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Wednesday, 10 July 2013

## The latest industry news at your fingertips

'Guacamole' is the Australian avocado industry's fortnightly email newsletter. It is intended to be a topical and industry specific newsletter.

Guacamole is separated into four sections: [Grower Update](#), [Industry Update](#), [Marketing Update](#) and [Industry News](#).

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## Grower Update



### Avocado Videos Live!

Want to know how and why you should use a reject bin analysis in your business? Want a quick and easy way to train your pickers? Industry has funded the development of two short videos to help you do just that! To view these videos log onto the [Australian Avocado Best Practice Resource](#). Alternatively, the videos have been uploaded to YouTube, simply follow these links to view: [Reject Bin Analysis: A smart tool for understanding your orchard](#) or [Avocado Harvesting: The picker's guide](#). Undertaking a reject bin analysis is a quick and easy way for packers and growers understand more about what is happening in the packing shed and the paddock. This process can identify if you have issues with over grading or specific pest and disease pressures in some blocks. The second video focuses on the main things avocado pickers need to know before heading out into the orchard. This video is designed to be an induction aid for growers to use when training new staff.

The videos have been developed by Applied Horticultural Research (AHR) in conjunction with Avocados Australia, numerous industry representatives and the Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). This project has been funded by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) using the avocado industry levy and matching funds from the Australian Government.

For more information please contact Avocados Australia on 07 3846 6566.

### Win a FREE iPad!

All growers who complete and return their OrchardInfo forms to Avocados Australia by 30 September will go in the draw to win a brand new iPad! Forms this week have been mailed and emailed to all growers. To complete the forms electronically simply follow the instructions included in the email to download the Formatta Filler program (if you have not already done so). Should you have any questions or concerns please contact Avocados Australia on 07 3846 6566 or [infocado@avocado.org.au](mailto:infocado@avocado.org.au) Don't miss out on your change to win!

### Queensland Fruit Fly changes now in effect

Queensland fruit fly (QFF) management are now in effect and have been since the 1st of July. QFF host fruits entering Victoria (with the exception of the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area) will now no longer require certification and treatment for fruit fly.

Requirements for host fruits entering the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area remain unchanged. All consignments to this area still require certification and verification on arrival within the district.

The marketing of host fruits infested with QFF remains an offence with heavy penalties to applying to businesses found not to be complying with legislative requirements including the return, treatment or destruction at the owner's expense.

To view the Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) website regarding the QFF management changes (for market access requirements and consignment into and within Victoria - outside Greater Sunraysia PFA) - [click here](#). The DEPI fact sheet is [here](#).

### Horticulture - Next Generation applications close 15 July!

Horticulture - the Next Generation is a tailored leadership development program designed to benefit Owners and Managers of levy paying businesses who have responsibility for managing staff, are looking to grow their business and have a passion for their industry and its future. The program funded by Horticulture Australia (HAL) is offering 20 business leaders from across the Australian horticulture industry to take part. Participants must be available for the following dates and locations for the 2013 program:

1ST WORKSHOP: AUGUST 26-27, 2013 BRISBANE, STAMFORD PLAZA  
2ND WORKSHOP: OCTOBER 28-29, 2013, MELBOURNE, COMO HOTEL.

To find out more about The Next Generation Workshop contact Russell Cummings email [russell@horticulture-nextgeneration.com.au](mailto:russell@horticulture-nextgeneration.com.au) or for more information and to register before the deadline (before 5pm, 15th July) [click here](#).

### Additional disaster assistance for NSW farmers

The Attorney-General and Minister for Emergency Management and NSW Minister for Police and Emergency Services recently announced additional assistance for farmers hit by the January and February 2013 floods and storms in Ballina, Byron, Gloucester and Richmond Valley. Category C clean-up and recovery grants of up to \$15,000 are now available to eligible primary producers through the NSW Disaster Assistance Arrangements that are jointly funded with the Commonwealth Government through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA).

For further information on the grants, including eligibility, refer to the NSW Rural Assistance Authority by calling 1800 678 593, or visit their website at <http://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/> Further information on Australian Government assistance is available at [www.disasterassist.gov.au](http://www.disasterassist.gov.au).

### Electricity price rises - update

Queensland farmers have been given a one-year reprieve from a 20 per cent electricity price rise that was recommended by the state's Competition Authority (QCA). Under pressure, the LNP Government back tracked and decided to cap the increase for farmers and irrigators at 10 per cent for the 2013-14 year. Avocados Australia welcomes this cap and is pleased that the intended increase of 17.5% (as originally announced by the QCA in May) was not instituted.

AAL will continue to monitor proposed changes to electricity tariffs in all states and remain in contact with the relevant agencies in case of new developments. A detailed article following up on this issue is set to appear in a future edition of Talking Avocados magazine.

## Industry Update

### Quality of Australian avocados is improving in-store - research shows

The internal fruit quality of Hass avocados available to consumers in retail outlets has improved 38% since 2008, according to the findings of Retail Quality Monitoring Surveys conducted by Avocados Australia. In particular avocado fruit in retail stores are showing less bruising compared with five years ago.

Overall results show that the internal quality of the top two main varieties of avocado (Hass and Shepard) has improved since Avocados Australia's fruit quality improvement program began in 2008. A detailed article providing an overview of the survey's findings on this will appear in the next edition of Talking Avocados.

### Thailand's New Conditions for Australian imports

Thailand's Department of Agriculture (DOA) has advised that new import protocols for Australian avocado have been gazetted ([click here](#) to view the new conditions). The new import conditions specified in the protocol will enter into force on 19 July 2013 meaning that consignments arriving from that date must comply with the new conditions.

The new protocol will require cold disinfestation of avocados from outside fruit fly pest free areas. Avocados Australia has been pushing for acceptance of conditional non-host status for Hass and Lamb Hass and/or chemical treatments in the short term. Industries' concerns and comments have been conveyed to DOA on numerous occasions and requests made by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) for amendments to be made prior to gazettal. However DOA made it clear that amendments will only be considered after the new conditions are made active. DAFF continues to press DOA for timeframes on its amendment process for both gazetted and pending new import protocols.

Avocados Australia is working with DAFF and exporters on a strategy to expedite the protocol amendment.

### Early bird conference deadline extended to 1st August!

Discount registration to attend "Nutritional Values", the 5th New Zealand & Australian Avocado Growers' Conference, has been extended to the 1st of August!

As many of you are aware the conference is being held from 9th to the 12th of September at the ASB Arena, Baypark in Tauranga, New Zealand. If you want to increase your efficiency, productivity and results then take time out to pick up on topical issues, network with other growers and arm yourself with information to improve your orchard business. To view the program [click here](#).

If you would like to register for the conference over the phone, Midge Munro and Jo Nunn are happy to assist, please call +64 7 571 6147 alternatively to register online [click here](#).

### Study Tour expressions of interest close 19 July!

The deadline for expressions of interest for growers wanting to access financial assistance to attend the the 5th New Zealand & Australian Avocado Growers' Conference is next Friday 19th of July. For further information contact Anna Petrou, Communications Manager on 07 3846 6566 or email [co@avocado.org.au](mailto:co@avocado.org.au).

## New Federal Agriculture Minister

The Hunter Valley MP Joel Fitzgibbon has been appointed as the new Federal Agriculture Minister following the recent Federal Government leadership change and Cabinet reshuffle. [Click here](#) to read more info about the new minister.

## The names and portfolios of the new Rudd Ministry

With the recent changes to cabinet new key politicians will now impact upon agriculture they are: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Communications and Infrastructure: Anthony Albanese; Agriculture Minister: Joel Fitzgibbon; Minister for Regional Australia: Catherine King; Minister for Industry and Innovation and higher education: Kim Carr; Finance Minister: Penny Wong; Minister for Trade: Richard Marles; and Minister for Immigration: Tony Burke. [Click here](#) to see ABC's coverage of the changes.

## Scholarships available for women in the industry

The "Supporting Women Scholarship", an initiative being transitioned to the Department of Education, Training and Employment (from Skills Queensland), is aimed at opening doors for women to undertake study and ultimately employment in a range of fields, including agricultural science. To find out more view the fact sheet here. To enquire call (07) 3836 0015 or to find out more [click here](#).

## Marketing Update

### Consumer Education Strategy Gets Underway to Address Purchase Barriers

It's no secret that many consumers continue to lack confidence in choosing and ripening avocados. This was again confirmed last year in the major research study (Project Avocado Accelerator, Oct 2012) where greater than 20% of all avocados buyers identified a lack of confidence in choosing and ripening avocados as a barrier to their increased purchase. Not surprisingly this was identified by an even greater proportion of less frequent avocado buyers. To date marketing activities to help educate consumers have been difficult to implement at store level. Periodic in-store sampling is ad-hoc, point of sale material is difficult to maintain and information retained on the website is removed from the critical point of purchase. A very big challenge is also knowing what are the right messages and what are the most effective ways to deliver them to consumers.

To address this issue Australian Avocados are developing and implementing a new consumer education strategy to ultimately build consumer confidence. This strategy is based on three key steps that are being implemented over the next 6 months. 1) develop a deeper understanding of consumers knowledge gaps towards ripening and selecting; 2) Develop the most appropriate messages that consumers will engage with and 3) Identify the best vehicles to deliver those messages. Starting in July the first step of this strategy will be underway via a consumer research program involving in-store observation and interviews plus consumer group work.

An important part of this strategy is also working with our retail partners to establish our common goals. In delivering the right communication in the right place for their customers it is important that we work together through this process.

## Industry News

### Peru: Procesadora Torre Blanca to supply Walmart with citrus and avocados

Procesadora Torre Blanca (PTB), a member of Grupo Ransa (under Grupo Romero), announced that the world's largest supermarket chain, Walmart, has recently become its new client for the supply of citrus and avocados. Read more by [clicking here](#).

### Peru regulates dry matter

A new regulation in Peru delayed the first shipments of avocados into the U.S. this year but

should ensure a higher quality of fruit, says online produce magazine The Packer ([www.thepacker.com](http://www.thepacker.com)). Read more by [clicking here](#).

#### **Mexican scientists map avocado genome**

Scientists from Mexico's National Laboratory of Genomics for Biodiversity (Langebio) have successfully completed genome sequencing for a native variety of avocado. Click here to [read more](#).

#### **ACCC takes Coles to task on misleading country of origin claims**

Coles Supermarkets Australia Pty Ltd (Coles) has paid six infringement notices totaling \$61,200 for alleged misleading representations about the country of origin of fresh produce made in five of its stores between March 2013 and May 2013. The stores were located across Queensland, New South Wales, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. Click here to [read more](#).

#### **E-Scan confirms need for skill building in agriculture**

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) announced that they support the findings of the 2013 Environmental Scan, which reiterates the need for skills development and growth in the agriculture workforce. Click here to [read more](#).

Can't wait for Guacamole? You can read all the latest [Avocado News](#) and industry-related [National & International News](#) on the Avocados Australia industry website.

This email was sent by Avocados Australia, Level 1 / 8/63 Annerley Rd, Woolloongabba, Australia 4102 to [co@avocado.org.au](mailto:co@avocado.org.au)

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