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News

Guacamole E-Newsletter 25 Feb 2013 - 11/03/2013 - 25/02/2013

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The latest industry news at your fingertips

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

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

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Grower Update



Immature North Queensland Fruit

The February dry matter assessments indicated that 70% of Shepard fruit tested was immature. The lowest reading was only 13.55%. The average of all the Shepard fruit tested was only 19.64%. Unfortunately this fruit will be a disappointing experience for the consumer who buys it. All Shepard fruit was tested within seven days of the date packed as recorded on the tray. Instructions on how to test dry matter at home can also be found on this page. Should you have any questions please contact Julie Petty on 07 3846 6566 or supplychain@avocado.org.au The full Dry Matter Report can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

The 'avocado bible' now available

The fully updated new edition of the successful 2002 book 'The Avocado: Botany, Production and Uses' is now available. Edited by B Schaffer, Professor of Plant Physiology, B Wolstenholme, Emeritus Professor, and A Whitley, Emeritus Professor the book provides a comprehensive review of avocado production, science and technology. For more information or to purchase this book please [click here](#).

Avocado Problem Solver Field Guide soon to be available

In the coming weeks all avocado growers and packhouses will be receiving a free copy of the new Avocado Problem Solver Field Guide. This comprehensive manual has been produced for you to use to identify problems encountered in the avocado supply chain and to also gain practical advice on how to prevent and manage each problem. It includes descriptions and colour illustrations of pests, beneficial insects, diseases, deficiencies, toxicities and other disorders. Exotic pests and diseases are also included in the manual. The booklet has been produced by the Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) through a project led by Principal Extension Horticulturist, Simon Newett. It has been funded by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) using the avocado levy and matched funds from the Australian Government. Should you have any questions please contact Julie Petty on 07 3846 6566 or supplychain@avocado.org.au

Orchard Info

Western Australian, Central New South Wales and Tristate growers would have received their latest OrchardInfo forms to complete late last year. In the coming weeks our office will be in touch with grower's who have not submitted their data as yet to provide assistance where possible. The OrchardInfo program is

designed to collect orchard information about tree numbers, tree age, varieties, rootstocks and overall production. This aggregated data is a valuable tool for the industry to use to estimate long term crop production, as well as for businesses to have a better understanding of tree numbers and varieties in their local area. We strongly encourage you to fill out the forms to the best of your ability and return them to us as the more people who participate the more accurate the reporting will be. For more information please contact Julie Petty on 07 3846 6566 or email infocado@avocado.org.au

Industry Update

First meeting of the new Industry Advisory Committee

The Avocado Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) is a committee of Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and has a key role in providing advice to HAL in relation to investment of industry and government funds for R&D and marketing managed by HAL. A new IAC structure has recently been put in place and the new members held their first meeting last week. The meeting was both productive and positive with the new IAC agreeing on the Annual Investment Plan for 2013-14 and endorsing a new three year marketing plan. Barry Avery, Avocados Australia Director for the Tristate growing region and continuing IAC member, commented that he was "very impressed" with how the meeting was run. "When it comes to marketing and R&D, Tristate growers and the rest of industry can look to the future with confidence," he said.

Best Practice Resource

Best recommended practice information for avocados growers is currently being added to the Best Practice Resource (BPR) in preparation for its launch next month. The BPR is an online, interactive system which will house all materials and information relating to best recommended practices for all sectors of the supply chain. It is designed to be a 'one stop shop' with training modules for staff and key reference materials available at the click of a button. Growing information will be available on issues such as Phytophthora and techniques for tree injections. Not all content will be available at once, but will be added to the system over the coming months. This is an exciting new tool for the industry to use to improve their avocado handling practices and as a result improve or maintain fruit quality. Should you have any questions please contact Julie Petty on 07 3846 6566 or supplychain@avocado.org.au

An update on the current review of Industry Communications

Avocados Australia is undertaking a review of the effectiveness of its communications which we recognise is vital in supporting the development of a sustainable industry. This review is part of a formal evaluation of the current industry communication program. The aim is to assess the effectiveness of existing communication channels and the information being disseminated.

Telephone interviews are currently being conducted by representatives from PRISM Communication Architects who have been engaged to conduct this review on Avocado Australia's behalf. The interview takes around 20 minutes and will be valuable in understanding stakeholder perceptions of and satisfaction with current communication. Comments are treated with complete confidentiality and we will use the results to measure communication effectiveness to date and to form recommendations for how we can improve our communication program to better meet your needs in the future.

If you are an Australian avocado grower and would like to take part in the telephone interviews please contact Courtney Vane at the Avocados Australia office on 07 3846 6566 or email co@avocado.org.au

In the coming weeks, when telephone interviews have concluded, an online survey will be made available to all of industry so that everyone can have the opportunity to provide their feedback.

Infocado Quarterly Report delayed

In the last Guacamole we indicated that we would be issuing another Quarterly Report in February to try and capture fruit losses resulting from the wild weather around the Australia Day long weekend. Feedback from a number of packers in the Bundaberg, Sunshine Coast and Tamborine areas has been that many of their growers are still trying to assess the damage and estimate possible tree deaths due to water logging. Given this feedback there is limited benefit from publishing another report this month. We will assess this situation again in a couple of weeks and if another report can be published before the scheduled April report then we will do so. Thank you to all the packers who promptly submitted their estimates. We will keep you informed about what is happening. For more information please contact Julie Petty on 07 3846 6566 or email infocado@avocado.org.au

Infocado Individual Reports

Packhouses in North Queensland, Central Queensland and the Sunshine Coast will soon be receiving their 2012 Infocado Individual Reports. These reports are designed to help illustrate how accurately you were forecasting compared with your dispatches. Both weekly and seasonal forecasts vs. dispatches are shown along with total dispatches for your growing region and the industry as a whole. For more information please contact Julie Petty on 07 3846 6566 or email infocado@avocado.org.au

Avocado Prices and Quality

Our four contractors have been out and about every Monday to collect the retail pricing information from 64 stores across Sydney, Perth, Melbourne and Brisbane. This pricing data is displayed on our website and distributed through the Infocado Weekly Report. It provides a regular snapshot of what is happening in each capital city on a week by week basis. Carmel Carmichael in Brisbane, Brenda Morse in Sydney, Joy Walker in Melbourne and Johanne Appelbee in Perth do a fantastic job. These ladies also undertake the retail quality surveys on a monthly basis; spending hours buying avocados from retail outlets across their cities and cutting them up to assess any internal blemishes. Analysed data from the assessments have helped us to determine what the major challenges are for industry in regards to internal blemishes. Some information about avocado pricing is available from our website by [clicking here](#). Information about product quality can be viewed at our website by [clicking here](#).

Courtney Vane resigns as Communication Officer of Avocados Australia

It is with some regret that I announce our Communications Officer, Courtney Vane, has resigned from her position here at Avocados Australia. Courtney was employed by Avocados Australia in March 2010 to take up the newly created Communications Officer role. Avocados Australia would like to thank Courtney for all of her hard work over the last three years and wish her all the best in starting a new phase of her career.

As of Friday, 1 March 2013 please direct all communication enquiries to Anna Petrou. Anna will be taking care of the Communications Officer role for the next 4-6 weeks during which time Avocados Australia will recruit a suitable candidate. The contact details for the Communications Officer will remain the same; please email co@avocado.org.au or call 0488 384 222.

Marketing Update

Strategic Marketing Plan recommendation presented to the Avocado IAC

The strategic marketing review process that has been underway since April last year came to its conclusion with a presentation to the IAC of the Strategic Marketing Plan recommendation for 2013-2016. Presented at the IAC meeting on 13 February the plan was the culmination of months of consumer development work by HAL and its research, media and creative agency partners. Based on the findings and insights from the consumer research (Project Accelerator) a new communications strategy has been developed to elevate avocado awareness and consumption over the next three years. The plan addressed the key issues and recommendations from last year's marketing review (the Review Partners) and was endorsed in principle by the avocado IAC. Full details of the plan will be published in Talking Avocados once approved by the HAL Board.

Member Update

Changes to the Avocados Australia Board

In the week commencing 11 February 2013, Avocados Australia received the resignations of Mr Chris Nelson, Director for the Central New South Wales Growing Region and Mr Russell Delroy, Director for the West Australian Growing Region from the Avocados Australia Board effective immediately.

As directors on the Avocados Australia Board Chris and Russell have proudly represented the interests of growers in their respective regions and played an integral role in shaping our organisation to date. Chris has been a director since its inception in 2003 and Russell has been a director since 2009. Avocados Australia would like to thank Chris and Russell for their service and wish them all the best in the future.

To ensure the Central New South Wales and West Australian growing regions continue to be represented on the Avocados Australia Board we have sought expressions of interest from growers to fill the positions in the coming months.

Industry News

Heart Foundation and Unilever separately welcome “good fats” message

Australia's National Heart Foundation and food giant Unilever have independently welcomed the new Australian Dietary Guideline's message in support of "good fats". The 2013 revision of the guidelines released by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) yesterday promotes "good fats" such as polyunsaturated and monounsaturated instead of the previous encouragement of a "low fat" diet promoted in the 2003 guidelines. To read the full article please [click here](#).

Smaller harvest leaves avocado eaters paying more

Marcio Pires shops for avocados at the City Market in Tauranga. The likelihood of paying two or three dollars for a disappointingly stringy avocado is proving to be higher than usual this summer. The New Zealand Avocado Growers' Association confirmed this season's avocado harvest had been half as large as last season's - the crop producing only 3 million trays this year. To read the full article please [click here](#).

Spray reform riles growers

New legislation for agricultural pesticides and chemicals could hit the horticulture industry hard. The Bill will introduce mandatory re-registration for agricultural chemicals. The new Agricultural and Veterinary and Chemicals Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 was introduced November last year, and is now in committee. To read the full article please [click here](#).

Chile braces for easier Peruvian avocado entrance

An array of opinions have surfaced following the announcement by Peru's National Agricultural Health Service (SENASA) that Peruvian Hass avocados would be allowed across the Chilean border without quarantine treatment starting in April. To read the full article please [click here](#).

Peru anticipates Chinese opening for avocados, lucuma, quinoa

Peru will soon have new opportunities in the Chinese market, with avocados, quinoa and lucuma expected to gain market approval soon, according to Peru-China Chamber of Commerce manager Pablo César Matos León. To read the full article please [click 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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