



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

2 March 2016

### **Shepard avocados set to hit the shelves**

The Shepard avocado season is upon us and consumers can start to enjoy them as they hit the shelves en masse at local stores this month, according to peak industry body, Avocados Australia.

Shepard avocados are a variety of “greenskins” – their skin stays green as they ripen rather than darkening to a purple-black like the Hass variety.

Avocados Australia CEO John Tyas said this year’s crop is expected to be an absolute cracker, with an estimated 1.7-million trays from North and Central Queensland, up on last year’s 1.1-million trays.

“Australians are the highest avocado consumers in the English-speaking world, eating around 3.2kg of the fruit each year. *[See graph below]*

“Australia’s avocado industry is growing each year and we’re focusing on producing premium avocados to match the country’s high consumer demand,” he said.

Shepard grower and Avocados Australia Chairman Jim Kochi said the best thing about the Shepard variety is that if a fruit looks great on the outside, it will be great on the inside.

“Sheps have that lovely shiny green skin and are more elongated in shape with a teardrop-shaped seed,” Mr Kochi said.

“They have a lovely smooth, buttery texture with a nutty flavour and are a great introduction for those who have never tried avocados before.” Mr Kochi said.

Unlike Hass avocados, the flesh of a Shepard avocado does not go brown once it's cut. This means they stay brighter in salads and sandwiches for longer.

Shepards are grown predominantly in North and Central Queensland and their harvesting season runs from February through until May.

Other less common greenskin varieties grown in Australia include the Wurtz, Sharwill and Reed.

Mr Tyas said households should check out [www.avocado.org.au](http://www.avocado.org.au) for buyers’ tips on how to get the best value out of avocados.

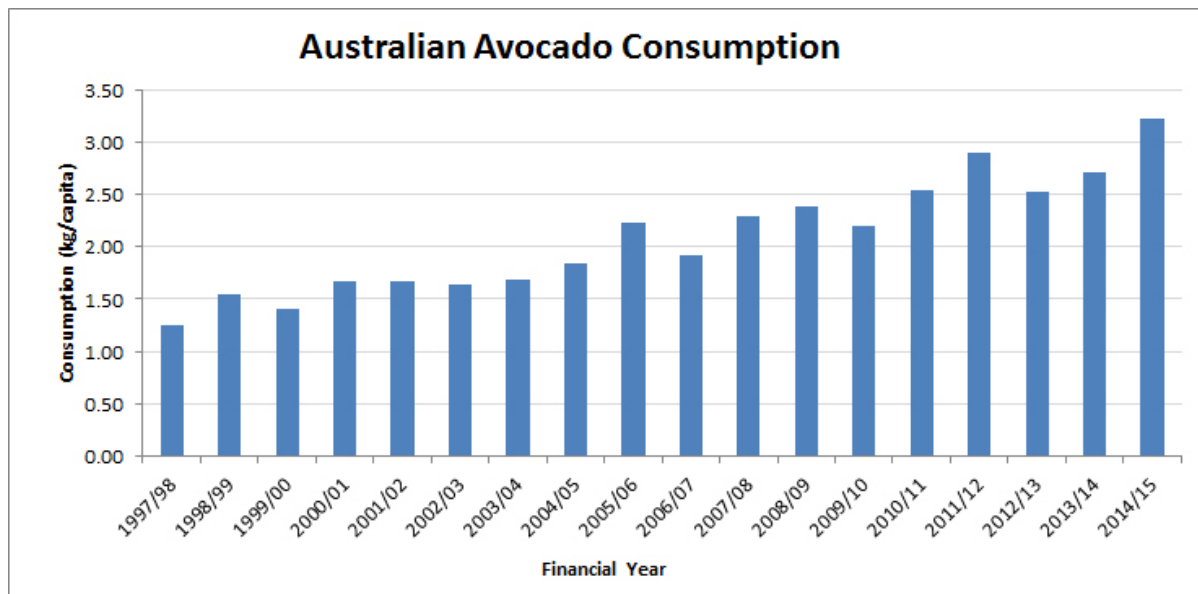
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*[See over for consumption per capita graph, Hass vs Shepard description and About Avocados Australia.]*

## Growth of Australian per capita consumption of avocados since 1997-1998



<b>HASS</b>		<b>SHEPARD</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classic oval shape</li> <li>• Distinctive pebbly textured skin</li> <li>• Changes colour as it ripens – green to purple black</li> <li>• Mostly available all year round</li> <li>• Creamy texture and taste</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longer and more elongated</li> <li>• Smooth glossy green skin</li> <li>• Always stays green</li> <li>• Available March to May</li> <li>• Nutty flavour and buttery texture</li> </ul>	

### **About Avocados Australia**

*Avocados Australia (AAL) is the representative industry body for the Australian avocado industry. We provide a range of services to our members and the broader industry to foster growth and development.*

*Avocados Australia is a “not for profit” member-based organisation and our members include avocado growers, associated businesses and industry people.*

*Avocados Australia seeks to work with all parts of the chain, from production through to the consumer. By working together we seek to continually improve the ability of growers to provide a healthy, profitable and safe product for all consumers.*

*As part of this continual improvement, an industry Research and Development Program and a Promotional Program for the Australian avocado industry is managed in conjunction with Horticulture Innovations Australia and a range of external service providers.*