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News

Avocados growers wiped out by Cyclone Larry - 20/03/2006

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Avocados Australia, peak industry body said cyclone Larry had caused devastation to one of the Australia's largest avocado production areas and to the lives of hundreds of avocado growers.

The main growing areas in North Queensland have been destroyed in the middle of their harvest period. Resulting is large losses for growers in what was looking to be one their most successful seasons in many years.

Over \$15 million worth of crop was lost in just a few short hours. The North Queensland avocado crop was currently supplying 80% of the fruit in the market. The next production area to begin harvesting is Bundaberg.

Avocados Australia, Chief Executive Officer Antony Allen said initial reports indicated the majority of production areas had been devastated.

"Communities in producing areas will be severely effected in what was the height of the harvesting and packing period for avocado businesses", he said.

"We understand some growers have lost their entire avocado crop and large numbers of trees have been completely up-rooted. It could be up to five years before the North Queensland industry is capable of recovery."

"The North Queensland industry and community will require long term assistance to be able to rebuild and we will work with the Queensland Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries and our fellow peak industry bodies on what can be done to help rebuild the North Queensland horticulture industry."

For further comment:

Antony Allen, Avocados Australia Chief Executive Officer on 07 3391 2344 or 0438 132 477

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