungus to become resistant to Amistar® is a one-gene mutation.

It is because of this highly specific mode of action that Amistar® MUST be used in an anti-resistance strategy. Incorrect usage of Amistar® could lead to the development of pathogen resistance, resulting in reduced efficacy of the product.

Figure 1. The effect of field foliar sprays of Amistar® and Kocide® on anthracnose incidence in 'Fuerte' avocado following ripening at 22°C and 65% relative humidity.



Strobilurin anti-resistance spray experiment on 'Hass'...

This experiment was conducted on a block of 4 1/2 year-old 'Hass' trees grown on seedling 'Velvick' rootstocks. A randomised complete block design with 9 treatments and 6 single tree replications/treatment was used.

The following treatments were applied on 10th November 1999 after fruit set. Treatment 1 was an untreated control, whilst treatment 2 was Kocide® DF (ai. 400g/kg copper hydroxide) 2g/L as a 28 day foliar spray. All of the other treatments are outlined in Table 1 (page 32). All sprays were applied at 28 day intervals until the last spray finishing 7 days before harvest.

NB. These spray programs were just for this trial and are not recommended for commercial use. Please see recommendations at the end of this article for example spray program.

Approximately 15 L of fungicide suspension was applied to each tree. Mature fruits were harvested in August 2000, ripened at 22°C (65% RH) without postharvest dipping and assessed for postharvest disease (anthracnose, stem-end rot).

Results ...

All of the fungicide treatments, except for the Amistar® + Bion® treatments applied in program 2, reduced the incidence of anthracnose compared with the unsprayed control (Table 2, page 32). Overall, Amistar® applied in an anti-resistance strategy spray program provided the same level of anthracnose control as the current industry standard program of Kocide®. The severity of anthracnose was not significantly reduced by any of the treatments (Table 2).

The incidence of stem-end rot was significantly reduced by all of the fungicide treatments compared with the untreated control (Table 2).

Table 1. Summary of spray programs used in anti-resistance experiment

Month	Program 1		Program 2 (Amistar®)		Program 2 (Amistar® + Bion®)		Program 2 (Flint®)
	Tr 3	Tr 6	Tr 4	Tr 7	Tr 5	Tr 8	Tr. 9
Oct (flowering)	A1	A2					
Nov (flowering)	A1	A2					
Dec	K	K	K	K	K	K	K
Jan	K	K	K	K	K	K	K
Feb	K	K	K	K	K	K	K
March	K	K	K	K	K	K	K
April	K	K	K	K	K	K	K
May	K	K	K	K	K	K	K
June	K	K	A1	A2	A1+B	A2+B	F
July	A1	A2	A1	A2	A1+B	A2+B	F
August (harvest)	A1	A2	A1	A2	A1+B	A2+B	F
Sept	K, K	K, K					
Total Sprays	12	12	9	9	9	9	9

K = Kocide® DF (ai. 400 g/kg copper hydroxide) at 2 g/L

A1 = Amistar® WG (ai. 500 g/kg azoxystrobin, Syngenta) at 0.2 g/L

A2 = Amistar® WG (ai. 500 g/kg azoxystrobin, Syngenta) at 0.4 g/L

F = Flint® (a.i. 500 g/kg trifloxystrobin CGA 279202, oximinoacetate) 0.07 g/L

B = 0.05g/L Bion®

Table 2. Effects of the new strobilurin fungicides applied as a foliar spray in different experimental anti-resistance strategy programs with and without a plant activator (Bion®) as compared with the current commercial copper fungicide (Kocide®) on 'Hass' fruit shelf life and postharvest disease. Mean values within columns with the same letter are not significantly different at $P < 0.05$.

Treatment	Shelf life (days)	Anthracnose		Stem-End Rot	
		severity (%)	incidence (%)	severity (%)	incidence (%)
Control untreated (Tr 1)	10.1a	3.6a	22.9a	2.4a	8.9a
Kocide® (Tr 2)	10.6a	0.5a	5.4c	0.8b	2.9b
<i>Program 1</i>					
0.2g/L Amistar® (Tr 3)	10.5a	1.0a	11.7bc	1.0ab	4.6b
0.4g/L Amistar® (Tr 6)	10.2a	0.6a	10.1bc	0.2b	2.6b
<i>Program 2 (Amistar®)</i>					
0.2g/L Amistar® (Tr 4)	11.2a	0.3a	5.4c	0.3b	2.1b
0.4g/L Amistar® (Tr 7)	11.0a	0.3a	5.8c	1.1b	2.1b
<i>Program 2 (Amistar® + Bion®)</i>					
0.2g/L Amistar® (Tr 5)	10.4a	1.1a	12.7abc	0.6b	2.1b
0.4g/L Amistar® (Tr 8)	10.7a	1.2a	20.5ab	0.4b	2.0b
<i>Program 2 (Flint®)</i>					
0.07g/L Flint® (Tr 9)	10.6a	2.6a	12.8bc	0.2b	2.3b

Practical application...

We found that there were no phytotoxic effects when Amistar® was sprayed and then seven days later trees were sprayed with potassium phosphonate (0.5% at pH 7.8) (data not shown).

We also found that Amistar® used at the registered rate of 1.4g/L was effective in the control of sooty blotch (caused by the fungus *Strombospora*) and pepper spot when compared with untreated control.

Amistar® is integrated pest management (IPM) compatible. It is not toxic to predatory mites, has low toxicity to bees, low mammalian toxicity and it breaks down readily in soil.

Amistar® also has the advantages of being locally systemic. When using Amistar® there are reduced visible residues on fruit at harvest. Amistar® has a 'greening' effect on trees so they look healthier.

It is very important to use Amistar® in an anti-resistance strategy with copper fungicides. This means that:

- 1) Insert in copper program
- 2) No more than three Amistar® sprays per season
- 3) No more than 1/3 of sprays to be Amistar®
- 4) No more than two consecutive Amistar® applications
- 5) Do not start a season with Amistar®

Recommendations for use of Amistar®

Copper - First two sprays at early fruit set

Amistar® - Third spray, 14/28 days after second copper spray

Copper - 14/28 day intervals during season

Amistar® - 3-5 weeks prior to harvest

Amistar® - 1 week prior to harvest

For example, if you currently apply 9 copper sprays per season, you can use 6 copper and 3 Amistar® sprays

Or if you apply fewer Amistar® sprays just abide by the 1/3 rule

Acknowledgements ...

We sincerely thank the growers who allowed us access to their orchards throughout all of the spray trial experiments. This work was funded by the Australian Avocado Growers' Federation, Horticulture Australia Ltd and the Queensland Department of Primary Industries.

DON'T FORGET

Avocado R&D Road Show 2003

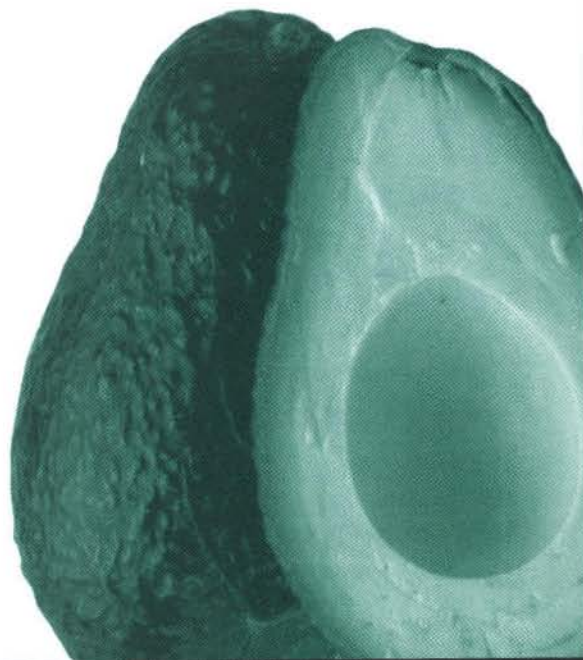
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Fax 07 3213 2480 to register and we will send you details of your event.



WA CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT THAT WORKS

A decision by WA Minister for the Environment, Judy Edwards not to apply license administration fees to water users has been welcomed by the WA Fruit Growers Association (WAFGA).

"It's great news that growers who've gone to enormous personal expense building their own dams and efficient irrigation systems, now won't be insulted by having to pay unwarranted license fees," Nannup grower and WAFGA water spokesperson, Chris Scott said.

"By recognising that inflicting yet another cost burden on farmers, who for generations have been responsible custodians of their environments, the Minister acknowledges most already have made very considerable investments in water management.

"Given the Auditor General's damning report on water resource management in WA, it is now clear that the Department of Environment (DOE) needs more public funds to better manage and administer the state's precious water resources for the good of the whole community," he said.

Mr Scott also welcomed the announcement that the DOE would develop a comprehensive water resources management strategy, but noted it must be done in consult with key stakeholders, including WAFGA.

"WAFGA acknowledges water resources must be managed when demand approaches sustainable limits, however apart from the Perth Basin and the Busselton Margaret River region, there are very few areas in the state where that is the case. If, in the future, certain areas require management, the most efficient method will be by localised water catchment groups," he said.

WAFGA believes that the state-wide rural water users summit scheduled for December will be an excellent opportunity to address the many water resource issues which have arisen since the Premier's Water Symposium and the Rights in Water Irrigation Act was amended in 2001.

Mr Scott said WAFGA would participate in the summit and bring a fair minded approach to the table to help enhance co-operation between water users and the DOE.

Sydney to host World Union of Wholesale Markets Meeting

Sydney Markets Ltd recently announced that it would be hosting the World Union of Wholesale Markets Members Meeting in Sydney in November 2004.

Holding the meeting in Sydney will provide Australia's Central Markets with an excellent opportunity to showcase Australia's world-class fresh produce, markets and strengthen relationships with international counterparts.

A specially designed program of speakers, workshops and field trips are being developed to provide delegates with the latest information on matters affecting markets worldwide.

Further information can be obtained by contacting Kate Evans on Ph: 02 9325 6295 or

Email: kate.evans@sydneymarkets.com.au

Other News from SML

SML PURCHASE EXTENDS MARKETS

In June, Sydney Markets Limited purchased just over 2 hectares of land at Flemington from the State Rail Authority bringing the total land now owned to 42 hectares.

The land will continue to be used by the Markets for overflow heavy vehicle parking but being examined is the feasibility of creating additional warehouse space. Also being examined is the use of the rail siding to provide an additional entry point for large vehicles.

NEW CHAIRMAN OF SML ANNOUNCED

Retiring Sydney Markets Limited Chairman Eric Kime has announced that Dr. John Keniry has been unanimously selected by the SML Board to take over the position at the

end of the year. Eric will continue as Chairman until the close of the SML AGM on 26 November.

In announcing the appointment Eric said that SML was particularly pleased that Dr Keniry had agreed to join its Board. He said Dr Keniry would bring a wealth of experience to the job with extensive contacts in government and business sectors.

Dr Keniry holds a number of board positions, including Chairman of the ASX-listed Ridley Corporation Limited. His current appointments also include membership of Commonwealth and State Government boards and working groups.

He was previously President of the Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry from 1999 to 2001.

DON'T FORGET

Avocado R&D Road Show 2003

Presented By The
Australian Avocado Growers Federation Inc
In Conjunction With
Your Local Grower Organisation

Fax 07 3213 2480 to register and we will send you details of your event.

Avocado R&D Road Show 2003

**Presented By The
Australian Avocado Growers Federation Inc
In Conjunction With
Your Local Grower Organisation**

8:30 am	Welcome
9:00 am	Tony Whiley – Avocado Researcher "Rootstocks, varieties and viroids – what you should know!"
9:25 am	John Leonardi – AAGF Avocado Researcher "To prune or not to prune" Developments in Canopy Management
9:50 am	Local Presenter
10:10 am	Break
10:40 am	Ken Pegg – Plant Pathologist "Integrated management of avocado diseases"
11:05 am	Antony Allen – AAGF Industry Manager "Marketing and promoting the world's most nutritious fruit"
11:30 am	Simon Newett – QDPI Senior Extension Horticulturist "Avoman 2- simpler, smarter, more powerful"
11:55 am	Local Presenter
12:15 pm	Rod Dalton – AAGF President "Industry leadership now and into the future"
12:40 pm	Lunch
2:00 pm	Farm and Packing Shed Walk
3:30 pm	Panel of Wisdom Question and Answer Session with all Presenters
4:30pm	Finish Drinks
Venue:	Are as set out on the pink insert in last issue of Talking Avocados.
Date:	Check your closest "Road Show Day" for its date
Start Time:	8:30 am

The "Road Show" offers to all growers the opportunity to learn, inspect and discuss various horticultural techniques and technologies in practice, as well as the opportunity to examine many current research sites to see some of the alternative strategies being investigated by researchers. It is an opportunity to discuss the interpretation and implementation of research outcomes at a regional level and to see current on farm research and practical applications of previous research in the growers own growing region.

Have direct access to all these experts and the AAGF team to extract the information you need to work smarter, improve your productivity and increase your bottom line. The day is all inclusive, R&D Experts, Industry Leadership, food and drinks will be supplied.

Fill out the pink form (forwarded with the Winter Issue of TA) and fax back to 07 3213 2480 to register and we will send you details of your event.

Crop Tech launch New Integrated Software and Web system

With the increasing pressure on growers to manage inputs more efficiently, while producing high yielding, quality crops, there is a need for more accurate and intensive monitoring of management parameters. To cope with increased monitoring data, Crop Tech has developed "Integrator", an integrated package of software, to collect and analyze test results and measurements.

Crop Tech has recently won the 2003 Wide Bay Burnett Region Excellence In Innovation Awards for its unique software and crop monitoring systems. The company has previously won a string of local business awards, and was the winner of the Qld Telstra & Qld Government Small Business Awards in 2001.

The new software package integrates laboratory data with field information, whether it is collected manually or electronically downloaded from sensors, and allows direct comparison of the different but closely related parameters to help diagnose problems more accurately. The full data history can be presented in a "real-time" graphic form within hours of data collection. A more dynamic approach to making management decisions can then be developed by the consultant and the client with confidence.

Nutrition Monitoring...

Sap testing is a measure of the soluble elements in transport in the plant system which are available for metabolism, and thus is not only an indication of instantaneous nutrition, but can also be used as a measure of the rate of metabolism. The sap levels can be viewed as a set of diagnostic data which reflect the crop's reaction to the environmental and management influences.

"Quicksoil" testing is a new method for rapid determination of available nutrients in the root zone of plants which has contributed to improving the internal quality and shelf life of a range of fruit, vegetable and flower crops. QuickSoil tests are also used to regularly monitor the movement of soluble nutrients through the soil profile to avert the leaching of nutrients into groundwater and reduce fertilizer wastage by eliminating unnecessary fertilizer inputs when nutrient imbalances in the soil solution reduce plant uptake.

The Integrator software scans Sap and QuickSoil results looking for patterns that indicate environmental or managerial influences that may be affecting nutrient uptake or metabolism. It will then make calculations of ongoing fertigation requirements based on test levels, yield expectation, crop removal, soil type and salinity, irrigation type, cation balances and crop stage.

The graphics package presents the dynamic changes in plant and soil nutrients over time, rather than only using the analysis as a diagnostic test.

The combination of sap testing and the new "Quicksoil" method makes Crop Tech's laboratory service unique, and has allowed for successful entry into the very competitive California and Florida markets.

Integrated Pest Management...

"PlantCheck" consists of handheld computer software that enables the accurate collection of pest, disease and beneficial insect numbers, plant measurements and weather data which is downloaded into the Integrator software which collates all field and lab data and allows for immediate graphing of pest and beneficial insect populations. The instant pest and beneficial dynamics in graphic form gives the growers and consultants the confidence to reduce pesticide applications and rely more on natural pest control measures.

New Global Web Site...

Integrator connects to the cropsystems.com site to provide rapid and flexible data access to consultants and growers around the world. The site also has a range of informative databases including pictorial library of pests, beneficials, diseases, nutritional disorders, sampling techniques and specific product information.

New Irrigation Monitoring System...

"CropSense" is a new competitively priced wireless soil moisture monitoring system successfully tested by Crop Tech early this year. It will be launched on the Australian market in October, as part of the whole Crop Systems integrated package.



- Advanced Nutrition testing
- Sold WORLDWIDE
- 18 years experience

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NEW AVOCADO BARCODE



Lawrie Greenup of Fresh Produce Watch displays a tray of Avocados with the new barcode incorporating the National Heart Foundation 'Tick'. AAGF holds a sub-license for its growers to utilize the 'Tick' through AUF. Photo was taken in late May at the Mango 2003 conference in Bundaberg at David Courtice's Packing Shed.

For further Information on the Barcode and 'Tick' contact AAGF on 07 3213 2477