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Monday, 12 January 2015

The latest industry news at your fingertips

'Guacamole' is the Australian avocado industry's fortnightly email newsletter delivering the latest news of relevance to the Australian avocado industry.

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Grower Update



Infocado Improvement Survey - Have your say!

As Avocados Australia's Infocado system moves into its 10th year of operation we are undertaking a survey of all contributors and non-contributors. Although participation in the system is currently very strong, the aim is to improve the reporting interface and to encourage even greater participation.

The **Infocado Improvement Survey** allows you to provide your views about the current Infocado system, both the Weekly and Quarterly reports. We need to ensure they continue to meet stakeholders' needs, so please take the time to provide your comments. Responses remain confidential and those who take the time to complete the survey and provide their business contact details will go into the draw to win a **\$300 FlightCentre voucher***.

The online survey link appears below. To assist you in completing the survey click on the links below for a copy of the Infocado Reports before opening the survey. Printing out the reports will assist you in completing the survey. The survey takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete depending on the length of your responses. Please complete the survey before close of business on Monday 19 January 2014.

[Click here](#) to access **Infocado Weekly Report**.

[Click here](#) to access **Quarterly Infocado Report**.

[Click here](#) to go to the **INFOCADO IMPROVEMENT SURVEY**.

For more information about the survey please contact Nathan Symonds on 07 3846 6566 or email supplychain@avocado.org.au.

*Conditions Apply: Prize is to be taken as offered and is not transferable or redeemable for cash and can't be on sold. Prize must be redeemed by the due date as indicated on the offer. All personal details provided are only used in conjunction with this survey prize and are not disclosed to any other parties. Avocados Australia will not be held liable for any further claim following the receipt of the prize by the winner.

Sunshine Coast Qualicado Workshop – 13 February!

Avocados Australia's Sunshine Coast Qualicado Workshop will be held next month on the 13 February. Claim the date in your diaries! A copy of the program will be made available soon.

World Avocado Congress 2014 Update

Please note that the venue for the **World Avocado Congress for 2015** has now changed and will be the Westin Lima Hotel and Convention Center in Lima. The dates for the congress will remain the same, the 13 to 18 September 2015. Please refer to the WAC2015 website as more information will be uploaded there: <http://www.wacperu2015.com>.

Dry Matter Testing available at Mareeba DAFF

North Queensland growers can access avocado dry matter testing services in Mareeba at The Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). Dry Matter (DM) standards for optimum avocado quality are 23% for Hass and 21% for Shepard and other varieties. Each sample (5 fruit pieces) should be delivered to Mareeba DAFF at 28 Peters Street on Wednesdays prior to 12.00pm. DM results will then be sent to growers by mid Thursday afternoon.

The cost is \$20/sample, with discounts for more than 2 samples. For more information please contact Geoff Dickinson, Senior Horticulturist at Mareeba DAFF, on 4048 4600 or email Geoff.dickinson@daff.qld.gov.au.

2015 is International Year of Soils



The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2015 to be the International Year of Soils. But as every good avocado grower knows, fact finding about the nature of an orchard's soils and understanding its biology, composition and other attributes is important every year.

Avocados Australia's Best Practice Resource (BPR) is a free online one-stop-shop of information for avocado growers and other members of the supply chain. Growers will find that the BPR now provides a wealth of information related to soils. Be it related to soil health, site selection for planting, nutrition or irrigation. The BPR even provides information on what you can do to encourage soil biology.

To access the above content on the BPR, [login to the BPR](#) then move your cursor to the "Growing" menu item and then select from the sub-headings.

How to gain access to the BPR:

If you are an Australian grower/packer/wholesaler/riper/transporter/exporter/retailer and you haven't applied to access the Best Practice Resource apply for access now! [Click here](#) to access the "Apply for access" online form.

Earth Hour 2015 – Aussie growers invited to play a part

In 2014, Earth Hour was celebrated in over 162 countries and over 7000 cities and towns worldwide. The symbolic hour has grown into the world's largest grassroots movement for the environment, with beyond the hour projects and initiatives happening throughout the year. The focus of the Earth Hour campaign for 2015 will be on how climate change is affecting Australian food production and farming. To support this theme the organisers (WWF) are inviting growers to host or attend Earth Hour events on the 28 March 2015.

"These events can be as small as having friends over for dinner, or big events such as night-time farmers markets or food fairs," said Marion Glover, an Earth Hour volunteer.

The Earth Hour organisers believe that by holding or participating in events growers can promote the great work they do, and the important role farmers play in regional communities. Those interested in arranging an event can register their event by emailing earthhour@wwf.org.au. The Earth Hour team will then be able to assist with promotion, and materials.

[Click here](#) to view the Earth Hour flyer. For more information call Earth Hour volunteer Marion Glover on 0409 006 309. To go to the Earth Hour website click on this link: <http://www.earthhour.org/celebrating-earth-hour>

Marketing News**Driving Social Engagement in 2015**

2014 was a hugely successful year for Australian Avocados within the social sphere. In the last 12 months the Facebook audience increased by 200%. The Australian Avocados brand page now has 106,690 fans with an average engagement rate of 7.5%, eclipsing all industry benchmarks. Engagement Rate is the percentage of people who liked, shared, clicked or commented on a Facebook post.

The most recent festive season social campaign, '12 Days of Christmas' focused on keeping avocados top of mind throughout the December period. A series of recipes were shared with the Facebook community to provide inspiration for meals from snacks to the dinner party. The campaign delivered the following results:

- 34,843 engagements
- An average engagement rate of 5.7% - again above the industry 3.5% benchmark
- 25 unique recipe competition contributions
- A reach of over 600,000



Above, an example of a '12 Days of Christmas' Australian Avocados Facebook post

In 2015, the focus on social will be to place the Avocado Lovers and Avocado Enthusiasts at the centre of the social content. This will see new content created around:

- Heroing the most engaged fans
- Tactical campaigns that invite the fan base to share avocado-related content and experiences
- More video content featuring the fan base

With increasingly good results from driving engagement with our Facebook Community fans, the 2015 objective is to continue to convert Avocado enthusiasts into lovers.

The social initiatives will continue to work closely with creative, digital and media touch points to ensure an omnichannel approach to drive reach and awareness of messaging. The 'Back to School' campaign at the end of January will be the next initiative.

Industry News

Snow hit California avocados

A snowstorm that hit Southern California on New Year's Eve dumped up to 6 inches of snow on parts of Riverside County and caused damages to avocado orchards that the industry is still assessing. Read more by [clicking here](#).

Debate about GST on fresh food ignites

Recent suggestions from the Australian Federal Government that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) be applied to the sale of fresh food has sparked concern from both farmers' groups and the Federal Opposition. Read more by [clicking here](#).

Peru second largest exporter of Hass avocado to US 2014

According to Pachamama, the Agricultural Weekly Paper of the Embassy of Peru in United States, in 2014, Peru became the third biggest supplier of Hass avocados to the United States and the second largest exporter of this product to that market. Read more by [clicking here](#).

Chile: Free trade with China, the U.S. and Australia

Chilean exports to China, the U.S. and Australia have become tariff-free since 1 January this year. Read more by [clicking here](#).

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

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