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## News

### Avocado Industry Working to Set Future Direction - 11/05/2010

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A selection of key members in the avocado industry met recently in Brisbane for two days of intense planning about the future direction of Australian avocados.

The Australian avocado industry is now developing a new 'Strategic Plan' to address the challenges of the next five years, to ensure grower levy is invested wisely, to continue to build opportunities for avocado growers, and to ensure the industry continues to be a leader in horticulture.

Key industry stakeholders invited to participate in the 'Strategic Planning Workshop' included: the leadership of the avocado industry, Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) representatives, representatives from the wholesale and retail sectors, including Coles, as well as a number of growers and packers within the industry.

The workshop included 'Future Scenario Planning', led by well-renowned research ecologist and futurist, Dr Steven Cork, participants were challenged to broaden their thinking and consider any and every potential issue that may affect the industry in the next five to 50 years.

Participants brainstormed such things as the possible implications of a sudden and dramatic rise or drop in demand, the longevity of the industry in relation to the attractiveness of avocado growing to young Australian farmers, improving the efficiency of the avocado supply chain, the impact of free trade-agreements and the possibility of rising imports.

Chairman of Avocados Australia, Mr Jim Kochi, was very pleased with the outcome of the first workshop. "We're well on our way to developing a new strategic plan that will ensure the avocado industry is heading in the right direction; offering growers greater opportunities and Australian consumers the best quality avocado on the market" he commented.

Other speakers included Mr Selwyn Snell, who has over 35 years of Agribusiness experience, and Mr Martin Kneebone, Director of Freshlogic, who has detailed knowledge of the food industry segments.

Participants will meet again in June, in Canberra, to finalise a draft strategic plan. The draft plan will be provided to the whole industry for comment in August and September, and the industry welcomes and encourages growers and all stakeholders for their input and feedback.

**For further comment please contact:**

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Avocados Australia Limited is the Peak Industry Body in Australia for Avocados. We are a "not for profit" membership based organisation. Our members are Avocado growers along with associated businesses and industry people.

Avocados Australia seeks to work with all parts of the chain from production through to the consumer. By working together we seek to continually improve the ability of growers to provide a healthy, profitable and safe product for all consumers. As part of this continual improvement we guide a "research & development" and "marketing and promotion" program for the Australian Avocado industry.

The Australian Avocado industry comprises 1100 growers across the country and produces 49,500 tonnes of Avocados each year worth **\$AUD140 million at farm gate and \$380 million at retail level**. Key growing areas are North, Central and Southeast Queensland, Northern and Central New South Wales, the Sunraysia or Tristate area (South Australia, Victoria and South Western New South Wales) and Western Australia.

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