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Tuesday, 27 May 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



Central NSW Growers & Packers - Workshop coming 11 June!

Avocado growers and packers based in and around the Central New South Wales growing region are invited to attend the **Central NSW Qualicado Workshop** happening on **Wednesday 11 June** at **224 Herbert Gill Road near Comboyne**. This free and informative workshop has been tailored to meet the needs of avocado growers and packers. Avocados Australia would like to thank local avocado growers Ernst and Penny Tideman for kindly offering to host this workshop. The Qualicado workshops are extension events that are being rolled out across the country as part of Avocados Australia's Qualicado program. Qualicado has been funded by Horticulture Australia Ltd using the national avocado levy and matched funds from the Australian Government. Our thanks also go to Birdwood Nursery for supporting the Qualicado program as a national sponsor.

[Click here](#) to view the **Central NSW Qualicado Workshop** program.

Those interested in attending can **RSVP** now by contacting Nathan Symonds on **07 3846 6566** or supplychain@avocado.org.au before **Monday 9 June 2014**.

South QLD Qualicado Workshop is a hit with growers

The majority of avocado growers and packers based in South Queensland attended Avocados Australia's South Qld Qualicado Workshop that was held recently at Mt Binga (near Blackbutt). Overall 86 people attended the day that included presentations from leading researchers, an overview about the Qualicado program followed by an orchard walk.

The orchard walk began with an overview about the current orchard management practices being adopted by host and local avocado grower Barry Trousdell.

Avocados Australia would like to thank the speakers who took part on the day. We would also like to thank Barry and Michelle Trousdell for hosting the day and supporting the event. During the event Graeme Thomas was presented with an Avocados Australia Order of Merit award for making a significant contribution to the avocado industry. This award is well deserved and more information about this recognition will appear in the Winter issue of Talking Avocados magazine.

All of the presentations delivered on the day are available online from the Best Practice Resource (BPR). To do this [click here](#) to access the BPR login page. Once you are logged in glide your cursor over the menu bar to "Growing" then scroll down and click on "Qualicado". Once on the page click on "South Queensland". A list of the presentations and their links appear on the page.

Progress with market access to Thailand

On Thursday 1 May an Australian delegation met with the Thailand Department of Agriculture (DOA) in Bangkok to progress the request for a revised (workable) protocol for Australian avocados to Thailand. A new protocol was introduced in July last year by the DOA, but is not commercially feasible. AAL has been working with the Australian Government to negotiate an alternative protocol with the preference being for a recognition that avocados are a conditional non-host of fruit fly. The delegation, led by AAL CEO John Tyas, included AAL director Daryl Boardman, representatives from the Australian government and key industry exporters.

The meeting was very successful with potential alternative protocols discussed in detail. AAL is now working with the Australian Government to ensure prompt follow up to provide additional information to the Thailand DOA. The meeting has certainly helped to progress our application but further negotiation will be required before we have agreement on a final protocol that will enable trade to recommence.

HAL Review recommends change

The final report from the independent review of HAL undertaken by ACIL Allen Consulting was released to industry on 9 May. You can download an electronic copy of the report from the HAL website by [clicking here](#). The report has made nine key recommendations for change. AAL, along with other Members of HAL, received a briefing in Sydney on 9 May and further consultation with HAL Members will be undertaken to develop a response to the review. The recommendations call for significant change although the details for implementation are yet to be developed.

AAL will continue to work on behalf of industry to seek the best outcome for all levy payers. The avocado industry is in great shape, and the levy investment in R&D and marketing has played a major role in this success. We need to ensure that any changes to levies management doesn't result in the proverbial 'baby being thrown out with the bath water'.

[Click here](#) to read the latest HAL Media release about the Review's Final Report. To read the media release issued from The Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP - Minister for Agriculture [click here](#).

DATE CLAIMERS!

Events for Growers and Packers:

Central New South Wales Qualicado Workshop - 11 June 2014
Western Australia Qualicado Workshop - 24 July 2014
Central Queensland Qualicado Workshop - 11 September 2014

Events for Wholesalers, Ripeners & Transporters:

Perth Qualicado Workshop - 23 July 2014

Other Events:**Growcom's "Whatever the Weather" Workshops:**

Free workshops for horticulture growers that focus on reviewing extreme weather experiences and focusing on coping strategies to better prepare in case of future extreme weather events (for growers based in select areas of regional Queensland only). Future dates: Gympie (29 May - Mareeba - 16 July 2014); Cassowary Coast (18 July 2014); South Burnett (July 2014); Gatton and Boonah (August 2014). [Click here](#) to RSVP or for more information.

Norco Primex 3 Day Exhibition, Casino NSW - 19 to 21 June 2014:

Interested growers wishing to attend, who are also members of Avocados Australia, are eligible to receive special industry passes to this event (if you enquire before 6 June) [click here](#) for more information.

National Irrigation Conference - next week!

The **National Irrigation Conference and Trade Show** will be held at the **Gold Coast Convention Centre** (2684 -2690 Gold Coast Highway, Broadbeach QLD) next week (from 2nd - 6th June). [Click here](#) to view the program. You can register online by [clicking here](#).

APVMA releases fenthion review

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) recently released a "Preliminary Review Findings Report" in regards recommendations for further restriction of the use of fenthion. To access an electronic copy of this report please [click here](#).

In the report the APVMA concludes that in a number of situations fenthion products may pose unacceptable risks to human health through dietary and occupational exposures, and to the environment. Among the regulatory actions the APVMA proposes is the variation of the label of the horticultural product to remove all uses except post-harvest dipping of tropical and subtropical fruits with inedible peel, and to update safety directions and warnings.

The APVMA say they will consider submissions before making a final regulatory decision. We recommend that growers review the report. Consultation and submissions are invited from interested parties between now and the deadline of 22 August 2014.

Dry Matter Results & Retail Prices

The latest **Dry Matter results** and **Retail Prices** have been uploaded to the Avocados Australia website. You can regularly access this information by going to the [Avocados Australia website](#). Glide your cursor over the maroon menu bar to "Services". Once there drag your mouse down the list or for quick access click on these links: "Maturity Monitoring" and "Retail Pricing".

Online Report Centre - latest uploads!

Avocado levy payers and Avocados Australia members that have access to the **Online Report Centre** (located on the Avocados Australia website) can view and open electronic copies of Avocado-related Research & Development reports, Annual Reports, Market Data, Member

notices and other useful documents. To view the recent uploads, and all of the above documents, [click here](#) to access the Online Report Centre and then enter your username and password to log in.

RECENT UPLOADS:

Under "Market Data":

- Nielsen Avocados Brand Health Report to 22 March 2014 (revised)
- Export Market Intelligence Report (Jan-March 2014)

Under "R&D Reports":

- Australian Avocado Export Development Plan 2014-2019 (Agnes Barnard & Garry Goucher, Oliver and Doam - Project Number: AV12025)
- Assessing the potential of reduced cold treatments for Shepard Avocado (Peter Leach, The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Qld, Project Number: AV12010)

If you require assistance in accessing the Online Report Centre please email co@avocado.org.au or call 1300 303 971.

Best Practice Resource - Maturity & Dry Matter Testing DIY!

Did you know that the Best Practice Resource online (BPR) includes information about how growers can test the maturity and dry matter levels of their fruit around harvest time?

Previous consumer research has shown that consumers prefer mature fruit. The industry standard for Hass avocados in terms of maturity was in 2009 updated to 23% Dry Matter (DM) at time of harvesting. This was based on consumer research that showed consumer acceptance of the quality of avocados declined from approximately 95% to 70% if the DM is below 23% and that up to 70% of consumers would choose 26% DM avocados over 22%. The standard aims to assist growers and packhouses to achieve the best tasting avocados. The standard for Shepard avocados remains at 21% DM.

The BPR contains all of the information growers need to conduct their maturity and dry matter testing at home! The "Maturity and Dry Matter Testing" information includes hints, tips and the methods you can use to conduct a ripening test, and DM test using a number of different methods, and how to calculate percentage of dry matter.

HOW TO ACCESS:

Once you have logged on to the BPR move your cursor over the "Growing" menu option on the maroon menu and then scroll down to and click on "Harvesting". Once on the Harvesting page go to the "Article Resources" section on the right handside and click on "Maturity and Dry Matter testing".

If you are a grower and you haven't applied to access the Best Practice Resource apply for access now! [Click here](#), then click on "Apply for access" and complete the online form.

Marketing Update

Rationale behind New Australian Avocados Consumer website



Over the last 5 -7 years the Australian Avocados Consumer website has kept up with consumers as they have become more online savvy with their search for information. The website strategy has been to create a leading website that could be the hub of Avocados digital activity by aligning all programs to an online capability and providing extended content. Over the years this has involved adding new website features and content depth to remain fresh and relevant to site visitors resulting in growing visitor numbers rates.

However, the need to update the website has come about by a number of changes in both technology and how consumers are now interacting digitally across multiple channels. Firstly the technology sitting behind the website has become “old” in web standards and was in need of a major upgrade. As an analogy to a house renovation the decision became whether to continue to renovate on old foundations or to rebuild entirely. Redeveloping the website was a more cost effective opportunity to harness newly available technologies and frameworks that weren't previously available when the website was first developed. This will ultimately make the website more manageable, easy to update, and cost efficient to maintain.

Secondly an important part of harnessing new technology was for the site to become “device responsive”. That means that the website will adjust its view automatically to any device whether it's a mobile, desk top or tablet. This ensures that it remains easy to read, easy to navigate and stays true to the sites design elements. This is critically important as the number of mobile visitors has increased incrementally over the last 2 years.

Another significant factor is the change in the digital landscape and the emergence of social media channels such as facebook which now plays a leading role in the overall digital strategy. As Australian Avocados facebook fans approach 90K the website needs to be better integrated with social media content and direction to add value to consumers. The new technology of the website enables a facebook feed to be a persistent item on every page that allows visitors to easily move between platforms and benefit from the deeper website content as well as the more dynamic conversation on facebook.

Finally the redevelopment of the site was an opportunity to better align features and content with the strategic marketing pillars. A contemporary redesign of the website was necessary to match the new positioning direction of the new campaign. Elevating the “How to” menu items onto every page will help build consumer confidence around selection, handling and storage. Also having “Nutrition” as a persistent menu item will make it easy for consumers to find the health benefits of avocados. Overall redundant features and pages have been replaced with stronger search capabilities for recipes that cross sell content and improve multiple page visits.

The launch of the new television advertising campaign created an ideal opportunity to launch the new website for Australian Avocados. A new more contemporary design coupled with improved page navigation and search functionality, the new website now provides a better user experience for existing and new visitors.

