

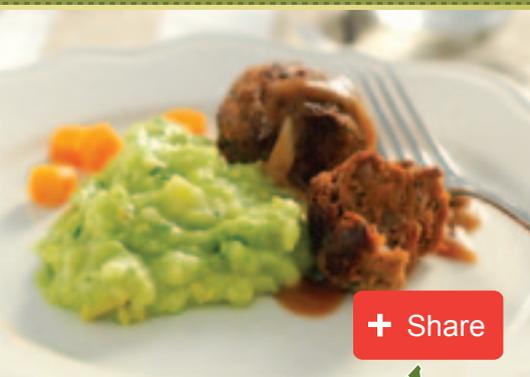
TALKING AVOCADOS



Australian Avocados

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Australian Avocados Website Promotion Strategy

Avocado Maturity & Dry Matter Testing

Western Australian Hass Campaign 2010



THE HULK SMOOTHIE



eating my colourful vegies and fruit

I ♥ FOOTY

SUMMER 2010

Print Post Approved - 44307/0006

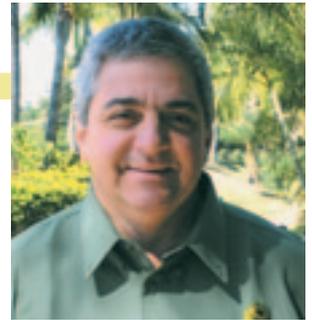
Volume 21 No 4

Chairman's Perspective

As we come to the end of 2010 it's a good time to reflect on the year that has past, and what a year it was too.

We saw unbelievable high prices for avocado from January through to March 2010, with strong supply and good consumer demand. We saw a Shepard crop of exceptional quality that reinforced the benefits that variety can offer the consumer and the retailers. We saw strong prices for Hass in winter when for the first time supply was in excess of 200,000 trays per week. We saw a change of Federal Government leadership on the day when the Avocados Australia strategic planning group was seconded in a meeting room in Parliament House. This excitement certainly set the tone for a positive outcome to the development of our strategic plan that will move our industry forward to 2016. There were the exciting developments in the marketing programme which takes us on the road of the early childhood and food service programs. There were so many achievements this past year and I hope you will take the time to read this issue of Talking Avocados and re-read past issues to fully appreciate the achievements your organization has clocked up.

Looking forward we can see that we have a major world event on our calendar. I hope all avocado growers in Australia will take this opportunity to get together and celebrate our achievements with our friends from the world-wide avocado community. The VII World Avocado Congress 2011 will be held in Cairns, Australia, on 5-9 September. Early registrations are now open and I would recommend that growers start planning.. The World Congress is primarily focused on the delivery and discussion of technical aspects of avocado culture



provided by experts from all over the world. This is certainly the only place you will get to hear and meet these experts in one place. In support of the scientific programme there is a strong following of people interested in the marketing aspect of the World Congress; allied suppliers to farmers, government, growers and other researchers. This will be a week of learning and fun and you will really see and enjoy what makes this industry, your industry, so good and so different from other horticultural industries in Australia and around the world. The World Congress will be the place to make new friends and catch up with old friends.

Jim Kochi

Jim Kochi,
Chairman, Avocados Australia



Cairns Conference Centre
venue for the VII World Avocado Congress 2011

WARNING

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

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

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

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

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

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



CERT TM

Industry Matters

Merry
Christmas
and Happy
New Year



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

avocado. For more information about the nutritional benefits of avocado and hundreds of avocado recipe ideas please visit www.avocado.org.au

Australian Avocados also utilised the Expo as an opportunity to launch their 'Cutest Baby Competition'. Parents blocked the aisles of the convention centre lining up to have their two to six month old babies professionally photographed sitting in the seed pocket of a Hass avocado.

View some of Australian

Avocados cutest babies

at www.avocado.org.au/cutestbaby/



On behalf of the Avocados Australia Board and Office Team we wish to thank everybody for the support we have received throughout what has been a very busy and challenging year.

We wish you all a very safe and happy Christmas and holiday season and look forward to working with you in 2011 as we continue to grow our industry.

Babies Aussie Avos

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

Last month, Australian Avocados attended the 'Pregnancy, Babies & Children's Expo' at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in Southbank, Melbourne. The expo sources the best early childhood expert advice, parenting tips and product innovations to help guide parents to make informed choices on what's best for their child as they grow and develop.

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

"Avocados are a brilliant food for your baby's health and development. The monounsaturated fats found in avocados are needed for your baby's brain and nervous system, as is vitamin B also found in avocado which is vital for your baby's neural retention" commented avocado nutritional spokeswoman Zoe Bingley-Pullin, who attended the expo to educate parents about the benefits of eating

More than 250 babies were entered into the Australian Avocados 'Cutest Baby Competition'. Voting opened October; over 2500 people joined the Avo Club to view and vote for their favourite cutest baby, with in excess of 2200 votes being cast before voting closed on November 14. To view some of Australian Avocados cutest babies please visit www.avocado.org.au/cutestbaby/

"The response Australian Avocados received at the Expo was absolutely incredible. We are so happy with the success we saw in Melbourne that Australian Avocados will be returning next year at the 'Pregnancy, Babies and Children's Expo' in Sydney from the 13-15 May 2011" said Avocados Australia CEO, Antony Allen. Source: Avocados Australia

OrchardInfo

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

See below for an example form.



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

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

A new market for small avocados

Avocados Australia CEO Mr Antony Allen today welcomed, as a milestone for the Australian avocado industry, the retail launch of AvoFresh and their seven new packaged fresh avocado products. The AvoFresh range is now available right alongside fresh-cut salads in the fresh produce section of every Woolworths store across New South Wales.

“The Strategic Plan for the Australian avocado industry has included the goal of developing new markets for Australian grown avocados and AvoFresh will certainly do that” commented Mr Allen, “the opportunity for Australian growers to sell smaller and second grade avocado for processing is good for the overall profitability for growers.”

AvoFresh is made from up to 98 per cent fresh avocado

and is a great option for meal occasions that include spreads, salads, parties and snacks. The AvoFresh range includes chunky, soft and firm texture avocado in plain avocado as well as seasoned and spicy flavour varieties available to purchase in convenient ‘peel open’ tubs or squeeze tubes. Woolworths will be supporting the launch with in-store demonstrations and sampling opportunities for both the avocado-loving and curious customers.



The AvoFresh brand is marketed by NewFresh Foods Pty Ltd based in Bundaberg Queensland and is a partnership venture between Australia’s leading avocado grower and processor Simpson Farms and fresh produce experts Austchilli/Pressure Fresh.

“Our partnership brings together Simpsons expertise in growing and sourcing avocado, new technology to package fresh avocado, and fresh produce branding and marketing experience” said Mr Agnew.

Australian avocado growers are expected to benefit from incremental sales of Australian avocados especially as there will now be more options for fruit with variable external quality as with AvoFresh products the skin and seed are removed.

Mr Agnew explains that the AvoFresh products “all keep fresh for four weeks and up to five days once opened, so there’s no reason for not having ripe and ready avocados on hand this festive season.” Source: Avocados Australia

Registration of endosulfan cancelled in Australia

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) advises that it has cancelled the registration of the insecticide endosulfan.

This decision follows a recent assessment of new

ANVAS ACCREDITED NURSERIES

ANVAS accredited trees can be purchased from the following nurseries:

<p>Anderson’s Nursery Graham & Vivienne Anderson Duranbah Road Duranbah NSW Ph: 02 6677 7229</p>	<p>Avocado Coast Nursery Greg Hopper Schulz Road, Woombye Qld Ph: 07 5442 2424</p>	<p>Birdwood Nursery Peter and Sandra Young 71-83 Blackall Range Rd Nambour Qld Ph: 07 5442 1611</p>	<p>Turkinje Nursery Peter & Pam Lavers 100 Henry Hannam Drive Walkamin Qld Ph: 0419 781 723</p>
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Industry Matters continued

information by the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPC) that the prolonged use of endosulfan is likely to lead to adverse environmental effects via spray drift and run-off.

A full risk assessment conducted by DSEWPC concluded that these long term risks could not be mitigated through restrictions on use or variations to label instructions.

Agricultural products containing endosulfan are no longer registered in Australia. The three current approvals for endosulfan have also been cancelled, and the five products containing the chemical will be phased out over the next two years.

This time period has been imposed because of the relatively limited amounts of endosulfan in use and is in line with phase-out periods imposed by other national regulators who have similarly taken recent action against endosulfan.

Risks to human health were not a factor in the APVMA decision. While recent and emerging toxicological data was assessed by the Office of Chemical Safety and Environmental Health, it has been determined that the current regulatory regime has been effective in managing these risks.

Some of the new environmental data on which the APVMA's decision is based emerged following the recent nomination of endosulfan to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). This nomination focussed more attention on endosulfan and produced a large volume of new information on its environmental fate and effects. Source: APVMA

Withdrawal of endosulfan for avocados

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) have announced the withdrawal of all

registrations for endosulfan in Australia. The decision was taken on environmental grounds based on new data that emerged as part of the compounds review and nomination for inclusion to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

The APVMA are allowing a phase-out period of two years for existing stock. Given the importance of endosulfan in the control of certain pest species, importantly FSB in avocados, the APVMA have indicated a preparedness to discuss access to potential alternatives where applicable via the permit system.

Currently there are a few alternatives for controlling FSB. One confirmed option is Lepidex 500 from Nufarm, please contact your local reseller for more information.

Avocados Australia has been working closely with the macadamia, lychee and papaya industries to develop a new multi-approach project for new methods of control for FSB. The sudden withdrawal of endosulfan has caused this strategy to become of urgent importance. Avocados Australia is also looking quickly into possible other products that could be used under the permit system for growers without product for the next two years and for use while other methods are finalised under the multi-approach project.

The management strategies proposed in this project are:

1. Collation of past research / practices

Collation of past research and practices will be important to have a data base of research and practices of FSB management.

2. Chemical control

Evaluation of IPM compatible insecticides, new chemistry and bio-pesticides.

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3. Monitoring

There will be two key components of the monitoring program: trap cropping and pheromone traps.

i. Trap cropping

Developing a new monitoring strategy by using trap crops as a monitoring tool.

Monitoring protocols need to be developed in consultation with crop consultants.

There are about 20 trap hedges with different FSB host plants in place on commercial farms in NSW and Queensland.

ii. Pheromone traps:

Pheromone compounds for *Amblypelta spp.* have been identified and now need to be fine-tuned and tested. Pheromone traps would also be a very easy and efficient way to monitor FSB if they prove to be successful.

The following four aspects need to be considered in this study:

Adjustment of pheromone compounds to optimise efficacy and stable compounds for field use

Field evaluation of pheromones for both *Amblypelta spp.* in QLD and NSW

Design optimal trapping device

Evaluate trapping device for both *Amblypelta spp.* in the field in QLD and NSW

4. Biological control

A number of potential biological control agents have been identified and need to be evaluated. These include the egg parasitoids *Ooencyrtus caurus*, *Anastatus sp.*, *Centrodora darwini* and *Gryon sp.* as well as the tachinid fly *Trichopoda giacomellii* that should be evaluated for their potential to control FSB in the field.

Searching for biological control agents requires a trapping grid in the areas where the pest is most abundant. This work has commenced but needs to be expanded to other crops.

This study will involve six different components:

- i. Searching for biological control agents in QLD and NSW.
- ii. Ecology of biological control agents if unknown (including live-cycle, investigation of flora of their environment).

- iii. Mass-rearing of FSB for testing and rearing of biological control agents.
- iv. Mass-rearing of biological control agents.
- v. Release strategies.
- vi. Evaluation of biological control agents in QLD and NSW.

5. Case studies

Case studies on commercial farms are an important demonstration tool to strengthen adoption of management strategies.

6. Area Wide Management

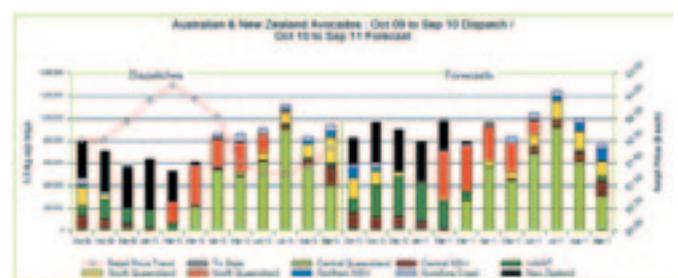
The above control strategies will be integrated and tested at farm level and regionally via an Area Wide Management (AWM) approach.

Source: Avocados Australia

Infocado update

Below are extracts from the October 2010 Infocado quarterly report. The next quarterly report will be distributed to all Infocado contributors before the end of January.

Previous forecasts had suggested volumes were set to reduce fairly significantly in September. From August however, as the graph below illustrates, September volumes were slightly higher than those in August as Central Queensland fruit was moved back. Retail prices have remained quite steady over the last three months only starting to rise slowly towards the end of September; which is interesting given the rise in dispatches during that month.



As can be seen from the graph provided, volumes towards the end of Spring and the beginning of Summer have remained high, especially in comparison to the same time period last year. This is due to higher New Zealand volumes at the beginning of their season and higher volumes coming out of Western Australia due to young trees coming into production.

Industry Matters continued



During this same period retail prices have remained quite steady although increasing slightly as we come into the Summer period.

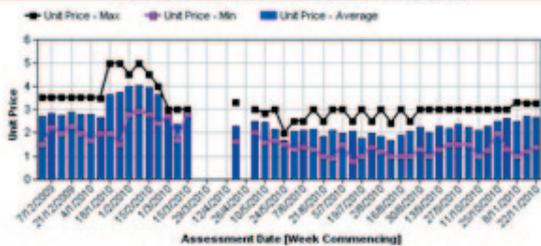
Hass Avocado Average Retail Prices - Brisbane



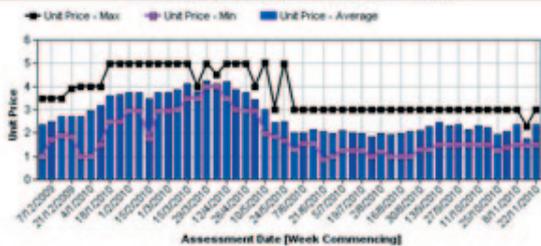
Hass Avocado Average Retail Prices - Sydney



Hass Avocado Average Retail Prices - Melbourne



Hass Avocado Average Retail Prices - Perth



Infocado Summit

The third biennial Infocado Summit was held in St Kilda, Melbourne on the 26th and 27th October this year. This was an invitation only event open just to Infocado contributors; including both packhouses and wholesalers. 70 packhouses and wholesalers attended the event which included a suite of great presenters and activities that

included both a wholesale and retail outlet tour.

Presenters included:

- Professor Andrew Fearn, supply chain expert from the UK;
- Yahya Kanj, The Nielsen Company;
- Martin Kneebone, Freshlogic;
- Antony Allen, CEO, Avocados Australia; and
- Joanna Embry, Program Manager, Avocados Australia.

As well as providing Infocado contributors with invaluable information, experiences and opportunities for networking, the Infocado Summit also provided a forum for discussing the future of Infocado and how the system might develop into the future to further benefit the industry.

Freshcare Code of Practice – Food Safety and Quality - 3rd edition

The 3rd Edition Code of Practice has been generally well received by members and has been widely accepted by customer groups - ensuring Freshcare maintains its position as a practical and cost-effective on farm assurance program delivering consistent food safety and quality outcomes.

The 3rd Edition Code has a more logical, more user-friendly structure and includes improved hazard analysis tools and guidance information, as well as practices for managing emerging issues such as allergen control. Code elements from the 2nd Edition have also been reviewed and in many instances strengthened.

All Freshcare members and businesses moving from other on-farm food safety programs, must undertake approved Freshcare training before they can be audited and certified to the 3rd Edition Code of Practice.

This training requirement was identified as essential to ensure effective implementation of the 3rd Edition Code, and it was also a specified requirement from key customer groups to ensure ongoing approval of the Freshcare Food Safety and Quality Code.

IMPORTANT - All Freshcare audits after the 1st March 2011 will be to the 3rd Edition Food Safety and Quality Code.

Bumper avocado harvest a catch-22

A West Australian avocado grower says this year's bumper season could be marred by dry weather conditions. Busselton and Capel avocado producers began picking three weeks ago, while most Manjimup and Pemberton growers will kick things off later this month or early November.

Warm weather is ideal for avocados as it encourages

flowering and, if the grower is using bees, more pollination. But dry days also mean dry dams and the lack of water is worrying Russel Delroy.

“A bumper season depends on two things - one that we get good bee activity, good pollination and good fruit set and the second is that we have enough water to carry that crop through.” There are a lot of growers in the South West this year that are somewhat short of water for the first time. “We’ve had a number of our growers ring and say they’re short of water and they have a good crop, so they’d like to harvest the whole of their crop early. That’s just risk management, but what we have to be careful of is that there isn’t too much supply in a short period of time. So we’re prioritising the growers that need to harvest now because of a water shortage, so we avoid too much of an overlap.” Source: ABC

Results of AVOMAN users’ survey

A survey was sent to the 120 registered owners of the AVOMAN avocado orchard management software in April 2010 to assess how many were still using the software, which parts they were using, and how they were using it. Of the 55 growers who responded, 29 (53 per cent)

said that they were still using the software. The highest proportion of respondents was from Western Australia, perhaps reflecting where the greatest numbers of new growers are.

The highlights from the survey were as follows:

The parts of the program being used the most (ranked in order)

- Crop information Help files
- The chemical/fertiliser database
- Growth cycles
- Crop monitoring (e.g. leaf analysis)
- Fertiliser recommendations
- Crop calendar

Most useful features (ranked in order)

- Chemical/fertiliser database
- Recording and monitoring leaf and soil analysis
- Crop information Help files
- Nutrition recommendations
- Phytophthora recommendations
- Growth cycles



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- **Value Added Products take more fruit**
- **Grower Owned and Investors welcome**
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- **Offering Retailers what THEY need... means we get more regular business**
- **Transparency and Experience since 1984**

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PH 07 4126 6900
FAX 07 4126 6955
Email: jim@avochoice.com

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Childers Qld 4660
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* STANDARD 5.5KG TRAY WITH INSERT

Industry Matters continued

Most useful reports (ranked in order)

- Leaf and soil analysis reports
- Fertiliser reports
- Chemical reports
- Leaf and soil analysis charts
- Spray diary

Frequency of use

Most growers said they used AVOMAN weekly.

Those no longer using AVOMAN cited the following reasons (in order of frequency) for dropping out:

- Lack of time
- Using some other method to keep records
- Too complex to use
- Insufficient training

To encourage growers to use AVOMAN again many growers called for more training and some simplification of the program.

While the number of users is not sufficient to warrant significant investment in software updates, the survey did show an ongoing need for training and support for these clients. Many thanks to the AVOMAN users who responded to the survey.

Source: Simon Newett DEEDI

Auspak Avocados and their customers enjoy success

The Australian Export Company (AEC) enjoyed a very successful 2010 season; exporting 'Auspak Avocados' to customers in Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, with the addition of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait this year. Throughout 2010 the AEC increased their exports by over 100 per cent, developed an avocado 'Export Manual' to standardise good practice throughout their export supply chain, and launched a series of avocado handling and merchandising training programmes across Asia.

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

The AEC offers free training to importers and their personnel, wholesalers and retailers in the handling and merchandising of Australian avocados. AEC customer Euro-Atlantic Sdn Bhd, a leading importer and distributor of exotic fruits and vegetables based in Kuala Lumpur has successfully leveraged their training to promote the consumption of

avocados in Malaysia and increase their profits significantly.

The training was offered as an educational seminar entitled 'A Taste of Australian Avocados' and was held at the Berjaya University College of Hospitality in Kuala Lumpur on the 18 May 2010, attracting the participation of many of Malaysia's leading retailers and hoteliers. The seminar included the presentation and discussion of information about the proper handling of avocados, in order to minimize damage and maximize consumer satisfaction, as well as the many ways of approaching effective merchandising and consumer awareness campaigns.

Soon after, Euro-Atlantic launched a new pre-packed avocado product containing three avocados: a softening, firm ripe, and medium to soft ripe avocado. An avocado ripeness chart and avocado nutritional guide were placed on the front and inside cover of the packaging for consumers to refer to if they were in anyway unsure about the level of ripeness or nutritional content of their purchased avocado. Sales increased by approximately 300 per cent.

The training offered to AEC customers is a project that was launched in conjunction with Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) and the Global Markets Initiative (GMI) of the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), with DEEDI representative Jodie Campbell appointed as Project Leader. Training programmes have successfully been completed in Singapore; Hong Kong; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Bangkok, Thailand. In total, approximately 528 participants have been trained in 2010.

The AEC in collaboration with Avocados Australia, HAL, DEEDI and the GMI have also developed an avocado 'Export Manual'. The manual describes the processes and practices used by all AEC members and their in-market partners to manage fruit quality through the avocado export supply chain; from growing and packing Australian avocados for export, to transporting avocados to international markets, and handling avocados from within the market. The manual has been presented to all AEC shareholders and is scheduled to be implemented across the AEC export supply chain in full by May 2011.

The AEC is very optimistic about the future; the Australian Shepard avocado season is set to begin in February as Auspak Avocados leads the way in the supply of premium quality avocados and the most supported export product on the international market. "At the moment we are busy exporting avocados from Western Australia; the supply is good and the quality is very high" commented Mr Louis Grey, General Manager of the AEC, "we are confident that we can supply a consistent, high quality, well supported product to meet your requirements and help you grow your business with avocados." Source: Freshplaza

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Industry Matters continued

VII World Avocado Congress update

Register now for the VII World Avocado Congress!

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

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

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



The VII World Avocado Congress will be held in beautiful Cairns, Queensland.

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

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

“The last World Congress in Chile saw researchers,

growers and marketers all attend in large numbers,” explains Mr Allen, “attending the Congress was in such high demand among industry stakeholders that unfortunately many missed out and were left disappointed, so I would urge everyone to register early.”

Registering now will ensure your place as a delegate of the VII World Avocado Congress. Those who register early will also receive a discounted ‘Early Bird’ registration price.

	Early Bird (on or before 6 May 2011)	Standard (on or before 5 Aug 2011)	Late/ on-site (on or before 6 Aug 2011)
Avocados Australia member	650	850	1,050
Non-member	795	995	1,195
Full time student	500	600	700
Day registration*	300	400	500

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

Sponsorship and exhibition opportunities now available

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

Reach key national and international avocado growers, allied industries and government agencies

Participate in the discussion about current issues and challenges in the avocado industry

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

Showcase your products and/or services on a multi-national scale

Position yourself as a leader in the industry

Be part of the most important event in the avocado industry

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

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

Sponsorship opportunities to suit all budgets

Book now at early bird rates and maximise your exposure

For inquiries or further comment please contact:

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

VII World Avocado Congress abstracts now open

Next year over 1000 delegates from 15 countries around the world are expected to attend the VII World Avocado Congress. The Congress will be hosted by Avocados Australia in beautiful Cairns, Queensland, Australia, from 5-9 September 2011. For those that are interested in presenting to the world-wide avocado industry at this flagship event, the congress managers are now accepting abstracts for consideration at www.worldavocadocongress2011.com

Presenting at the VII World Avocado Congress offers a rare opportunity to share and showcase good practice and/or research, create networks and communities of practice with others that are interested in the same topic/issue, and lets those outside your own local area know your interest and/or strengths.

The Scientific Committee is seeking presentations relating to the latest information on avocado production and management issues, with a special emphasis on the future of the avocado industry. Other topics/issues of interest relating to genetic resources, pests and diseases, culture management, post harvest/processing, marketing and the commercial stream will also be highly regarded. Congress delegates will comprise of avocado producers, wholesalers, food service providers, market traders, retailers and government representatives. Presentations need to extend, challenge and stimulate those delegates.

Speakers will have the option to make either an oral presentation or a poster presentation. The oral presentation requires the speaker to make an 18 minute presentation; 15 minutes for the presentation and three minutes to answer any related questions. Oral presentation will be accompanied with simultaneous interpreting made from Spanish into English or from English into Spanish. The poster presentation requires the speaker to present a poster (in English or Spanish) and be available at their poster to discuss their work with interested parties during refreshment breaks.

The congress managers have opened a 'Speaker and Program Committee Zone'; an online site where potential speakers will be able to submit their abstract/s for consideration by the congress's Scientific Committee. The speaker zone also offers potential speakers the opportunity to register to the congress; edit their contact details; edit, change or delete their abstract/s; and confirm their abstract/paper has converted successfully to a PDF format. The speaker zone can be accessed via the VII World Avocado Congress website at www.worldavocadocongress2011.com

The deadline for abstract submission is 6 April 2011. The Scientific Committee will consider all submitted abstracts and in May 2011 the abstracts that are the most engaging and relevant to the industry will be approved and added to the VII World Avocado Congress program. Congress managers will send a confirmation email to those people whose abstracts are approved and from that point the selected speakers will have until 30 June 2011 to submit their full papers.

Expression of interest for the post VII World Avocado Congress tour to New Zealand

The New Zealand Avocado Industry Council (AIC) is seeking expressions of interest from attendees of the VII World Avocado Congress 2011 to attend a post congress tour in New Zealand. To express your interest to attend and to let us know what avocado industry related places and/or activities you would like to see and do, please fill out the online form found on the NZ Avocado website http://www.nzavocado.co.nz/index.php/pi_pageid/351. Should interest be sufficient, the AIC will go ahead with planning a tour and be in touch with those who have filled out this form.

Around Australia

Tamborine and Northern Rivers Report

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



Northern New South Wales and Tamborine growers should by now be finished picking for what was a most disappointing season. Yields were again down on what was to be expected and reject rates were up for most orchards. Prices however for the most part were satisfactory.

The 2011 crop seems a real mixed bag; all orchards across the region had an excellent flowering that looked extremely promising. However, some coastal orchards received in excess of 500mm in October with very few clear days. The result being another compromised crop for the east and north of the area and large promising crops in the west, despite extensive cloud cover for the duration of flowering.

For some orchards this will mark the third year of weather compromised crops, with severe storms in 2009 and the suspected effect of dust and cloud in 2010. This is the nature of farming however and my sympathies do go out to affected growers with the hope that things will turn around for them next year.

The incessant wet weather has meant an early start to the Phytophthora risk season. Growers who have set large crops need to be especially diligent so as not to suffer dieback and the resulting loss in productivity that ensues. Any growers who are unsure what to do should contact their district horticulturist for advice.

Wishing all growers a happy and safe summer season.

Sunshine Coast Report

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



As the avocado season comes to an end for this year, we again reflect on the year that has passed. I guess it could be summed up as follows:

- Reasonable return for fruit
- Lower than usual crop sizes
- Good rains throughout the year and more to come - climate is always a challenge in the horticulture industry - too little, too much, too late, too early - one maybe an eternal optimist one day.

At the time of writing this it appears that the fruit set for next year is in the 'good category' however only time will tell, especially in the next few months. I realise it maybe

early to wade into the maturity standards and residue levels - this aspect is never early or late. I will continue to mention these two topics and I strongly urge you to comply with residue levels and to ensure fruit has been tested appropriately for maturity. Marketing of Sunshine Coast region fruit is months away and I urge you not to place immature fruit on the market. The long term negative impact is significant in terms buyer confidence and future prices and the short term fix of early prices doesn't last the distance.

Along the grapevine I have heard that our Sunshine Coast Regional Council is debating whether to charge residents, who do not have rubbish bins, a new levy-somewhere in the vicinity of \$70.00 per year. On one hand you are encouraged to recycle and minimise waste and then we shall put a new levy on to raise more revenue anyway. One has to be cynical about the five levies that we have in our region - there are no increases in rates just constant rise in levies.

I wish all of you a very happy Christmas and joyful New Year.

Tri State Report

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



The cool start to spring has continued and the potential for a heavy flowering has been realised, perhaps as heavy as I have seen in a number of years. This has resulted in an excessive leaf drop, particularly for growers who still have some Gwens. The cool start has been beneficial in limiting sunburn on fruit that has been more exposed than usual.

Pollination has been excellent to average, depending on when the trees were in peak flower. Trees that flowered in mid-October had the biggest fruit set I have ever seen and are currently and thankfully shedding a lot of this set. Realistically, we could lose 95 per cent of this and still have too much. The packing shed manager is not keen on packing fruit that peaks at 32's, but still I watch the drop and hope it does not go too far. Trees that flowered at the end of October to first week of November were, I assume, affected by a period of cold and wet conditions and did not set even remotely as well, although at this stage look to still be good. It may also be that the trees are showing the set more with the higher leaf drop and I am still frustrated by the variability with some trees failing to set much at all. These trees really drop the average yield across the block.

This year, as previously, I faithfully had a heap of bee hives in to aide pollination, only to watch them fly past the avocado trees straight to the citrus and work their bums

off pollinating my seedless mandarins. We seemed to have a few feral bees around this year and can only assume that their numbers are down from the run of dry years and hopefully they will build up this year. So what is pollinating the avocados? As in past years we had high numbers of Hover flies, but the difference was as big of a population of Blow flies that we have ever seen - nearly as thick as the locusts - and seemed to be active around the trees, so who knows?

We cannot control the pollination temperatures or the activity of all the possible pollinators, but it appears that best yields come with heavy flowerings, which becomes just a numbers game. We can certainly aim with irrigation management and nutrition to improve flowering levels but we are limited by the use of Zutano rootstock. Therefore, I am really pleased that we have approval for an extension of Tony Whiley's rootstock improvement trial to include a site in Waikerie where we will get a look at a lot of the new selections under local conditions. While it will be a number of years until we have results, hopefully selection and use of better rootstocks will allow new plantings to be less variable with fewer of the dud trees that we all have.

North Queensland Report

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



It was the last week in December as I was writing the article for the Summer 2009 issue of Talking Avocados, and I ended my column with a comment that the first consignment of Shepard avocados had hit the Rocklea markets that same week. Well, this year I am getting in early with the hope that the Shepard crop is harvested when the dry matter (DM) reaches a minimum of 21 per cent, as recommended, and I would expect that to occur sometime in 2011.

The Hass crops coming in from New Zealand and Western Australia are expected to be larger than last year, so it's likely that there will be ample supply of Hass at high DM in January and February and unlikely that there will be a strong demand for Shepard at low DM. I urge all growers to be vigilant with your DM testing to avoid the disappointment of poor returns from low quality avocados.

Quality will be the biggest issue for Northern Queensland in 2011. We've had an early start to a very wet summer - all those field day topics of Phytophthora control with phosphoric acid, Amistar and copper sprays, spotting bug control, sprayer calibrations, and every other trick you know will be necessary to get you through this summer.

The Atherton Tableland Avocado Growers Association (ATAGA) welcomed David Adil as the new President and

gives a sincere thank you to Etienne Theart who vacated the position.

This will be a difficult summer for our trees, but I wish all growers good health, good cheer, a happy festive season, and safe passage through the months ahead.

Central New South Wales Report

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



Central New South Wales (NSW) avocado production can essentially be divided into two seasons. Coastal orchards usually set their crop during September and the harvest season runs from June to October. The elevated cool-climate orchards, on the other hand, generally set their crop during late October/early November and maturity is reached during July/August. However, their harvest can be managed to run through the late Spring/Summer window.

It was fairly obvious after last year's dust storms and cold events that the crop would be compromised. Most coastal orchards have been achieving around 40-50 per cent of capacity for the 2010 season with the odd early flowering block doing better. Three weeks of consistent showers and drizzle during September and early October has meant the 2010 flowering was again a lost opportunity. Growers are confirming that we are basically looking at a 5-10 per cent crop. Apart from the pain of reduced turnover, the other difficult issue growers face is determining what standard orchard inputs are actually worth investing in. Good luck with that headache! In contrast to the coastal orchards, the tableland areas have flowered late enough to avoid the problem periods and set well in the past couple of seasons, not withstanding existing biennial situations.

I would like to see work done on manipulating peak flowering, either earlier or later, to provide growers in more southern latitudes a hedge against weather and other anomalies. In the last issue of Talking Avocados you would have read about research and development (R&D) project number AV09009. This is Antony Allen's brain child and so far is attracting great international support. Congratulations to Antony and the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) for expanding their horizons to a global perspective. I'm hopeful that out of this will come some potential tools to manage flower timing.

In recent seasons at around this time I have found myself reflecting on what a great job all those involved in the supply chain have done in achieving an orderly market. What has gone wrong lately? As I write this, the market is failing to the tune of \$4/tray at a time when

Around Australia continued

demand should be rising significantly. Week 46 shipments exceeded forecasts by 50,000 units. Obviously there are always external factors that influence harvest decisions and market conditions but there would appear to be a degree of mismanagement occurring that deserves review and hopefully some lessons learnt.

While on the topic of forecasting and planning, total dispatches from Central NSW packers will end up somewhere around 25 per cent below their seasonal forecast. The avocado IAC relies heavily on your forecasts to set its research and promotional budgets for the year ahead; setting the mould for important financial commitments and partnerships. If all nine reporting areas were to get the forecast wrong then the industry would find itself in a very embarrassing situation. I would simply ask that all Central NSW Infocado contributors review their forecast methodology and ensure that wishful thinking doesn't form part of the equation.

Finally, I'd like to mention that a Comboyne grower, Gordon Burch, has been working with WorkPlace Health and Safety NSW to develop a new maintenance protocol that will allow older elevating work platforms on orchards throughout NSW to remain in use by satisfying state

regulations. Further work still needs to be done but hopefully once finalized this new protocol will lead to a code of practice that can be utilised by growers throughout Australia. I will keep you updated. I would like to thank Gordon for his hard work so far on this much needed initiative.

Central Queensland Report

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



This time last year we were wondering when we were going to get some decent rain. Well the year of 2010 has certainly provided plenty of wet stuff from the sky; storages are close to, if not, 100 per cent full and more is forecast to come. While the challenge in the past has been to work around too little rainfall, we are now faced with the issues of having plenty. Phytophthora control will be an important part of orchard management. Growers can use a multi-task approach to preventing and curing Phytophthora, from the use of chemicals, to mulching, and watering techniques.

As mentioned before, and I am sure to harp on it again, it is important for growers to maintain adequate protection of their crop from disease even at this young stage. Conditions for disease to build up and cause post-harvest problems in a few months are ideal at the moment. As has been pointed out time and time again; if we give consumers a bad experience they will turn off buying avocados.

Again we had a reasonable season pricing wise, the Shepards started off with a bang, the usual ANZAC day dip occurred, and it was not until August that the market came up significantly. Volumes have been on the increase and look like they will stay up. The marketers of the avocados from here on to the start of our season should continue the good work done through the winter. This will give our region a similar start to this year.

Crop set has produced a mixed bag of results among orchards and varieties due to cloudy and showery weather. Only time will tell but it is expected that this region will produce more trays in 2011 than were produced in 2010.

The Infocado Summit in Melbourne was well attended. Those who went got plenty out of the market tour, retail tour and the seminar. It was particularly good for growers to touch base and talk to those who are the end sellers of the fruits of our labour.

The VII World Avocado Congress in Cairns next year will be on us before we know it, so I urge growers who want to

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attend to register soon.

Western Australia Report

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



This summer is looking like a long, hot dry summer and water management is going to be critical. Having had one of our driest winters on record many growers have limited irrigation reserves and careful budgeting is going to be critical to get through the summer - let's hope we have an early break to the season.

Harvest is nearing completion on the coast and Manjimup/ Pemberton has finished harvesting exposed fruit. Leaf drop has been an issue for many growers in the Manjimup/ Pemberton area this year and early harvest volumes have been higher than normal because of this. Volumes of fruit into the Australian marketplace reached record levels in late November - week 46 dispatches were at 242,000 with tray equivalents reaching 175 per cent in comparison to the same period last year. Values have been somewhat lower but held reasonably considering the increased volume. Encouragingly there has been little buildup of stock

on hand in the supply chain - so all this fruit is moving through the system and being sold in a timely manner. One area of concern is that many orchards have dry matters that are much higher than normal for this time of the year and at this rate may be excessive by mid to late Summer.

While all growing regions had a good to heavy flowering, the amount of fruit set that is being retained is looking a little disappointing. North of Perth, coming off a light crop and expecting a solid set, have had significant fruit drop as have some orchards further south. Once again the frustrations of biennial, or rather what may be more aptly described as 'irregular cropping', continues. Many theories abound as to what is the primary cause - the sooner we get some solid science examining the complexity of issues involved the better. Although Spring has been relatively free of rain with plenty of nice warm days, minimum night temperatures during flowering have been between 2.8 - 0.7 degrees lower than last year across all growing regions.

Let's hope by the end of Summer, as fruit begins to size up, the crop set is actually better than first thought - as is often the case. Farmers by their very nature are pessimistic, but we all live in hope.



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A Tribute to Johannes (Jan) Toerien

1941-2010

Jan was born in the Cape Province of South Africa in 1941, he graduated from the University of Stellenbosch in 1965 and started his scientific career in the South African office of Chesterford Park Research based in Cambridge UK. In 1971 he joined Ciba-Geigy and in 1973 he started his career with Westfalia Estates (a major producer of avocados and timber) near Tzaneen in South Africa.

At that time *Phytophthora cinnamomi* root rot was rife not only at Westfalia Estates but also in the avocado industry throughout the world and the control methods available were very limited. Jan set about finding effective yet practical control methods. A study tour to Israel and California was the turning point and following this he played a pivotal role in the development and adoption of both metalaxyl (Ridomil®) applications and phosphorous acid injections for the treatment of *Phytophthora* root rot through collaboration with researchers such as Prof. George Zentmyer in California and Dr Joe Darvas in South Africa.

When it became apparent that chemicals alone were not sufficient to deal with *Phytophthora*, Jan turned his attention to rootstocks as another means of achieving control. He searched for rootstocks that were better able to perform under disease pressure and initiated the current successful rootstock selection program at Westfalia Estates which has released the rootstocks that are now established in many countries around the world.

In spite of getting on top of *Phytophthora* root rot, fruit quality was still sub-optimal upon arrival at markets in Europe. Jan and his team started to focus on other areas for improvement including mineral nutrition and postharvest treatment, storage and transport. Breakthroughs at the time included improvements in air circulation through pallets, high carbon dioxide shock treatments prior to shipping, and a step-down temperature regime from picking to marketing to reduce chilling injury.

Jan was an excellent communicator, business and people manager and served as a very effective General Manager of Westfalia Estates from 1988



until 1995. He was well respected by all levels and cultures in the business. Jan's quiet but well informed and considered approach won over many people throughout his life.

In 1998 Jan and his wife Zenta moved to Australia where he consulted with avocado producers in Australia, South Africa and Chile. In 2000 he and Zenta bought 'Rosehill Estate' in the Childers region of Queensland. The avocado and litchi orchard there had been neglected but Jan and Zenta applied their expert knowledge and a lot of hard work to rejuvenate the property. This included replacing the irrigation system, top-working Fuerte trees to

Hass, correcting nutritional problems, establishing a canopy management system and tackling a serious *Phytophthora* root rot problem. Today the orchard produces some of the best quality avocado fruit to be found on both the local and export market.

Jan was very generous with his time and was always willing to share his ideas and knowledge with others; whether it was an individual grower, a study group, a conference field trip, a marketing group or on the world stage at international conferences. He authored many scientific papers and his belief in the importance of collaboration and sharing of information led to him to initiate the quadrennial World Avocado Congress, the first of which was hosted in South Africa in 1987 (the 7th will be here in Australia in 2011). He was also a founding member of the World Avocado Society in 1991 and became its first president.

Jan was a board member of Natures Fruit Co and became actively involved in the push to get avocado exports more firmly on the agenda for the Australian industry, becoming a founder member of the Avocado Export Company. Both organisations benefited greatly from Jan's wealth of experience in growing, packing, storage and export.

Jan and Zenta were very involved with the local

community and church in their adopted home of Childers. They went out of their way to meet people and make new friends. They initiated a two hour weekly radio program 'Afrikaans without borders' in their mother tongue on the local station Coral Coast Radio and held a social function every year on their farm to welcome new arrivals from southern Africa. Jan became known as the 'grandfather' of the South African community in the region.

Jan left his mark on all he knew and he will be sadly missed by the avocado industry around the world and the communities in which he lived both in South Africa and Australia.

To his wife Zenta, son and daughter Christo and Karla, and his grandchildren; we salute your husband, father and grandfather, he remains to all who met him, a man of great integrity, ability and humility.

This tribute compiled by friends of Jan and Zenta with information sourced from Gawie Eksteen, Louis Vorster and Louis Grey.

On behalf of Natures Fruit Company shareholders, staff and Board

Jan made an enormous contribution to the avocado industry during his career; as a scientist, consultant, manager and producer in both South Africa and Australia. Jan was a great advocate for quality and continual improvement, and this remained the cornerstone of his philosophy in how he addressed everything within his life.

As avocado production continued to grow rapidly, and more pressure came to bear on producers experiencing unsustainable returns, Jan became actively involved in developing a solution. Jan was passionate about the development of an Australian Avocado Export Company where avocado growers/packhouses/marketers worked together to export Australian fruit to relieve pressure on the domestic markets, and ensure a sustainable and profitable future for Australian avocado producers. The Avocado Export Company is now in its second year, has developed new markets, and its sales volumes to export destinations continues to grow.

When Jan joined the Board of Natures Fruit Company (NFC), it was an opportunity for the NFC Board and management to learn from Jan's prior experience in all areas of the avocado industry on the domestic and world stage. He was instrumental in developing a continual improvement system for our business that we continue to build upon.

Many of us have benefitted not only from Jan's knowledge and experience, but also his friendship over the years. Jan has touched many lives, and his generosity in sharing both his time, knowledge and experience with others is to be admired. As a friend, colleague and mentor, Jan will be greatly missed.



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Australian Avocados Website Promotion Strategy

2010 Website Activity

A new, evolved digital strategy commenced on 1 July 2010 and already the Australian Avocados website (www.avocado.org.au) is well underway in meeting its digital objectives, which support Australian Avocados' overarching marketing objectives.

Over time the Australian Avocado industry has worked to produce market segment research, which has identified multiple demand drivers for avocados. In light of these findings, the website aims to provide relevant content to these specific audiences. The following market groups have been individually targeted using tabs on the website - Consumer, I ❤️ Footy, Food Service and Early Learning. The website's audience segmentation ensures relevant information is delivered, while maintaining easy navigation and a simplified user experience. The website also supports the industry's multi-platform marketing activities by including campaign related content, such as the Cutest Baby Competition (held in October) and NRL footy content (March-September).

The achievements of the digital activity in the 2010/11 period so far have been:

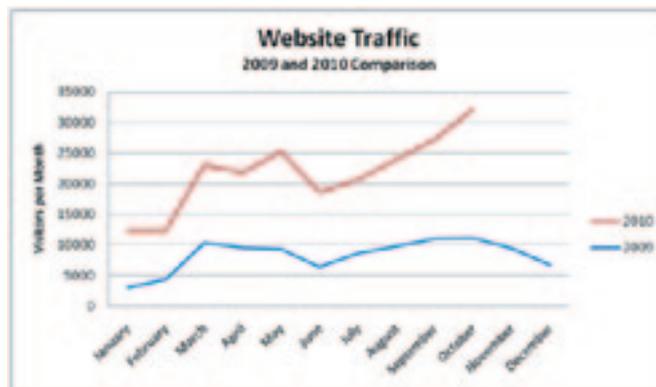
- Increased traffic to the website by 55.61 per cent
- Increased the size of the databases by 65 per cent (5,310 new contacts)
- Increased search engine (primarily Google) traffic to the website by 7.09 per cent and increased number of visitors from search engines by 77.2 per cent
- Greater emphasis on the recipes on the website and increased popularity of these pages – recipe page views have increased by 17.12 per cent

Website for avocado consumers

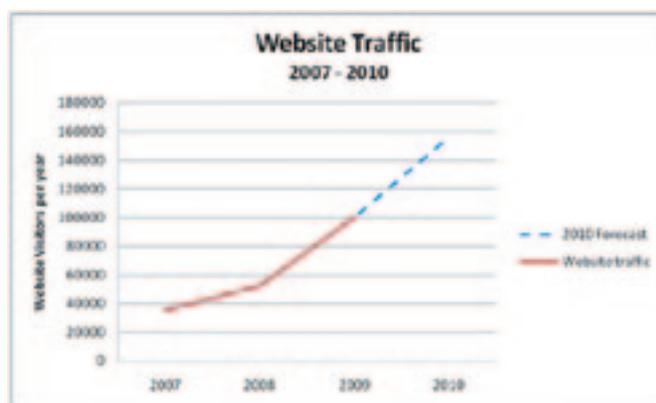
The Consumer site is the default landing page and is targeted towards mothers with children where the oldest is between 12-17 years old. The market research conducted by the avocado industry, show these are the biggest consumers of avocados and therefore the most profitable group to target.

Website traffic

In a monthly comparison of website traffic over 2009 and 2010, website traffic significantly increased in the 2010 time period by 55.61 per cent, and this is illustrated in the following graph.



Comparing this traffic to the website in 2007, 2008 and 2009 with 2010* data, the following results illustrate the growth in website traffic over the years.



*Please note, the 2010 traffic needed to be forecasted due to the time of reporting - monthly traffic average (as at 31 October 2010) was used to forecast the remainder of traffic for 2010.

Website content

Recipes

The strategy behind increasing popularity and user engagement on the website's recipe pages is to help shift the mindset of consumers by promoting avocado as being an everyday grocery item by demonstrating its versatility.

The website currently has over 200 recipes, all of which have been categorised into a broad range of groups for users to easily search through. Recipe content has increased in pageviews during the 2010 period (when compared to the 2009 time period) by 17.12 per cent, which supports the digital objective in increasing traffic to recipe related content on the website. The I ❤️ Footy, Food Service and Early Learning sites are consistent with this strategy and provide recipes that relate to the visitors viewing these pages on the website e.g. on the I ❤️ Footy

site, they are focused on party food for at-home NRL Grand Final parties.

The July 2010 updates for the consumer site included 'quick ideas' in the sidebar and in a breakout box on the homepage. The quick ideas in the side bar focuses on simple ways to easily use avocados. Users can browse through the recipes until they find one that they like and then they can click through to the full recipe page. The quick ideas in the breakout box on the homepage are Zoe Bingley-Pullin's (resident nutritionist and health expert for the industry) recipes and these link users directly to the relevant recipe pages. These quick ideas have been developed to help position avocados as a versatile, everyday ingredient.

All the quick ideas are proving popular with the website users. For the most popular recipes i.e. those with over 200 pageviews during



2010, 73 per cent of those are categorised as quick ideas. This may be seen to demonstrate a preference for easy meals rather than ingredient intensive recipes.

Website user engagement

Establishing high levels of user engagement with the site has been achieved by encouraging user generated content i.e. making sure people engage with the website and provide content in the form of feedback, posts on forums, rating recipes, etc. This has contributed to the increasing popularity of the site, positions the content as more credible in the eyes of other users, and has increased the number of people who keep returning to the website.

Avo Club members can engage with the website in a variety of ways, including submitting their own recipes, posting comments, asking questions, rating recipes, receiving SMS recipe shopping lists to their mobiles, downloading and using a personal recipe computer desktop widget, and creating their own online Recipe Book. Improved user engagement

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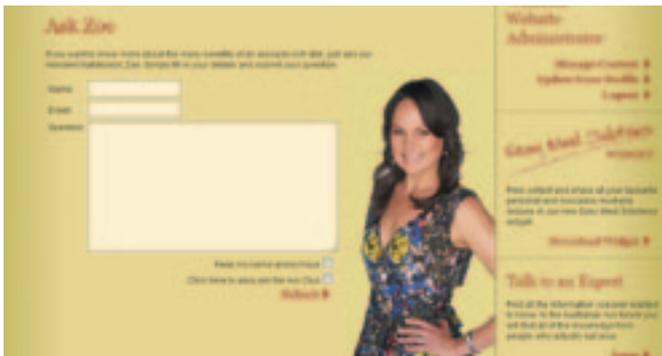
Australian Avocados Website Promotion Strategy continued

on the website will essentially improve the user experience and create credibility for the recipes listed on the website. The July 2010 updates included 'recent bites' which sits above the homepage and displays recent user generated content to improve and encourage user interaction with the website.

A widget is a downloadable tool which sits on the users desktop. It displays information that can be changed by the user so the information can be customized. The avocado Easy Meals Solution Widget lets users search, store and add into it their own recipes or recipes from other websites.



Nutrition



Another integral section of the website is the nutrition content, which provides comprehensive nutritional information about avocados. This content focuses on promoting and educating consumers about the health benefits of eating avocados. It also seeks to increase consumer knowledge, giving them more reason and confidence to increase their level and frequency of avocado consumption. The website has continued to actively promote resident nutritionist Zoe Bingley-Pullin as part of the nutrition education strategy. She provides credibility when endorsing the nutritional benefits of avocados through her monthly feature articles, recipes, and when providing answers to user generated nutrition or health questions throughout the website.

I ❤️ Footy

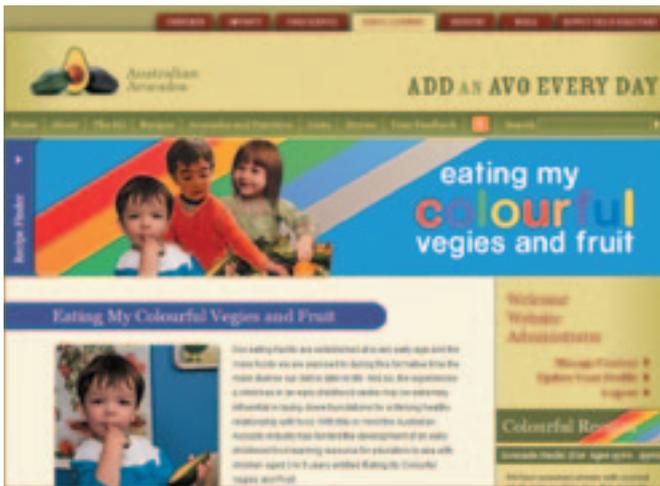
This particular section on the website supports the public relations (PR) strategy of creating a culture between watching football and eating avocado. The partnership with NRL Football has allowed Australian Avocados to appeal to a different user. This has expanded the marketing campaign reach to essentially increase consumption and the demand for avocados.



The NRL partnership has been integrated across the website with NRL team inspired recipes, a footy competition (the prize was tickets to the NRL Grand Final and a signed jersey from the winning team), as well as a series of live chats that users could have with NRL football stars. The I ❤️ Footy strategy seeks to position avocados as being a core ingredient when entertaining guests or when watching the football. For this reason, entertaining style recipes are promoted on this section of the website to help support this objective.

During the 1 July - 31 October 2010 time period, 49.54 percent of traffic to the I ♥ Footy site came from a majority of NRL team or NRL - related websites. This suggests that the online and PR activities worked successfully together to drive new visits to the Australian Avocados website and helped in providing another occasion for users to use avocado.

Early Learning



The Early Learning site was designed to support the industry's strategy into early childhood education and to house the resources produced. The 'eating my colourful vegies and fruit' program is an Australian Avocados branded initiative, promoting the importance of children establishing healthy eating patterns from a young age. The content on this site has been created to specifically appeal to educators and parents of children under five years old. Within the program, avocado is strategically positioned as a healthy and fun food ideal for children within the early learning age groups.

The site provides samples of the resources produced, more information about the program, and recipes that have been categorised into the relevant early learning age groups, these are also consistent with the developed kit. Behind the scenes, the site now also serves as the channel through which all registrations for the kit are completed, monitored, and where the database information is stored.



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Australian Avocados Website Promotion Strategy continued

Food Service

Food Service was another identified important market segment and the Food Service site, therefore, has been created with specific content relevant to the needs of food service professionals.



The Food Service site supports the national Food Service Chef Training Classes and is an online resource for food service professionals using, or considering the use of avocados in their menus. The site provides recipes, educational information on the benefits of adding avocado to menus, cooking

and handling information, information about how to order avocados from provedores, information about size and yield as well as storage. In addition to this, under the tab 'Australian grown' there is information on the different varieties of avocado, the history of the industry, and how Australian avocados are grown. In making this information available on the site, food service professionals are able to easily access this relevant content to confidently include avocados on their menus. Doing so, aims to increase the use of Australian avocados in the food service industry.

As part of the 2010/11 work, avocado menu items from different food service outlets are now being cross-audience promoted. These restaurants and their avocado menu items are now featuring in the consumer RIPE eNewsletter. This is aimed at increasing consumer demand in the food service sector, by making consumers aware that avocado is available when dining out; whether it is as a side order or as an interesting main meal.

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Search Engine Marketing

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is a form of internet marketing. It is an umbrella term referring to various techniques for acquiring website traffic from search engines by increasing visibility of the website in search engine result pages. The different tools under search engine marketing are: SEO (search engine optimization), paid placement, contextual advertising and paid inclusion. In general, the earlier (or higher on the page), and more frequently a site appears in the search results list, the more visitors it will receive from the search engine.

As part of the avocado digital strategy, SEO and paid placement have been used effectively to drive traffic to the avocado website.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the process of improving the visibility of a website or a web page in search engines via the 'natural' or un-paid ('organic' or 'algorithmic') search results. e.g. if 40 year old mum of three Suzi hops on to the Google website and types in 'recipes avocado'. In regards to searched including avocado health information, the avocado website appears right at the top therefore, encouraging people to click on the link.

Pay per click advertising or paid search is a form of online advertising that ties the presentation of an ad to a specific keyword-based search request. The ad appears in the search engines 'sponsored links' section, clicking on the ad will redirect visitors to desired landing pages on the avocado website e.g. if 40 year old mum of three Suzi hops on to the Google website and types in 'healthy entertaining', even though it is a word not directly related to avocados, because the term may have been 'bought', the avocado website will appear right on the top.

Search Engine Optimisation

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) has been incorporated into the digital strategy to improve rankings in major search engines (primarily Google) and increase traffic to the website from search engines from relevant keywords i.e. the words and phrases typed in by users that lead to the Australian Avocados website. Keyword traffic to the website during the 1 July - 31 October period has increased significantly when compared to the year before (77.21 per cent more visits) and the number of keywords used to find the website has increased by 57.22 per cent. These results indicate that the website's SEO strategy in improving keyword related

content is working and has improved SEO results. The table below identifies popular keyword terms which have shown significant growth in driving search engine traffic to the website.

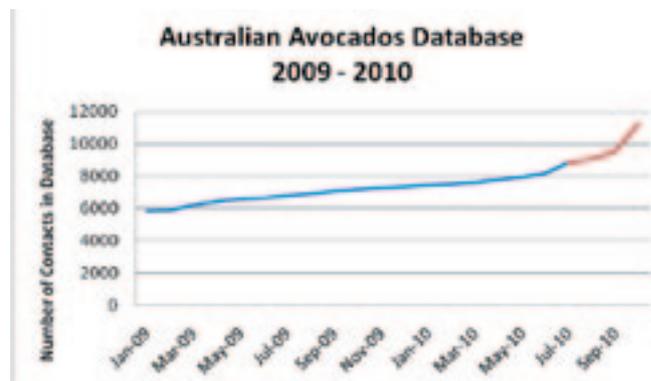
Rank	Keyword	1 July 2010 - 31 Oct 2009	1 July 2010 - 31 Oct 2010	%
1	Avocado	2,977	4,320	45.11%
2	Avocado recipes	1,001	1,708	70.63%
3	Avocado nutrition	556	1,373	146.94%

Pay per click advertising

Pay-per-click advertising works alongside SEO to effectively channel search engine traffic to the website and drive visitors to relevant content. Over time there have been a number of SEM campaigns that have used keywords from popular and promoted website content to drive users not necessarily searching for Australian Avocados in search engines to the relevant pages within the Australian Avocados Consumer website. This includes campaigns on the 'How To' content the website holds, nutritional information, as well as recipes.

Industry databases

One of the digital objectives for 2010 was to increase the size of the consumer database, as well as further segment the database by creating new databases for Food Service and Early Learning. The diagram below identifies significant growth as from July 2010, when this digital objective was identified.



Please note that the steep increase at the end of September was also aided by the 'Cutest Baby Competition' held offline, for which the website housed an online photo gallery where users could view and vote for the cutest baby. To help with security around the photos, users had to join the the Consumer database in order to view the gallery.

Australian Avocados Website Promotion Strategy continued

eNewsletter subscribers | July - 31 October 2010

The eNewsletter (RIPE) subscribers have steadily increased over time, as illustrated in the table below.

The graph below represents the number of e-Newsletter subscribers since the RIPE email was sent monthly instead of on a seasonal basis. The graph below highlights the start of the 2010/2011 digital strategy where increasing the number of e-Newsletter subscribers was one of the objectives.



When sent, the monthly RIPE eNewsletter results in noticeable peaks of traffic to the website. The eNewsletter continues to experience open rates (how many people open the newsletter), and click-through rates (how many people click through to the website from the e-newsletter), well above their Australian

averages.

Further database segmentation has been incorporated into the digital strategy and the I ❤️ Footy, Early Learning and Food Service databases have been established so that specific eNewsletters targeting these market segments can be sent to the relevant databases.

Summary

The website has been designed to specifically appeal to the profitable market segments identified in the industry's marketing plan, and these have been distinguished by individual sites under tabs labelled Consumer, I ❤️ Footy, Early Learning and Food Service. By differentiating these groups clearly and creating targeted sites, the Australian Avocados website can deliver relevant information to these groups as well as maintain easy website navigation and a positive user experience. The databases and eNewsletters support all the website activities and are a convenient means of delivery of relevant, changing, and new information on the website.

On each of the sites, the recipe and nutritional content has been heavily promoted to increase

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the appeal of and confidence in using avocados frequently. The recipes span across a broad category range, supporting the strategic objective of positioning avocados as a versatile ingredient in the kitchen, and the nutritional information provides the audience with a credible motive to actively include the ingredient in their everyday meal plans.

Across all sites, throughout each year, the website aims to deliver one consistent Australian Avocados brand but always with targeted messaging. The online activities and digital objectives will continue to support and adapt to the overarching strategic marketing objectives.

Glossary

Click-through-rate (CTR) - The percentage of impressions that result in a visitor clicking on a specific advertisement/ website.

Digital objective – defining goals which measure the success/ results of the online activity.

e-Newsletter – electronic newsletter which is sent via email to subscribers on a monthly basis.

Keywords – words or search terms a user types into a search engine e.g. Google.

Market segment - A portion of the entire market that a company is targeting.

Open rate – Percentage of people who open the email (in comparison to the number of emails sent).

Pageviews - Number of times your webpage was viewed.

Pay-per-click (PPC) - The pricing structure used by some online channels to charge an advertiser each time a user clicks on the advertiser’s ad. The amount is usually set by the advertiser, not by the channel. Also called cost-per-click (CPC).

Reach - The total number of unique users who will be served your ad over a specific period of time. Reach is often expressed as a percent of the universe for the demographic category. (Also known as an unduplicated audience)

RIPE – monthly Australian Avocado consumer focussed email, which is sent to the web subscribers database.

Search Engine Marketing Campaign – Grouping keywords with relevant ads, ensuring that the ads are relevant to the user’s search terms and driving them to the right page on the website.

Search engine optimisation (SEO) - Search engine optimisation is a process or strategy for creating webpage content to improve a website’s relevance ranking on a search engine results page (SERP).

Search engine ranking - A measure of the popularity of a specific website based on its placement in the results page for a specific keyword.

Target market - A group of people whose needs and preferences match the product range of a company and to whom those products are marketed.

User-generated content (UGC) - Also known as consumer-generated media (CGM) or user-created content (UCC), refers to various kinds of media content, publicly available, that are produced by end-users.

Website traffic - number of visits to the website.

Widget - In computer programming, a widget is a graphical user interface (GUI) that displays information changeable by the user. The Easy Meal Solutions widget is a desktop widget i.e. once downloaded, it is available on the person’s computer without requiring them to re-visit the website first, though it does lead them back there.



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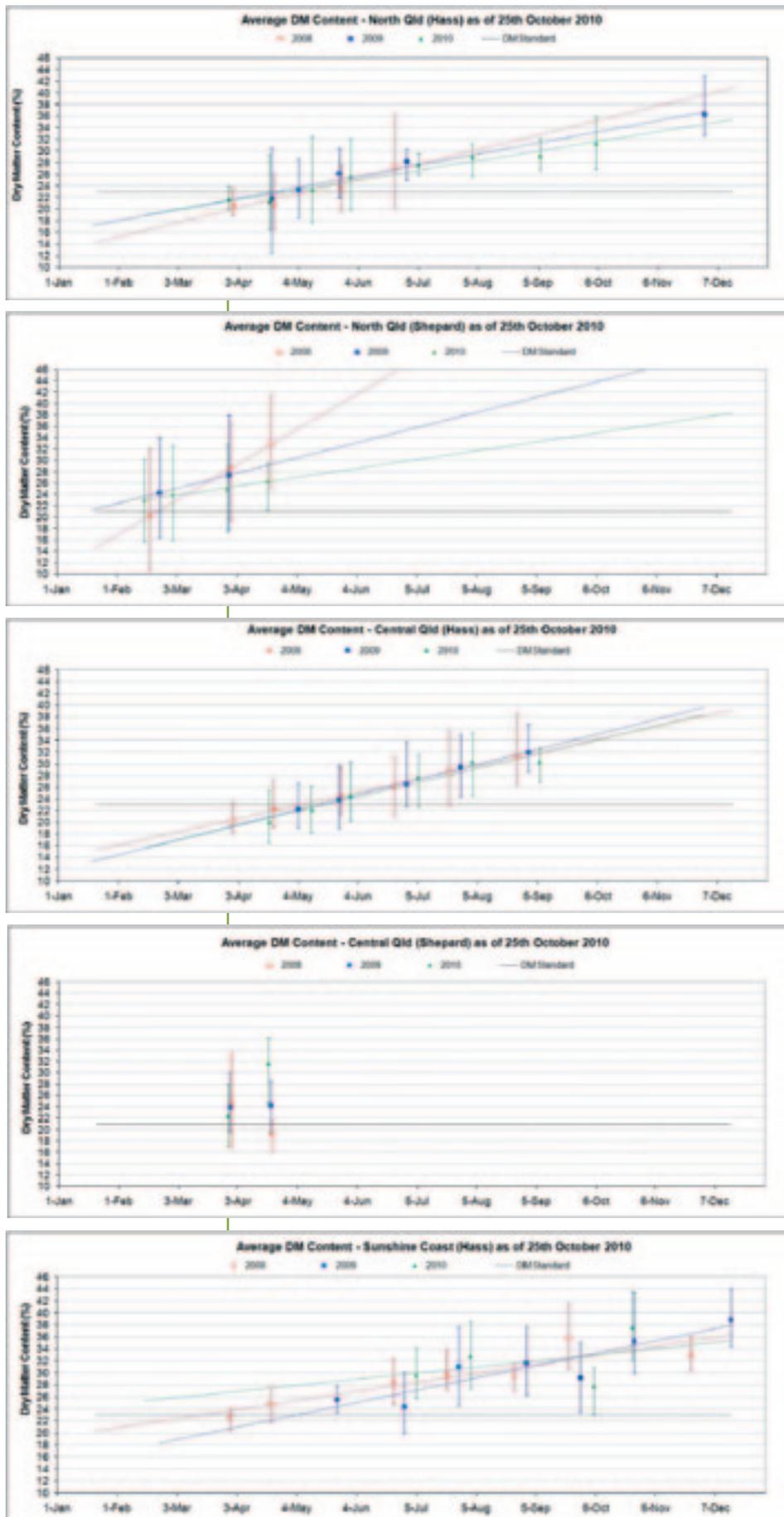
Avocado Maturity and Dry Matter Testing

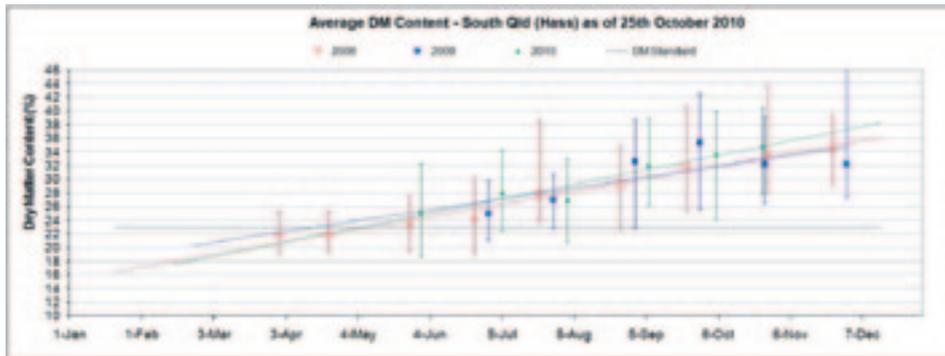
A program to test dry matter percentages (DM%) in avocados, as a measure of avocado maturity, on a monthly basis from the wholesale markets has been in operation for the last 2¹/₂ years. Based on extensive consumer research in both Hass and Shepard avocados, industry standards have been set at 23 per cent and 21 per cent respectively. The results have highlighted some growing regions and times of the year when marketing of immature fruit is still an issue. This is mainly a concern because of the impact that it has on overall fruit quality.

In summary for 2010

The Shepard season began with fruit from North Queensland. The average DM% from the first collection in February was above 21 per cent, however there was still some fruit testing as low as 18 per cent into April. The Shepard season continued with fruit from Central Queensland. There were however, only two collections of Central Queensland Shepard in late March and late April. There were lows of 17 per cent in late March, however the average was around 22 per cent. Late April dry matters averaged almost 32 per cent with the lowest results being around 24 per cent.

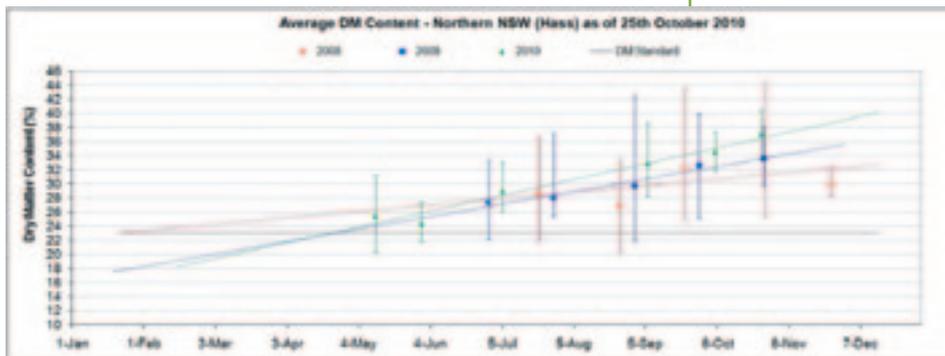
The Australian Hass season began with fruit from North Queensland with the first sampling in late March. At this time the average dry matter was approximately 22 per cent, but there was some fruit testing as low as 20 per cent and although by mid May the average dry matter had increased to above 23 per cent there were still fruit testing at as low as 18 per cent at this time. The first Central



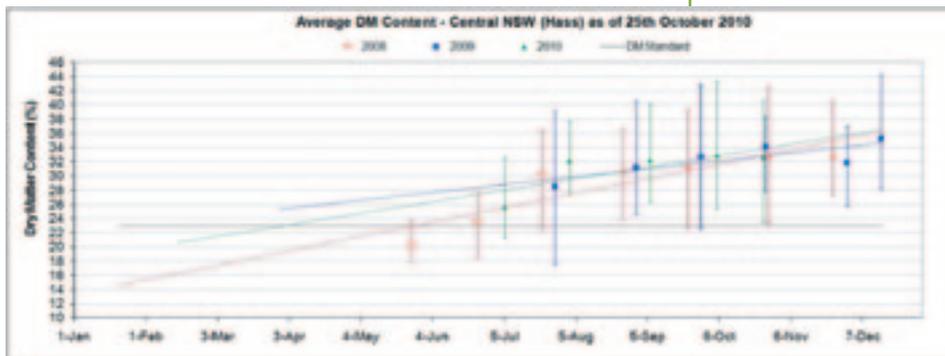


Queensland Hass was tested in mid April. At this time the average dry matter was 20 per cent with fruit testing as low as 17 per cent. The average dry matters didn't reach the industry standard (23 per cent) until early June, at this point there was still fruit testing as low as 20 per cent.

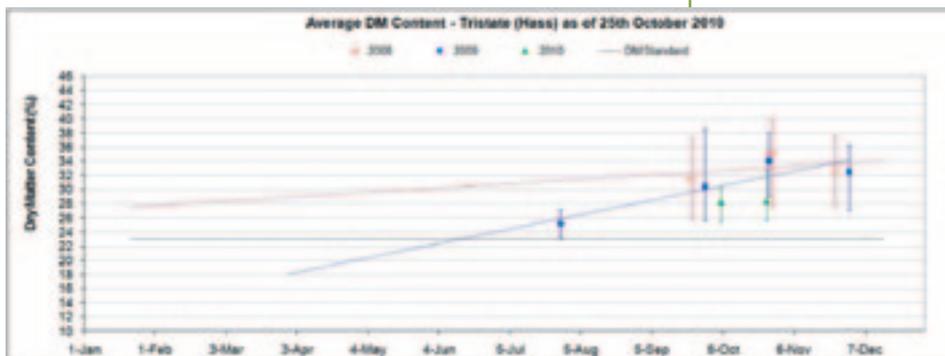
The first South Queensland fruit was tested in late May. At this stage the average dry matters were coming in at around 25 per cent but there were still some results as low as 19 per cent. From then on the average dry matters were all above the industry standard and there were only a couple of low outliers testing in the early 20 per cent's.



Northern New South Wales Hass testing began in early May with average DM% of around 25 per cent, with a small amount of fruit testing below the industry standard but above 20 per cent. Central New South Wales Hass sampling began in early July averaging around 25 per cent DM with the lowest results around 21 per cent.



There have been just two samplings of Tristate fruit in early and late October. On both occasions the results averaged 28 per cent, with lows of 25 per cent.



So far this season there has only been one collection of Western Australian Hass, the results showing an average of 25 per cent and lows of 20 per cent DM.



Graphs illustrating both the averages and ranges of dry matter test results are provided for all growing regions. Up-to-date results are also published on the Avocados Australia website (www.avocado.org.au) and individual dry matter results are sent to the growers whose fruit has been tested.

Evaluation of Sustainable Orchard Management Practices

Written by John Leonardi, Avocados Australia

The objective of this project is to identify sustainable orchard management practices used by avocado growers across Australia; conduct trials to evaluate the effectiveness of these practices; and provide recommendations on the most promising practices.

Evaluate orchard management sites

25 sites from the major production areas across Australia have been selected as case studies. Growers from each site provide information on the timing and cost of their orchard management operations and the impact of these practices on tree health, yield and fruit quality.

Currently information from sites in Central and Southern Queensland is being collated for the 2010 season. In these regions a range of orchard management strategies are being used including mulching (rhodes grass, composted vegetation waste and filter-press), brewed microbes, molasses and natural mineral fertilisers. Grower collaborators in Northern and Central New South Wales will be visited in January and February to collect information on their orchard management practices and the impact of these strategies on yield and pack-out figures for the 2010 harvest.

Conduct orchard management trials

Several trials have been established to test the effectiveness of a range of products and orchard management practices.

Foliar treatments

Pyroligneous acid is a light brown coloured organic liquid produced by heating Moso bamboo to 250-350°C in a restricted oxygen kiln, where the liquids and oils in the plant cells of the bamboo are turned into gaseous vapours. These vapours pass through several condensers where they are cooled and turned back into liquids. The solid residual is Moso BioChar. The condensed liquid is further refined into three fractions. The heavy tars and oils settle

to the bottom, the pyroligneous acid is the middle fraction, while the low density light oils accumulate on the top. After separation it is aged for at least six months before further decanting prior to packing. Pyroligneous acid has a density of 1.01 and a pH of 2.4-2.8. There are traces of more than 200 organic components that can be grouped as phenolics (18-21 per cent of total organic chemicals), aldehyde (3-5 per cent), ketones (8-17 per cent), alcohol (2-7 per cent) and esters (1-1.5 per cent). It also contains sodium 3.1mg/kg, magnesium 2.9mg/kg, calcium 56mg/kg, iron 13mg/kg and zinc 0.9mg/kg.

Pyroligneous acid has been reported to improve root, shoot and fruit growth, increase resistance to pests and diseases, improve yield and fruit quality and in some cases reduce leaf fall and fruit drop.

A trial investigating the effect of foliar application of pyroligneous acid (PandA®) on fruit quality and yield was established on three year old 'Hass' trees in Central Queensland. PandA® at 2 and 4 ml/L was applied at 3-5 week intervals using a motorised, backpack spray unit. Five trees for each treatment were sprayed to the point of run-off using 2.5 litres per tree. A total of six applications were made during the cropping season with the first application on 21 January 2010 and the final treatment one week prior to harvest on 3 June 2010. It is important to note the pyroligneous acid treatments were in addition to the grower's disease control measures which consisted of six copper applications (Norshield WG) during the cropping season.

Fruit yield

Fruit was harvested at maturity on 10 June 2010 and the number and weight of fruit was recorded in five trees per treatment. There was no effect of pyroligneous acid on yield with a mean of 13.9 and 12.7 kg/tree produced in the 2ml/L and 4ml/L PandA® treatments respectively, compared with 13.8 kg in trees receiving the grower treatment only.

Fruit quality

At harvest 20 fruit of uniform size were sampled from five trees from each treatment and ripened at 20°C. At the eating soft stage fruit were cut into quarters, the seed removed, and the skin peeled from the flesh. The quarters were visually rated for the severity of postharvest disease (body and stem end rots) and internal disorders (vascular browning) as the percentage of flesh volume affected. The effect of pyroligneous acid on the severity (% of flesh volume affected) and incidence (% of fruit with at least 10% of the flesh affected) of fruit rots and disorders is presented in Table 1 and Table 2, respectively.



es (AVo8020)

Table 1 Effect of pyroligneous acid (PandA®) on the severity (% of flesh volume affected) of body rots, stem end rots and vascular browning in fruit ripened at 20°C. Values are the means of 100 fruit sample from five trees per treatment.

Treatment	Body rots	Stem end Rots	Vascular browning
Grower treatment	7.0	5.1	4.1
Grower treatment + PandA® @ 2ml/L	5.1	5.3	3.4
Grower treatment + PandA® @ 4ml/L	5.7	3.2	2.5

Table 2 Effect of pyroligneous acid (PandA®) on the incidence of body rots, stem end rots and vascular browning in fruit ripened at 20°C. Values represent the percentage of fruit with at least 10% of the flesh affected and are the means of 100 fruit from five trees per treatment.

Treatment	Body rots	Stem end Rots	Vascular browning
Grower treatment	36.7	25.0	23.3
Grower treatment + PandA® @ 2ml/L	26.7	33.0	18.3
Grower treatment + PandA® @ 4ml/L	30.0	18.3	6.7

The addition of pyroligneous acid at 4ml/L reduced the severity of body rots and the severity and incidence of stem end rots and vascular browning compared with the grower treatment alone (data to be statistically analysed). The severity of body rots was reduced by 1.3%, stem end rots by 1.9% and vascular browning by 1.6% and the incidence of stem end rots was reduced by 6.7% and vascular browning by 16.6%.

Where to from here?

Foliar treatments

The effect of foliar application of pyroligneous acid on tree growth, fruit yield and quality will be investigated in the 2010/11 cropping season. Monthly treatments of PandA® at 2 and 4 ml/L will commence at the maturity of the spring growth flush. In addition, a combination of copper fungicide and PandA® as a single treatment will be included to reduce application costs. An untreated control will also be included for comparison.

Mulching trials

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

Branch scoring trials

The effect of branch scoring on fruit size and yield is being investigated in Hass trees in Central New South Wales. Scoring involves cutting a groove around the branch to sever the phloem using a knife or pruning saw. Branches are scored in the autumn to reduce vegetative growth and increase flowering and fruit set the following spring.

A single branch was scored in three year old Hass trees in May 2008. Trees were harvested in October 2009. There was a significant effect of branch scoring on yield with 42 fruit in the scored branch compared with three fruit in a similar non-scored branch. Two to four branches were scored in May 2009. In some trees the branch scored in 2008 was scored again in 2009 below the original scar. Trees were harvested in late October 2010 and the effect of scoring on fruit size and yield is being determined.

Additional branch scoring trials have been established in April 2010 on young vigorous trees in southwest Western Australia and on regrowth in stumped trees in Central Queensland in April 2010.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all growers who provided information on their orchard management practices and have assisted in conducting trials; Ray O'Grady (O'Grady Rural) for providing the pyroligneous acid (PandA®); and Peter Hofman, Barbara Stubbings and the postharvest team at the Department of Employment Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), Maroochy Research Station for their assistance and use of the ripening facilities. This project is funded by using avocado grower research and development (R&D) levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia.



Evaluation of AVO6003 'Study Groups to Achieve Global

The three year study group project finished mid-2010 and growers were subsequently surveyed to gauge how effective it had been. This article summarises the results of the survey. Many thanks to all those who were able to respond.

Some project statistics

A total of 42 workshops were held across the country attracting 1524 attendees with an average of 36 attendees at each event. Workshops were held on 39 different farms and two involved visits to the Brisbane wholesale fruit and vegetable markets and nearby supermarket distribution centres and food processors. The number of different topics tackled at the workshops was 21 and there were a total of 57 different guest speakers. The number of growers registered on the project database was 640 and during the course of the project 42 sets of comprehensive illustrated minutes were prepared and distributed.



NSW mid north coast avocado growers attending a study group meeting on the Nelson family's orchard where the topic for the day was irrigation.

Growers' evaluation survey

At the end of the project an evaluation survey consisting of 21 questions was sent to all on the project database. A total of 170 responses were received (117 via the electronic survey link and 53 as hardcopy) which is a response rate of 27 per cent. A summary of the survey results are reported here but the full results can be accessed in the final project report which is available from Avocados Australia (quote project number AVO6003).

Highlights

As a result of the project:

- 97 per cent of respondents felt better informed about how to produce higher yields of good quality avocados.
- 89 per cent said they had made changes to their businesses.
- 90 per cent said they had made changes (or would make changes) sooner than they would have done otherwise.

Growers were asked to try and put a value per year on the financial benefit of the project to their business

and provide a justification on how they arrived at their estimate. 70 respondents provided an estimate and this added up to \$3.2 million per year. Since only 11 per cent of growers on the project database answered this question it is reasonable to assume that the annual benefit across the industry is significantly greater.

Relative value of different parts of the study group workshops

Growers gave the following average scores (out of 10) to different aspects of the project (on a scale of 0 'not useful' to 10 'extremely useful'):

Presentations and interacting with presenters	8.3
Networking with other growers	7.9
Seeing other orchards and how they do things	8.4
Receiving the minutes and hard copies of presentations	8.6
If you weren't able to attend some of the workshops, to what extent have the minutes and hard copies of presentations been useful to you?	8.1

lly Competitive Avocados'

Note: In several cases growers who had only been to one or two workshops or even no workshops at all gave a score of 10 to this question and also reported a significant financial benefit from the project.

Communication

'As a result of these workshops do you think communication has been enhanced across the industry?' (o 'no improvement', 10 'big improvement')	7.4
--	-----

Supply chain

'As a result of the project do you have a better understanding of YOUR role in the supply chain?' (o 'no improvement', 10 'big improvement')	6.8
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Where were changes made?

The 89 per cent of growers who said they had made changes to their businesses as a result of the project were asked to identify in which areas of management they had made these changes. Ranked in order these were:

Phytophthora root rot management	76%
Canopy management	68%
Nutrition management	60%
Irrigation practices	56%
Soil health	50%
Knowledge of phenology to determine timing of practices	37%
Choice of rootstocks	34%
Flowering and pollination	30%
Composting	28%
Fruit disease control	22%
Weed control	19%
Biennial bearing	19%
Marketing, quality and Freshcare	17%
Workplace health & safety	12%
IPM	12%
<i>Phellinus noxius</i>	6%

Among the changes made; mulching, canopy management, application of phosphorous acid, linking timing of practices

to phenology, as well as better nutrition, fertigation, and irrigation featured prominently.

Adoption of best practice

Growers were asked about three specific best management practices. These were intended to act as indicators for the effectiveness of the project. The first question was about a new practice only introduced commercially in 2006, the other two were well established practices that have been around for many years. Growers had to state whether (a) they had already been using this practice (b) they had started this practice as a result of the workshops, or (c) did not plan to use it.

The proportion of respondents who said as a result of the workshops that they had started or would start using the practice within the next 12 months included:

1. Monitoring root phosphorous levels (25% were already doing it)	46%
2. Annual monitoring of leaf nutrient levels (75% were already doing it)	19%
3. Basing irrigation decisions on soil moisture measurements (59% were already doing it)	27%

When compared with those already following these practices (shown above in brackets) these are noteworthy increases in adoption levels, bringing levels (among survey respondents) to 71 per cent, 94 per cent and 86 per cent respectively.

Follow up with other attendees

71 per cent of respondents said that they had followed up with researchers, consultants or other growers after workshops. This suggests that the workshops were good forums for establishing useful contacts.

Acknowledgements

These workshops were a team effort between our hosts, guest speakers, group co-ordinators, board members, Avocados Australia and growers. Thanks to everyone for making them successful and to the funding bodies for providing the means - Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, Queensland (formerly DPI&F), Avocados Australia and Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and the support of the Department of Agriculture & Food WA, NSW Industry and Investment, and EE Muir & Sons.

Western Australian Hass Campaign 2010

Retail sampling

To make an impact on shoppers early in the season the Avocado Growers Association of WA launched a retail sampling campaign in August 2010 that was jointly funded by themselves and by using matching avocado grower marketing levies through Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and supported by Avocados Australia. Covering 46 stores in all, the program was launched with a mix of independent stores and Coles supermarkets, and was followed up in October with more independents and Woolworths.

Aimed at household shoppers, the program sought to:

- Show value and help consumers to emotionally connect with avocados and make it part of their weekly shopping basket thereby, increasing the regular intent to buy avocados.

- Provide easy avocado based solutions to the daily responsibility of feeding the family in a nutritious and tasty way.

A team of specialist product samplers attended intensive training prior to visiting retail stores. Local grower, Duncan Mitchell, of Avonova, provided information on avocados. Home economist/marketing specialist, Noelene Swain provided a broad range of information on avocado usage tips/ideas, as well as its health benefits.

Supported by avocado industry point of sale material, the sampling team was successful in achieving sales conversion. Over the two phases of the campaign a total of 6728 samples were distributed resulting in sales of almost 5550 avocados – a sales conversion rate of 82 per cent. This substantially beat projected outcomes of the project.

Table 1: Avocado Sampling Result Summary

			Number Dems	Number Samples	Sales (Each)	Avg Samples/ Dem	Avg Sales/ Dem
INDEPENDENT (Aug)	Phase 1	w/c 23 Aug	8	1130	772	141.3	96.5
COLES	Phase 1	w/c 30 Aug	15	2001	2599	133.4	173.3
INDEPENDENT (Nov)	Phase 2	w/c 1 Nov	8	811	733	101.4	91.6
WOOLWORTHS	Phase 2	w/c 8 Nov	15	2786	1442	185.7	96.1
OVERALL TOTALS			46	6728	5546	146	121
Sales Conversion Rate				82%			
Projected Outcomes:			46	5000	1500	109	33
Achieved OVER Projected Outcomes			35%	270%			

Figure 1: WA RETAIL SAMPLING OF HASS 2010 Sampling vs Sales Results

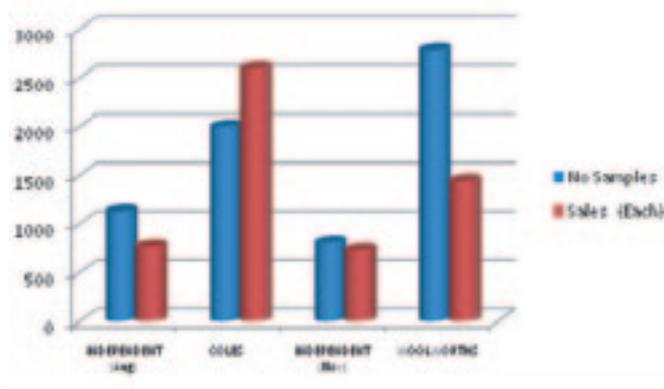
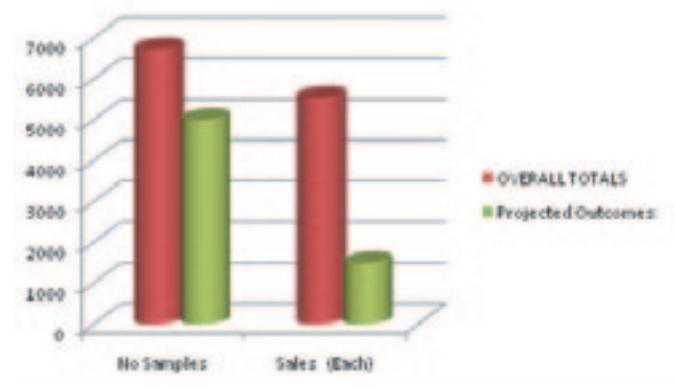


Figure 2: WA RETAIL SAMPLING OF HASS 2010 Projected Versus Actual Results





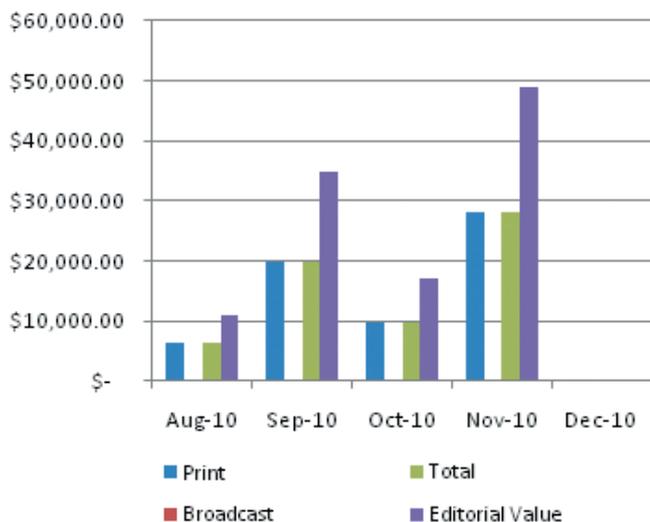
Sampling of Hass Avocados in WA

Media Awareness Program

Retail sampling activities have been supported by a local Media Awareness Program which was also funded by the co-operative grant. Commencing in August, this strategy supplied weekly avocado recipes, photographs, tips and hints through to Western Australia (WA) media outlets, as well as to chefs and home economics teachers throughout the season. Review of published material to date indicates a strong pick up of avocado recipes and photographs in news papers and food magazines. There have been a lot of requests from the media for additional material for coverage.

Media coverage achieved up until the end November has an advertising equivalent valued at almost \$30,000 or an editorial value of almost \$50,000.

Figure 3: WA MEDIA COVERAGE OF HASS 2010 Aug to Nov 2010



Sample of Media Coverage

Five years of data collection for clonal and seedling rootstocks

Rootstock evaluation programme. Part 1.

Written by Danielle Le Lagadec

Agri-Science Queensland. Department of Employment,
Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI)

The Australian avocado industry is growing by approximately 15 per cent per year (Woolf *et al.* 2009). As domestic markets become saturated the industry will have to seek alternative outlets for the fruit, such as value adding or export markets. The cost of producing avocados in Australia is increasing steadily, driven largely by high labour costs and increasing labour shortage (McKenzie 2010; O'Brien 2005). In order to remain competitive in both national and international markets, production costs have to be kept in check. One of the most effective and sustainable ways of achieving this is by increasing productivity through rootstock and scion selection (Arpaia *et al.* 1993).

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

A rootstock trial was established in 2004 at Goodwood Plantation, Childers, and central Queensland. It consisted of 33 rootstocks including clonal and seedling material with Hass and 'Shepard' as scions (Table 1). The two scions were planted in alternating rows at a spacing of 11m x 5m and were managed in accordance with standard Goodwood Plantation orchard practices. The trial was established on good, deep red soil with a soil pH of approximately 6.3 and low Phytophthora pressure.

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

The results of the rootstocks with Hass as scion are shown in this article. 'Shepard' results will be reported in a subsequent article.

Table 1. Clonal and seedling rootstocks included in the trial with 'Hass' as the scions. The country of origin is given in parentheses.

Seedling rootstocks	Clonal rootstocks
'Ashdot' ₁ (Israel)	BM1 (RSA)
'Degania' ₁ (Israel)	BM2 (RSA)
'Reed' (USA)	'Duke 7' ₂ (USA)
'Zutano' (USA)	BC101 (Aus)
BW127 (Aus)	BC128 (Aus)
BW128 (Aus)	BC16 (Aus)
BW140 (Aus)	BC19 (Aus)
BW16 (Aus)	BC197 (Aus)
BW181 (Aus)	BC62 (Aus)
BW19 (Aus)	BC7 (Aus)
BW197 (Aus)	'Velvick' ₃ (Aus)
BW2 (Aus)	
BW5 (Aus)	
BW6 (Aus)	
BW62 (Aus)	
BW68 (Aus)	
BW7 (Aus)	
BW70 (Aus)	
BW78 (Aus)	
BW80 (Aus)	
BW93 (Aus)	
'Velvick' ₃ (Aus)	

₁West Indian origin;

₂Mexican origin;

₃Guatemalan origin;

all the others are West Indian x Guatemalan hybrids

Results and discussion

Despite the clonal rootstock trees taking approximately 12-18 months longer to establish than the seedling trees, all the 'Hass' trees were extremely healthy and vigorous. 12 of the 15 'Hass' on 'Ashdot' rootstock were noticeably smaller than the other trees in the trial and appeared to have dwarfing qualities. Initially, a few of the clonal and seedling rootstocks showed signs of scion overgrowth at

Rootstocks with 'Hass' as scion

the graft union, but these had disappeared by the fifth year.

The first crop was harvested in 2006 with seedling rootstocks producing significantly larger crop loads than the clonal trees (Tables 2 and 3). BW2 appeared to be a precocious rootstock and produced the highest crop load in 2006 to 2008. In 2009 BW2 produced an average to good crop load, and in 2010 was once again one of the top bearers. BW2 had the highest cumulative yield for the five year observation period and produced 13 per cent more fruit than the industry standard rootstock 'Velvick'.

Taking into account the percentage marketable fruit produced by BW2 over this period, this would translate to approximately \$28,300 increase in revenue per hectare (11m x 5m spacing) over the five year period. 'Velvick' was found to produce high vigour trees bearing excellent yields and was the top producer in 2010. 'Hass' on 'Reed' and 'Zutano' rootstocks had lowest yields throughout the monitoring period despite producing relatively large trees.

Often large vigorous trees produce a good crop load but they may not be the most cost effective trees, since they are often more expensive to manage. Therefore, yield was expressed in terms of canopy volume, 'yield efficiency'. BW2 resulted in strong 'Hass' trees which were less vigorous than those on 'Velvick' rootstock (Figure 1). BW2 had 53 per cent higher yield efficiency than the industry standard 'Velvick'. Although BW2 has not been included in rootstock trials in other avocado growing regions, it has been commercially grown in many regions and is proving highly successful.

'Velvick' gave rise to very large vigorous trees and because of this large tree size had a relatively low yield efficiency. The Israeli seedling rootstock 'Ashdot' had the highest yield efficiency throughout the five year monitoring period (Figure 1). 'Hass' on 'Ashdot' rootstock produced a moderate crop load but because of its small tree size, had the largest effective yield.

'Ashdot' as a rootstock may be well suited for high density plantings. However, dwarfing rootstocks do have some serious drawbacks. They may be susceptible to stresses

and require high management inputs (Ben-Ya'acov *et al.* 1995). 'Ashdot' should only be considered for commercial planting under optimum growing conditions.

Of the clonal rootstocks, BC101 and BC62 were the top producers throughout the trial. Initially the clonal rootstock produced yields lower than the seedling rootstocks but by 2010, BC62 exceeded the production achieved by the seedling rootstocks. Over the five year monitoring period BC62 produced 42 per cent more 'Hass' fruit than did clonal 'Velvick' rootstock. Taking into account the percentage marketable fruit, this would equate to a \$37 000 increase in revenue per hectare over the five year period, as compared to clonal 'Velvick' rootstock. The industry standard clonal 'Velvick' produced average to good yields while 'Duke 7', the international standard produced relatively low yields. 'Hass' on BC128 produced the lowest yields throughout the trial.

Although clonal rootstock BC62 was the highest bearing rootstock because of its large tree size, it was not the best yield efficiency (Figure 2). BC101 was the most efficient producer followed by BC19. BC128 performed poorly throughout the trial.

Some studies have shown that rootstocks can have a direct effect on fruit quality (Burdon *et al.* 2007; Dixon *et al.* 2007; Marques *et al.* 2003; Smith and Kohne 1992). The present trial failed to produce consistent results, i.e. individual rootstocks did not consistently produce good or bad quality fruit for year to year. The fruit quality increased noticeably as the trees aged. In 2008, approximately 70 per cent of the 'Hass' fruit on seedling rootstocks were of marketable quality, 82 per cent in 2009 and 97 per cent in 2010. Visually there appeared to be a correlation between yield and fruit quality. Rootstocks that produced large crop loads tended to produce good fruit quality. However, this could not be statically proven.

The results presented here are from young trees that have not yet reached their optimum production potential. Some rootstock may take longer than others to reach optimum production and it is recommended that the monitoring of the trial continues until the trees reach maturity.



Five years of data collection for clonal and seedling rootstocks continued

Table 2. Average yield per tree for seedling rootstocks with ‘Hass’ as scion

Average yield per tree (kg)

Root-stock	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Cumulative
BW2	20.6	48.7	104.0	57.9	125.8	357.0
Degania	18.8	45.3	91.7	64.2	123.4	343.3
BW70	17.5	36.0	87.6	66.8	117.5	325.4
BW80	10.0	28.8	105.0	56.4	124.5	324.7
BW19	17.4	38.5	85.1	58.4	124.8	324.3
BW78	12.0	34.9	93.3	74.7	100.9	315.8
Velvick	13.6	32.6	86.0	53.7	129.3	315.1
BW181	13.7	39.5	78.5	66.6	116.0	314.3
BW140	11.1	29.4	87.2	65.8	114.1	307.6
BW7	17.6	39.7	80.0	64.8	104.7	306.8
BW197	14.4	33.2	84.7	61.6	112.5	306.4
BW93	10.7	35.5	86.1	47.4	124.0	303.8
BW16	15.9	36.9	76.6	51.4	121.0	301.7
BW127	12.7	41.4	90.2	43.1	111.9	299.3
Ashdot	18.9	39.5	81.5	77.1	78.6	295.5
BW6	9.8	34.5	90.3	56.2	104.2	294.9
BW62	9.2	36.4	94.2	42.3	112.6	294.7
BW5	15.8	38.9	77.0	38.6	120.7	291.0
BW128	13.3	26.7	79.8	46.5	113.9	280.2
BW68	7.8	21.9	72.8	73.5	97.9	273.9
Zutano	15.3	21.3	60.8	58.2	102.5	258.2
Reed	6.1	18.6	65.9	50.5	103.8	244.9
P	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	0.116	0.112	0.001
d.f.	21	21	21	21	21	21
v.r.	4.24	4.47	3.01	1.43	1.41	2.32

Table 2. Average yield per tree for clonal rootstocks with ‘Hass’ as scion

Average yield per tree (kg)

Root-stock	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Cumulative
BC62	4.0	33.6	110.6	63.1	139.0	350.3
BC101	8.1	34.0	88.9	50.5	122.5	304.1
BC19	4.0	25.9	85.7	40.0	147.9	303.5
Velvick	4.3	27.2	77.1	47.6	133.7	289.7
BM2	4.1	26.0	80.5	56.2	120.5	287.2
BC197	4.5	28.0	85.6	46.2	119.6	283.9
BC16	3.0	30.6	82.5	41.2	124.0	281.3
BM1	1.3	16.0	68.8	55.6	119.2	260.9
Duke7	4.0	21.2	59.7	52.1	102.5	239.6
BC7	1.9	21.5	66.9	54.9	92.7	237.9
BC128	1.0	14.9	51.9	23.3	98.2	189.4
P	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
d.f.	10	10	10	10	10	10
v.r.	7.18	4.58	9.61	5.22	4.08	8.68

Recommendations

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

For ‘Hass’ as scion clonal rootstock, clonal BC62, and seedling rootstocks BW2 and ‘Degania’ are all high yielders. BC62 produces large trees and on fertile soils may prove to be overvigorous. BW2 results in a smaller tree and may be better suited for fertile soil;

Seedling rootstock ‘Ashdot’ appears to have dwarfing qualities and may be well suited for higher density plantings on fertile soils. This rootstock requires ideal avocado growing conditions. Dwarfing rootstocks are known to be highly susceptible to environmental stresses and require careful management.

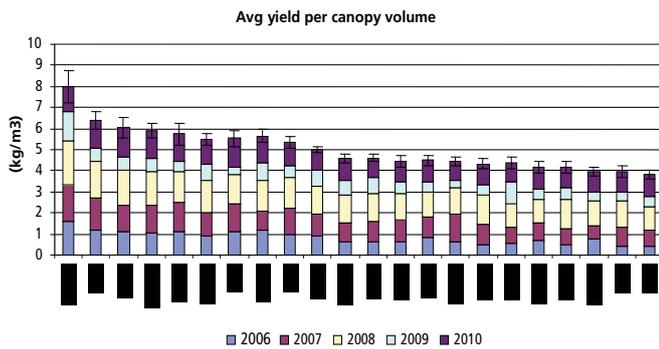


Figure 1. Average yield per canopy volume of ‘Hass’ on seedling rootstocks. Bars above the column indicate the standard error of the mean for the cumulative yield (2006 to 2010).

Acknowledgements

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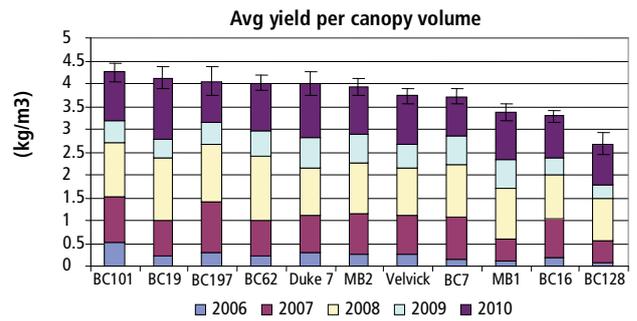


Figure 2. Average yield per canopy volume of ‘Hass’ on clonal rootstocks. Bars above the column indicate the standard error of the mean for the cumulative yield (2006 to 2010).

and Wayne Rose are thanked for their technical support and Roger Broadley and Denis Roe for their constructive criticism of this article.

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News from Around the World continued

adjacent to the plant.

On average, about half of the company's avocados come from the Mexico plant. At the peak of the season, the plant employs about 300 workers. The expansion will enable the company to operate more efficiently and cost effectively, Barnard said. "We were using some other facilities, and now we can consolidate," Barnard said. "We hope this will give us more control (with food safety and the cooling process) since it will be all under one roof."

Avocado packinghouses need to keep their pipelines filled, said Henry Vega, an avocado grower and past president of the Ventura County Farm Bureau. It's a sweet time for growers, with consumers ripe for avocados. The market for avocados has not been fully exploited yet, Vega said. "People are still learning about avocados. There is so much room for growth, and the packinghouses know that. I would imagine they're going to try to expand as much as they can," Vega said. Source: vcstar.com

Peruvian Avocado Commission receives USDA certification

The Peruvian Avocado Commission (PAC) has received certification from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to promote Peru's avocados in the U.S., the country's agricultural ministry MAF said in a statement. The certification allows the PAC to designate funds for promotional activities in the US. It is the first group to include Peruvian avocado growers, packers and exporters along with US importers.

To pay for the promotions, the PAC is opening a fund that will charge U.S. five cents for each exported kilogram. "For Peru it is an honour and a big step to receive this certification that will allow Peruvian agriculture to keep advancing in areas such as the promotion of Hass avocados and the growth of its consumption in the U.S.," Agriculture Minister Rafael Quevedo Flores was quoted as saying.

Peru is looking to position itself as a key supplier of avocados to the U.S., where Mexico and Chile are the main suppliers of the fruit outside the California harvest season. Source: freshfruitportal.com

Israeli growers stage strike to get more Thais

Once the pride of the country, farming survives today only with the help of low-cost foreign labor Israeli agriculture - once the epicentre of the Zionist pioneering, symbolized by hearty kibbutz farmers and crate loads of Jaffa oranges - has been pushed so far to the margins of society that the work of planting and sowing is now done almost entirely by

foreign workers.

So, when a shortfall of 4000 guest workers emerged during this year's harvest - 15 per cent fewer than the quota set by the government - farmers launched a three-day strike that threatened to choke off the supplies of tomatoes and milk. Rather than sun-burned sabras, or native-born Israelis, some 22,000 foreign guest workers, mostly from Thailand, pick oranges and avocados and cut roses and carnations.

Growers blocked traffic at the Arava junction in Israel's southern Negev region, handing out peppers and flowers to drivers and warning them that rising prices would one day make fresh produce affordable only for the rich. In the southern town of Netivot, farmers dumped fruits and vegetables on the road.

The strike wasn't having its intended effect and organizers were weighing extending it a fourth day. The marker.com online news service said wholesale markets and groceries still had produce. A spokeswoman for Shufersal, Israel's biggest supermarket chain, said the labor action had so far no effect. "Everything is okay today, we haven't had any problems," she told The Media Line, asking not to be identified. "I have no idea about tomorrow."

Growers blame the Interior Ministry for refusing to process the applications filed to get the extra 4000 foreign workers

while the government says farmers failed to file in time. Whoever is right, no one has considered the possibility that Israelis themselves would make up the shortfall even as the nation's unemployment rate stands at 6.2 per cent. Source: themedialine.org

Mexico: Michoacán avocado industry targeting small thefts

If small thefts of avocado are not controlled, the losses could reach almost 2 million pesos (US \$162,000) this year in Michoacán, an industry official said, according to newspaper Cambio de Michoacán. From January to June, the stolen avocados added up to the equivalent of eight truckloads each carrying 5.5 to 6 metric tons of fruit, said Jesús Martínez Castillo, information technology manager for the Association of Growers, Packers and Exporters of Avocado of Michoacán, according to the website.

At an industry meeting about the thefts in which a few avocados are taken at a time, Martínez Castillo proposed a monitoring system to track the thefts. A satellite could detect anomalies as they happen, allowing the industry to act immediately, the website said. Of the stolen avocados, about 2 MT were recovered, Martínez Castillo said, according to the website. Source: freshfruitportal.com

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