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Friday, 19 December 2014

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



Seasons Greetings from the CEO



This is the final issue of Guacamole for 2014. I just wanted to make you all aware that the Avocados Australia office closes today and then re-opens on Monday 5 January 2015. Avocados Australia's Weekly Infocado reporting, including retail prices, will continue as normal over the Christmas period.

2014 has been a very event-filled year. We continued the roll-out of the Qualicado program's extension events to benefit growers, and other members of the supply chain. With more events planned in 2015 this will continue into next year.

Avocados Australia is keen to ensure that we deliver value back to levy payers, so this year we again sought your feedback about how we are performing in terms of industry communications and services. From the feedback we received this year it shows that we are meeting industry expectations and your suggestions will be taken on board to continue to improve Industry Communications in 2015.

This year was also an important one for forging and maturing alliances and partnerships. I would like to thank all of the growers that hosted extension events in their regions during the year. I would like to thank also all of the researchers and project leaders that underpin our R&D and Marketing programs. My thanks also go to all the organisations that provide assistance to us in delivering the range of services and reporting that the industry now values so highly.

I sincerely wish you all a safe and happy Festive Season and a prosperous New Year.

Regards,

John Tyas
Chief Executive Officer

The 'Voice of Horticulture' officially launched this week



The Voice of Horticulture (VOH), a member-based organisation that was formed to represent horticultural growers and businesses across fruit, nuts, turf, nursery plants and cut flowers, was launched this week. Avocados Australia Ltd is a member and - overall - growers across 21 horticultural industries have united under the 'Voice of Horticulture' to represent and build support and understanding of Australia's \$50 billion horticulture industry.

The formation of VOH comes at a time when the horticulture funding levy system is undergoing a period of fundamental change, change that has the potential to impact across a range of horticulture industries including the avocado industry.

As the Voice of Horticulture's media release states, "*one of the driving forces to establish Voice of Horticulture was the formation of the new research and development corporation for horticulture - Horticulture Innovation Australia Ltd (HIA).*"

Tania Chapman is the Chair of the Voice of Horticulture, and their Directors are John Dollisson (Chief Executive Officer, Apple and Pear Australia Ltd), Doug Phillips (Chairman, Australian Banana Growers Council), Patrick McNamara (Walnut, grape and wheat farmer), John Tyas (Chief Executive Officer, Avocados Australia Ltd), and Alex Livingstone (Chief Executive Officer, Growcom).

[Click here](#) to view the Voice of Horticulture's media release in full.

We encourage you to visit the Voice of Horticulture's website at <http://voiceofhorticulture.org.au/>.

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 thoughts and opinions on 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.

Best Practice Resource Users – Qualicado Presentations

Did you miss the Qualicado Workshop that was held in your region? Not to worry, all of the presentations delivered at each of the Qualicado Workshops held in 2014 can be easily accessed from the Best Practice Resource (BPR).

To access the BPR just [click here](#) to go to the login page. Once logged in move your cursor to the menu bar to “Growing” and then select “Qualicado”. On that page select your region and then click on a presentation from the list.

WA's first Avocado Festival held this year was a Success

Western Australia's first Avocado Festival was held in the Perth hills in October this year and the reaction from the public was overwhelmingly positive. Thousands of people attended the “West Australian Avocado Festival” and the food demonstrations and orchard walks were very popular with locals.

This year's Avocado Festival took place as part of the Karragullen Expo, however plans are underway to hold the Avocado Festival as an independently run event in 2015. Organisers are planning a bigger and better festival offering in 2015.



Above: Festival organiser Roma Spiccia (far right) and her daughters (from left) Sarina Restifo and Melissa Spiccia (Photo by John Linton).

Highlights of this year's avocado festival included cooking demonstrations with celebrity chef Vince Garreffa, avocado stalls showcasing avocado products, gardening education sessions, avocado orchard visits, experts on hand to provide advice and information about nutrition,

horticulture and growing avocados, as well as activities for kids, free giveaways, entertainment and wine tastings.

The West Australian Avocado Festival was organised by Roma Spiccia, an avocado grower based in the Perth Hills at Pickering Brook. Roma was very happy about the festival's success and believes that it can only have a very positive effect on the avocado industry.

"The festival's success showed me that there are many people who love avocados and are enthusiastic to know how to select, ripen and prepare avocado," said Roma Spiccia.

"Perhaps growers from other growing regions may be equally inspired to run similar events."



Phytophthora poster on its way to growers

Avocado growers will soon receive in the mail a copy of a new poster that contains information about the management of Phytophthora Root Rot in avocados. This disease is regarded as the most serious and far reaching on-farm issue across the industry and if it can be managed better we will see improvements in fruit quality and productivity across the board. The poster entitled "Manage Phytophthora Root Rot - Never Let Up!" was developed by Simon Newett and the avocado extension team. The poster shows the effects of root rot, outlines the integrated practices to follow for its prevention and treatment and provides guidelines for effective phosphorous acid application. A copy of the APVMA Permit outlining the use of foliar sprays of phosphorous acid, is included (this permit, PER14813, is in force until 30 September 2017).

Marketing News

2014 - A Marketing Year in Review



2014 has been a significant and successful year for the Australian Avocados marketing activity spearheaded with the launch of the new “Love that avocado feeling” national television campaign in April. This was supported by the relaunch of the Australian Avocados website, a renewed emphasis on social media through Facebook advertising and new educational point-of-sale material developed and distributed to retail outlets. These consumer activities were also underpinned by the continuing Health and Nutrition education program targeting health professionals and the Foodservice Chef Training program for fresh avocados.

Some of the key highlights of the campaign for the year are as follows:

- Across two core bursts of media advertising (May and September) the new campaign reached a combined audience of 2,056,639 main grocery buyers 25-49.
- This combined audience represented 70% of the total target audience reached who saw our advertising 4 plus times for message frequency and reinforcement.
- Of those consumers that saw our advertising on-line through catch-up and on-demand TV, viewing completion rates were a high 85% reinforcing the entertainment value of the ad.
- The campaign built a growing and more engaged Facebook audience increasing the number of Australian Avocado Facebook fans by 30,133 to over 101,000 fans with an average engagement rate of 7.5%, eclipsing all industry benchmarks.
- The new Australian Avocados website was launched with new device responsive technology for improved mobile viewing, improved design features for easier navigation and the inclusion of the Facebook feed to close the digital loop for all audiences.
- The website newsletter “The Daily Spread” is reaching over 15,000 consumers every month and achieving a strong open rate of 26%.

Importantly these key highlights were also reflected in strong results from consumer tracking research reinforcing the positive impact of the campaign on consumer behaviour:

- The size of our target segments (Avocado Enthusiasts and Avocado Lovers) have grown from 63% to 67% of all avocado volume.
- Spontaneous advertising recall of the campaign grew to 26%, achieving the highest level in over 12 months, with prompted advertising recall at 31%. That means almost 1 in 3 main grocery buyers remembered seeing our advertising.
- 47% of those researched agreed that the ad made them want to buy an avocado.
- According to the latest Nielsen results (29 November 2014) the proportion of households purchasing avocados has grown to a high of 67.6% compared to last year. That represents an extra 215,000 households having purchased at least once during the year.

For your quick and easy reference [click here](#) to access an infographic representing a summary of the key findings from the ‘Wave 2’ of the advertising research.

Industry News

Admission of unconscionable conduct leads to Coles adoption of buyer training

Australian supermarket giant Coles has said it will immediately introduce an independently-run six-monthly training program for all its buyers on best practice commercial dealings. Read more by [clicking here](#).

Chilean avocado exports could drop by half this season, says Cabilfrut

Chile's avocado export volumes could take a tumble this season, as factors including attractive domestic prices and serious production issues conspire to alter market dynamics. Read more by [clicking here](#).

Spain: "Avocado prices down, supply up"

The avocado season is currently in full swing at Spanish company Natural Tropic. "The season started with very high prices, but eventually the price level dropped significantly. The current situation being enough avocados available on the market but sales are slow. There's a lot of competition from countries like Israel, Chile and Colombia," says Kenneth Meyer from Natural Tropic. 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.

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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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