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## News

**Guacamole E-Newsletter March 27 2012 - 27/03/2012**

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### 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 two sections: [Industry Communication](#) and [Industry News](#).

Industry Communication provides a snapshot of the recent news and information directly sent out by Avocados Australia. This includes [Industry Updates](#), [Grower Updates](#), [Member Updates](#) and industry [Media Releases](#). Please note that not all grower and member updates will be included in Guacamole.

**Industry News** provides a range of the latest media coverage on industry issues; this includes news articles, radio clippings and tv broadcasts.

### Industry Communication

#### INDUSTRY UPDATES

##### Avocados Australia Board set to appoint new CEO

Over the last few months the Board of Avocados Australia has been involved in an intensive selection process to appoint a new CEO. The Board has received numerous applications for the position.

"It is fantastic to see so many highly qualified individuals vying for this position. The Board will consider each applicant carefully and we hope to announce our final decision to the industry in the coming weeks," commented Jim Kochi, Chairman of Avocados Australia.

Former CEO of Avocados Australia Antony Allen has officially left the organisation. Mr Allen remains in the Australian avocado industry, using his expertise as the CEO of the newly formed avocado marketing company, The Avolution Group.

##### Avocados Australia to meet with HAL Board

On Wednesday, 28 March 2012 the new Avocado Strategic Investment Plan will be presented to the Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) Board in Canberra. This is a great opportunity to better inform the HAL Board about key issues in the Australian avocado industry and proposed strategic R&D and marketing investments to be implemented through HAL over the next five years.

The HAL Board will receive presentations on the Strategic Investment Plans from six of the largest HAL member industries, including avocados. This is the first time the HAL Board has held a dedicated meeting for this purpose. The meeting will enable the HAL Board to gain a much deeper understanding of the avocado investment program, so that when projects are considered for approval, their strategic context can be better appreciated and understood.

The Avocado Strategic Investment Plan was endorsed at the recent Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) meeting and will be presented to the HAL Board by Avocados Australia Chairman Jim Kochi; IAC Chairman Bob Granger; Avocados Australia Director Tom Silver and Industry Services Manager John Tyas.

### Infocado News

The March seasonal forecast forms have been emailed to all avocado packhouses. Please take the time to complete and review these forms as this long term forecast information will feed directly into the April Quarterly Report.

### Supply Chain Education Program

As a part of the supply chain education program, avocado harvest guides for both growers and managers as well as pickers have been developed. These documents have been distributed to all growers.

Copies can be downloaded from the Education Materials page on the Avocados Australia website or hard copies can be ordered from Avocados Australia office. Please contact Program Officer Julie Petty on (07) 3846 6566 or email [supplychain@avocado.org.au](mailto:supplychain@avocado.org.au) for more information.



### Australian Avocados Marketing Program Update

#### *NRL Campaign - Giving unhealthy eating the boot!*

Australian Avocados hope to become the first ever fresh food produce to take a stance against junk food advertising in the history of Australian sports. This April, straight off the heels of a successful 2011 campaign, Australian Avocados and the NRL will renegotiate their contract for the 2012 season.

In 2011, the NRL campaign reached a circulation figure of 43 million with the NRL recipe competition receiving 4,354 votes in total; a fantastic improvement compared to 1444 votes in 2010.

A part of the 2012 contract negotiations includes the plan to give unhealthy eating the boot, with the launch of a new sports sponsorship category that will only be open to healthy eating brands. If Australian Avocados is successful, the plan will be to announce this national-first at an exciting media launch at the Sydney Markets in Flemington.

The I Heart Foody website and recipe competition will be back in full swing in mid/late April. The website will host the recipe competition with new teams and new recipes.

The recipe competition will be promoted through the Australian Avocados Facebook page, direct emails to the industry consumer database, as well as to the NRL clubs. Emails will also be sent to the NRL clubs databases to encourage people to visit the Australian Avocados website and participate in the competition. Videos created by the NRL clubs cooking their recipe will also be featured on the industry's YouTube channel, which will be promoted through Facebook and email.

#### *Australian Avocados Magazine Activity*

Australian Avocados magazine activity takes advantage of creative executions that include more 'everyday' recipe ideas. 'ADD AN AVO EVERYDAY' magazine advertisements use hero shapes (e.g. heart avocado shape) and employ multiple simple usages in the one ad advertisement, accompanied with food photography that provides a strong visual link for consumers to understand the usages and also helps provide a taste cue.

Magazines are an excellent platform to present key messages such as avocado is a 'useful ally in the kitchen' and 'clever ideas for your family'. These key messages continue to deliver on the brand essence of 'One fruit. Endless possibilities.'

A third page vertical ad will run in the April on sale issue of Australian Women's Weekly, Donna Hay Magazine and Recipes +. Australian Avocados have also accessed a new to market publication called Naturally Australia, running a full page advert.

#### *Consumer Website*

On the consumer website the April feature article will be all about Easter. The industry's resident nutritionist Zoe Bingley-Pullin, with the help of accredited practising dietician Lisa Yates, have put together a feature article and FAQs on chocolate in relation to people's health. Through this relevant lifestyle content, avocados will be put back into the conversation with chocolate and avocado recipes and healthy alternatives that one can have during Easter.

Sweet recipes featuring avocados are largely unrealised by Australian consumers. Through experience on the industry's Facebook page, however, it has been shown that when avocado and chocolate based recipes are featured, consumers are pleasantly surprised and willing to try it out.

### **GROWER UPDATES**

**PMA Fresh Connections: Unique opportunity for avocado growers, packers and marketers**

PMA Fresh Connections organisers, together with Avocados Australia are encouraging avocado growers, packers and marketers to get to PMA Fresh Connections 2012 and make the most of a visit from one of the keynote speakers at this year's conference and trade show (Melbourne 26-28 June) – Dr Jan de Lyser, Vice President Marketing for the California Avocado Commission (CAC), US Produce Marketer of the Year 2011 and PMA Chair-elect.

In addition to her role as keynote speaker, Jan will be guest speaker at a Special Interest Workshop on "Cutting-edge initiatives to increase avocado sales in the Pacific Rim." Hosted by Avocados Australia, the hour-long workshop is specifically designed to provide detailed and specific information to avocado growers, packers, marketers.

Currently responsible for the overall leadership, management and organisation of the CAC's marketing functions, Jan has helped the avocado industry attain phenomenal growth during her time in the industry and she will offer avocado industry delegates valuable lessons on how this has been achieved.

"Jan will bring to delegates some great insights into successful avocado marketing and really being able to connect with consumers" said Michael Worthington, CEO of PMA Australia-New Zealand. "During her time as Marketing VP, avocados have seen a phenomenal rise in sales. Being awarded Produce Marketer of the Year was highly justified and a reflection of her considerable success and wealth of experience in the avocado industry" he added.

"The Special Interest Workshops (hosted by various retailers, industry organisations and technical experts) are designed to give specific industry segments the opportunity to ask the how, what and why questions that don't usually get asked, and to learn how to apply the most recent techniques into their business environment" said Mr Worthington.

Jan says that there is much to be learned from global alliances, networks and industry peers.

"It makes sense to collaborate globally especially where there is value in learning from each other. As an example, with avocado production research projects we can get a better understanding of and identify solutions for the alternate bearing nature of the Hass avocado worldwide" she said.

"Global alliances can benefit the produce industry in research, marketing and increasing consumption. Even where there is competition for share of shelf and share of stomach, collaboration on increasing demand ahead of the supply can result in a positive outcome in the marketplace" she added.

In her keynote address to all conference delegates, Jan will be addressing the topic of consumers as drivers of change throughout the fresh produce industry in her plenary session and cites interest in locally grown, food safety, and the "consumer voice" as the three main trends influencing change that she has seen in the fresh produce industry in the past decade.

"Do your consumer research, know your capabilities, understand your distribution and then make disciplined decisions based upon your strengths and competitive advantages. Work on building both demand and value" she emphasised.

Jan also emphasises the importance of initiatives to increase consumption of fresh produce, and especially avocados.

"Increasing consumption of all fresh produce is very important throughout the entire supply chain, from farm to table. For example, consumer health can be improved with a better diet including more produce. Retailers and foodservice operator profits can benefit from increased consumption of fresh produce, and for growers it is essential to their livelihoods."

"We have seen avocado volume in the United States nearly triple over the last 10 years and it is expected to continue to increase with additional sources of supply. We are now at 1.4 billion pounds and will likely reach 2 billion pounds in the next 5 years. Without the marketing investment made by the California Avocado Commission since 1978 and the Hass Avocado Board since 2004, we would not have seen avocado consumption nearly triple with viable returns to producers. It is significant that the California Avocado industry has realized its two highest crop values on record over the past two seasons" she said.

In addition to Jan's insights, avocado industry members will also benefit from attending sessions on topics such as southern hemisphere suppliers competing for market share in China, food safety, the growing foodservice sector, the battle for retail space, attracting talent to our industry, launching profitable new products and getting the most out of social media.

A joint initiative by PMA Australia-New Zealand and The Australian Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Industries, PMA Fresh Connections will bring together delegates from across the entire fruit, vegetable and floral industries in Australia and New Zealand and will be sure to inspire, educate and build business connections.

Registrations for PMA Fresh Connections 2012 are now open. To register, and for full information on the event, sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities, please visit [www.pmafreshconnections.com.au](http://www.pmafreshconnections.com.au)

**MEMBER UPDATES**

**New Avocados Australia member logo available**

**Promote your support of the industry today!**



As peak industry body for the Australian avocado industry we are proud to represent the interests of all Australian avocado growers, but many do not realise that we are a 'not-for-profit' membership-based organisation.

There is a common misunderstanding among growers that if you are an Australian avocado grower and you pay an avocado levy then you are automatically a member. This is not the case; to become a member you need to complete an easy two-step membership process.

The funding generated from our members, and not from avocado levies, allows us to provide certain services with tangible benefits to the whole of industry. These services include:

- Bio-security - lobbying the Government to protect your business
- Submissions and lobbying - approaching Federal and State Governments on industry matters
- Avocados Australia website - providing information about retail prices, dry matter testing etc.
- Infocado - expanding and improving the national avocado crop flow information system
- Avocado export plan - developing a strategy and tools to help exporters access new markets
- Talking Avocados - continuing to improve industry communication via our quarterly magazine.

If you are not a member or your membership is coming up for renewal please keep in mind that we need your support through your membership in order to continue offering these services.

For more information or to become a member please visit the Membership section of the website.

To obtain a copy of the Avocados Australia Member Logo please contact the Avocados Australia office at [admin@avocado.org.au](mailto:admin@avocado.org.au) or (07) 3846 6566.

## **MEDIA RELEASES**

### **Add an Avo Every Day: Australian avocados have long since lost their reputation as a 'niche' product**

The Australian avocado industry is encouraging consumers to eat more Australian avos. Fresh Australian avocados are not only a tasty and nutritious addition to any meal, but this year when you buy an Australian avocado you will also be supporting local farmers in what is predicted to be one of the biggest avocado crops in the history of the Australian avocado industry.

According to early forecasts from the Australia avocado industry, 30% more Australian avocados will be heading straight for the supermarket shelves this year.

"There will plenty of Australian avocados on offer this year at your local supermarket or green grocer, premium quality fruit at great prices, we are hoping more consumers will jump behind Australian avocado growers and start to love this truly amazing fruit" said Mr Antony Allen, CEO of Avocados Australia.

### **International Avocado Research Consortium Key to Future**

Over the last year the grower organisations from Australia, California, New Zealand and Mexico have formed an international consortium, the Avocado Research Consortium (ARC), to fund key avocado research. The formal agreement between the four organisations was signed in early September 2011 at the VII World Avocado Congress in Cairns, Australia.

The four consortium partners have in the first instance committed research funding to the key issue affecting all aspects of the avocado supply chain; 'alternate bearing'. Avocado trees in all producing countries suffer from varying degrees of alternate bearing and the impact on growers, marketers and consumers is severe.

## **Industry News**

### **Avocado growers fed up with imports**

OUTRAGED avocado growers are fed up with imported avocados hitching a free ride from local advertising.

An avocado marketing levy paid by Australian growers but not imposed on New Zealand growers, has angered Comboyne farmers and escalated when the amount of New Zealand produce sold in recent months in the Hastings skyrocketed due to a poor local season.

### **US: Hass avocado board reveals nutrition research**

For the first time ever, the Hass avocado industry has come together to unveil a major nutrition research program focused on heart health, weight management and diabetes, and healthy living. The comprehensive nutritional initiative will be one of the Hass Avocado Board's (HAB) key strategic priorities moving forward, with an overall goal of helping to drive increased consumption of Hass avocados.

### **Jan DeLyser shares insight on global trends**

### **PMA Fresh Connections speakers provide knowledge**

The fresh produce industry is set to gain insights from one of their best when Dr Jan DeLyser, Vice President Marketing for the California Avocado Commission (CAC), US Produce Marketer of the Year 2011 and PMA Chair-elect takes to the stage at PMA Fresh Connections (26-28 June 2012).

### **NZ: Avocado growers call for louder voice**

A group of Katikati avocado growers is calling for a split between the Avocado Growers Association (AGA) and the Avocado Industry Council (AIC) to give growers back their political voice.

A spokesman for 20 growers, who between them represent 5 per cent of last season's crop, Brien James, said the growers unanimously called for the change at a recent informal meeting.

### **PMA-Produce Plus Magazine Marketer of the Year Award 2012**

PMA Australia-New Zealand and Produce Plus Magazine are pleased to unveil the "Marketer of the Year" Award, the newest accolade for the Australasian fresh

produce and floral industries.

The new award recognises outstanding achievement over the past year in the marketing of fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers in Australia and/or New Zealand, and will be presented at the PMA Fresh Connections conference and trade show on 27 June 2012.

Get your nominations in now to be in the running for the prestigious new "Marketer of the Year" Award 2012!

Find out more at [www.produceplus.com.au](http://www.produceplus.com.au) and [www.pma-anz.com](http://www.pma-anz.com).

#### **AU: Agricultural growth predictions for coming years**

Total Australian agricultural exports are set to rise by almost 10 per cent this financial year to \$35.5 billion due to favourable breeding and growing conditions.

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences will this morning release forecasts for Australia's agricultural commodities over the short to medium term to 2016-2017.

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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