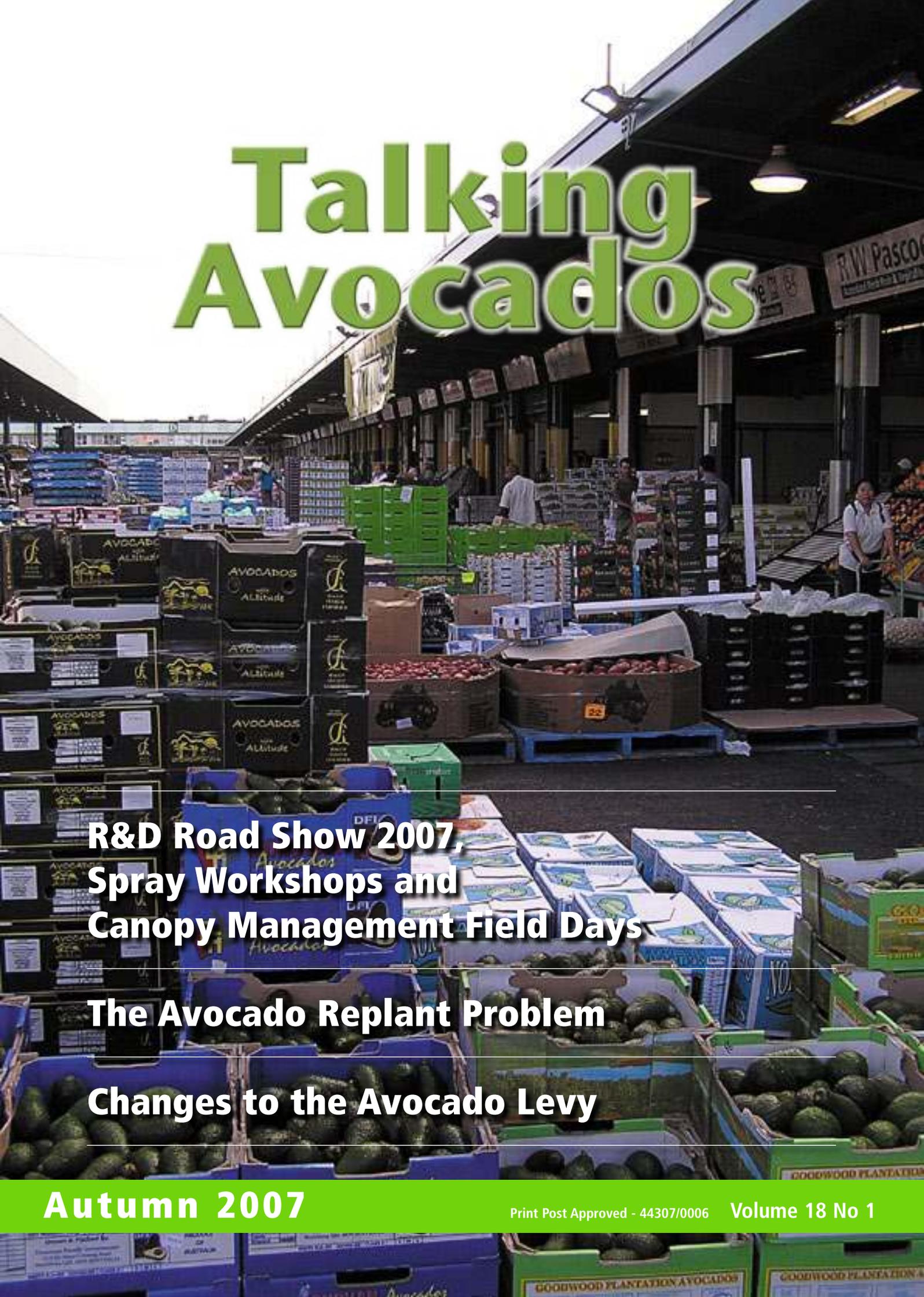


# Talking Avocados



**R&D Road Show 2007,  
Spray Workshops and  
Canopy Management Field Days**

**The Avocado Replant Problem**

**Changes to the Avocado Levy**

**Autumn 2007**

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**We all make mistakes:** If we make a mistake please let us know so a correction may be made in the next issue.

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# Chairman's Perspective

## Sphaceloma perseae

Without a doubt, my first big challenge in my role of Avocados Australia Chairman related to the issue of what was the appropriate action Avocados Australia should take in response to the information that New Zealand fruit could be affected by *Sphaceloma perseae* – commonly known as avocado blight or scab.



In brief, Biosecurity Australia initially confirmed that the disease was present in New Zealand, and this, of course, led to the possibility of it being transmitted into Australia. My report in the Summer 2006 issue of *Talking Avocados* gave a summary of the actions being taken by Avocados Australia and Biosecurity Australia. Since then, Biosecurity Australia has visited New Zealand and inspected some orchards and the two samples of the disease in the herbarium. This led to a revised decision, and Biosecurity Australia announced that they had found no evidence of the disease, and that the two samples had been misdiagnosed. Consequently, in early March, Biosecurity Australia declared that the quarantine procedures which were in place would be removed as of 14 March.

The Avocados Australia office advised all Avocados Australia members about this turnaround, and also issued press releases to this effect.

While Avocados Australia accepts Biosecurity Australia's decision, we are very mindful of the significant impact this disease could have on the Australian avocado industry, and are keeping a watchful eye on all elements and outcomes of this saga.

I need to publicly thank Antony Allen, the Avocados Australia office staff and the Board for many hours of work and unrecompensed effort required by this situation. As you can imagine, it has been a very troubling time for all those involved – I could even say 'traumatic'.

## Levies

Finally after several years of hard work by the Avocados Australia office and Board, a revision to the levies program has been finalised and signed by the Federal Government.

The new levies will come into effect on 1 April 2007, and will allow the industry to make significant investment into its future, including research and development (R&D) and also marketing programmes.

## The year ahead

Avocados Australia has planned a busy year of information dissemination and support for growers across the country. This will include:

- Avocados Australia's R&D 'Roadshow 2007' with information on the latest developments to regional growing centres. This will include R&D outcomes, advances in technology relating to our industry, national and local issues.

- Canopy Management Field Days run by Dr John Leonardi of Avocados Australia
- Spray Application Workshops run by Dr Henry Drew of Growing Green Growers
- Regional Study Groups led by Simon Newitt (Qld Department of Primary Industry)

All of the above events are funded by avocado R&D levies. Please take the opportunity to take advantage of the expertise when it is close to your region. All these sessions will include information of benefit to growers and I encourage you to attend these field days. A full timetable of these events is included in this issue of *Talking Avocados* on pages 12 to 14 and more information on the events section of our website [www.avocado.org.au](http://www.avocado.org.au)

## Response to Frank Ekin's Letter

(page 4)

In the Spring 2006 issue of *Talking Avocados*, Rod Dalton identified that one of the challenges to our industry was in relation to 'smart' marketing. "We cannot expect to continue to offer the market 200 plus brands, while the pool of potential buyers continues to shrink, and expect to be price makers rather than price takers."

It is Avocados Australia's policy to encourage rationalisation of marketing entities, in an endeavour to provide the buyers/consumers with the top quality long supply line that they are seeking. However, we must be mindful that Avocados Australia cannot dictate to commercial entities, regarding the formation of alliances or rationalisation of packing houses and ultimately, the decision is theirs. It may be beneficial to sometimes sacrifice independence for the good of the wider industry. I certainly encourage marketers and packhouses to think outside the square and to review or evaluate current practices in view of ever changing times.

Henry Kwaczynski

Henry Kwaczynski  
Chairman, Avocados Australia



# Industry Matters

Written, edited and compiled by  
**Antony Allen** CEO of Avocados Australia

## Infocado continues to Expand

Avocados Australia's Joanna Embry recently travelled to the Atherton Tablelands, coinciding with the beginning of the North Queensland avocado season, to meet with avocado growers who also pack and/or market fruit. The purpose of her visit was to get growers geared up for another year of Infocado – the Avocados Australia data collection system. Joanna visited 20 potential contributors during her 4 day visit in order to get everyone on track to contribute their weekly data to the system.

The visit was very successful and included recruitment of some new North Queensland growers as members of Avocados Australia and Infocado contributors. The North Queensland growers have been very supportive of Infocado since its inception and have already been good contributors to the new forecasting modules which were introduced last year. We look forward to their continued contributions and use of the system this year.

For more information about Infocado contact Joanna Embry on 07 3391 2344

## National canopy management approach

Several growers that have agreed to participate in the Canopy Management in the Perth and South West regions of Western Australia were recently visited. The purpose was to collect information on pruning strategies as part of the national program investigating canopy management systems which are being implemented across Australia. Growers provided information on the timing and costs (\$/ha) of their canopy management operations and the impact of these strategies on yield (t/ha).

Several strategies are being used by growers in the region including selective limb removal, selective and mechanical pruning, cincturing, stumping and tree removal. Deciding when to prune is often made more difficult by the presence of two crops (mature fruit from the previous season as well as current season's fruit).

In addition to the above, sites were selected for the upcoming canopy management field days. Pemberton has been selected for the month of May and Perth will be for the month of December. Growers will be informed on the timing and location of these dates in due course.

For more information about Canopy Management contact John Leonardi on 07 3391 2344

On a regular basis the Avocados Australia team travel to all the growing regions to work directly with growers on improving the programs the industry has in place to assist growers businesses and ensure R&D projects are on track to deliver real benefits.

## Avocado growers worried about BA Back Flip

Australian avocado growers are furious with a decision by Australia's quarantine regulator Biosecurity Australia to rescind tight controls on avocado imports from New Zealand. Two months after dramatically increasing disease control measures for New Zealand avocados Biosecurity Australia is relaxing them.

The measures were introduced when it was believed that New Zealand had the disease Avocado Scab, otherwise known as Blight. But new studies say the assessment was apparently wrong, and New Zealand is blight free. Source: ABC

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

LETTER re PACK HOUSES

Quoting Rod Dalton, in his last editorial in Talking Avocados, "*We cannot expect to continue to offer the market 200 plus brands, while the pool of buyers continues to shrink, and to expect to be price makers rather than price takers.*"

This quotation begs the question: where does the present board of Avocados Australia stand on number of brands it advocates for our industry?

Indeed, does the board favour rationalisation at all? Does the board favour a reduction in the number of brands? Bear in mind those agricultural industries that the Federal Government has had to cajole and even bale out for failing to rationalise that is "get real" to modern business imperatives in recent years.

Definitive figures for Mexico are not readily to hand, but they export about 300,000 tonnes from 20 pack houses, that is 15,000 tonnes each. By all accounts these exporting pack houses have hygiene, grading and record keeping standards of the highest order. Is the board happy with a third world country, Mexico, showing up the

inadequacy of grading and marketing in a first world country, Australia? By Mexico's experience Australia should have 3 brands.

I grieve because the current "segmented, uncoordinated and inconsistent" (quote from Timbercorps) state of our industry undermines the value of my fruit, hence the value of my farm and thus my superannuation.

F Ekin

Industry Matters  
continued

### ***The passing of an industry leader and former AAGF Director, Mary Ravello***

On the 8 December 2006 Mary Ravello passed away after a long and determined battle with cancer. As an avocado industry leader she worked tirelessly for her local region and for the national body over many years and will long be remembered. Our deepest sympathies go to her husband Natale, son Giovanni, daughter Anna, Mary's grandchildren and her family.

Mary was involved in the avocado industry for over twenty years. She worked actively and successfully in the family business with her husband Natale and son Giovanni. She was very active regionally in the "Atherton Tablelands Avocado Grower Association" and the avocado marketing cooperative, "Shepard Australia".

Over a number of years Mary gave generously to the national avocado industry serving as the Atherton Director of the Australian Avocado Growers' Federation (AAGF - previous name for Avocados Australia) and as a member of the AAGF Marketing Committee from September 1993 through to October 2001. She was also Chair of the Marketing Committee from 1997 to 2001. She served as Vice Chair of AAGF from 1996 to 1998.

Mary's positive approach to all things avocado will be sadly missed.



### ***Avocado growers say relaxed Quarantine Rules threaten industry***

Avocado growers say the country's quarantine watchdog is placing the industry at risk by relaxing quarantine restrictions for the importation of New Zealand avocados.

Two months ago Biosecurity Australia increased disease control measures to stop a disease called avocado scab entering the country. A Biosecurity Australia spokesman says those regulations will now be relaxed after its officers found no signs of the disease during an inspection of New Zealand avocado farms.

But Avocado Australia's Henry Kwaczynski says they still have concerns the disease is present in New Zealand. "We are not very happy with the testing regime and the way Biosecurity New Zealand went about it, initially admitting that they have then withdrawing it sometime later," he said.

"The whole thing has been a mishmash torturous route for us."

"We were not party to the testing regime and we have grave reservations about the way this was done."

"The samples that were produced for inspections, the samples in the herbarium in New Zealand, are less than satisfactory at this stage so we're not very happy about the whole process." Source: ABC

### ***Apple decision chills growers to the core***

Australia growers will demand a Senate inquiry, after the rejection of their appeals to keep New Zealand apples out of Australia. The Import Risk Analysis Appeal Panel has dismissed their claims that Kiwi apples could bring the disease fireblight to Australia.

Biosecurity Australia has recommended imports be allowed with strict conditions. John Corboy, from Apple and Pear Australia, says the decision is appalling.

But New Zealand growers say they may still take action in the World Trade Organisation, because of the strict import conditions being imposed.

Greg Buck, from Nelson on New Zealand's South Island, harvests nearly 40,000 cartons of apples every season from just 12 hectares. He says it's not fireblight that Australian farmers fear - it's competition. Source: ABC



## **Avocado Coast Nursery**

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Industry Matters  
continued

### **CDFAs Inspection Net catches pests in Wholesale and Retail Markets**

Los Angeles County Agriculture Commissioner Kurt Floren reported Friday that six lots of Mexican avocados (about 617 cartons) were taken off the L.A. wholesale market after tentative species identifications by County Entomologists indicated actionable scale insects were present. As of noon today (Monday 3-12-07) CDFAs has confirmed the County's findings for four of the six lots which have now been scheduled for fumigation. An additional 350 cartons were put on hold pending confirmation of preliminary species identifications.

CDFAs works cooperatively with county agriculture officials to implement its "Interior Detection Program" to make sure all commercial products entering the state are in compliance with state quarantine laws and regulations. From the first day scale insects were found at border checkpoints in February, CDFAs and CAC have been communicating closely with county agriculture officials who have been checking Mexican avocados for pests at wholesale and retail markets.

When appropriate, cartons found to be infested in that channel are "red-tagged." Commissioner Floren told CAC on Friday that "we're on it and all of our inspectors are well aware of the scale issue." In addition, he said more inspectors are being added to cover wholesale and retail markets on Saturdays. Similar assurances have been received from agriculture officials in other California counties.

Interception of pests at points of entry on the state's border is California's primary defense against the introduction and spread of invasive species. Trucks carrying Mexican avocados continue to be inspected at CDFAs checkpoints as they enter the state.

From the beginning, though much of our work then was "behind the scenes," CAC has managed this issue with all of its resources, experience, and energy. We'll keep you posted as new developments warrant. Source: CAC

### **Food Regulations under the microscope**

An independent review will examine ways of streamlining Australia's food regulations and making them more nationally consistent. Establishing the review was a recommendation from the Taskforce on Reducing Regulatory Burdens on Business (the Banks Report), which highlighted a number of issues with the food regulatory system, including:

- inconsistencies in applying standards across states and territories;
- lack of enforcement of some elements of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code;
- inconsistencies between state Food Acts and the Food Code; and
- the complexity associated with developing or amending food standards.

The Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Peter McGauran,

and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Christopher Pyne, jointly announced the review which will be undertaken by Mark Bethwaite, former Chief Executive Officer of Australian Business Ltd.

Want to know more? Further details on the review are available on Department of Health and Ageing:

### **2007 Avocado Tour to Chile**

Including the **World Avocado Congress** at Vina del Mar

Examine avocado production techniques and distribution systems in Chile before attending the World Avocado Congress. Enjoying the fascinating history and culture of Santiago and surrounding areas. Tour the scenic Maipo River Valley and local vineyards.

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Day 2	Thu 08 Nov 07	Santiago
Day 3	Fri 09 Nov 07	Santiago
Day 4	Sat 10 Nov 07	Santiago
Day 5	Sun 11 Nov 07	Santiago
Day 6	Mon 12 Nov 07	Santiago to Vina del Mar
Day 7	Tue 13 Nov 07	Vina del Mar 6th World Avocado Congress
Day 8	Wed 14 Nov 07	Vina del Mar 6th World Avocado Congress
Day 9	Thu 15th Nov 07	Vina del Mar 6th World Avocado Congress
Day 10	Fri 16 Nov 07	Vina del Mar 6th World Avocado Congress Last night, farewell dinner
Day 11	Sat 17 Nov 07	Depart for Santiago and Australia or Optional Peru Tour (see website or call Quadrant for details)
Day 12	Sun 18 Nov 07	in transit
Day 13	Mon 19 Nov 07	arrive Australia

For a more detailed tour itinerary and booking information please go to or phone Quadrant Australia on 1300 722 420.

Fully Escorted Tour Reference: AX01208. This is a non-HAL tour, it has no voluntary contribution component due to changes in the HAL tour policy. You should discuss the tax deductibility of the tour with your accountant.

### **VI World Avocado Congress in Chile - 2007**

The International Avocado Society has designated Chile, one of the leading countries in the avocado industry, as the host for the VI World Avocado Congress that will be held in Viña del Mar city, from November 12 until 16, 2007.

## Industry Matters continued

On behalf of the Local Organizing Committee we would like to invite you to visit the VI World Avocado Congress 2007 Web site, where you could find further information about the Congress activities and general information about Chile.

The scientific program of the VI World Avocado Congress will include the latest information on avocado production and management issues, with special emphasis on the future of the Industry. The program also includes avocado marketing presentations and panel discussions about promotional and trade topics from all over the world.

The Congress's Program includes General Sessions and a Pre-Congress Field Trip. The Congress's official languages are English and Spanish, simultaneous translation will be available in these languages.

Congress Sessions include:

1. Genetic resources (Propagation, Rootstocks, Varieties, Biotechnology);
2. Pests and diseases;
3. Culture management (Mineral Nutrition, Irrigation, Ecophysiology, Flowering and fruit development and Management);
4. Post-harvest and processing and
5. Marketing

### **US Govt wants wheat single desk scrapped**

The US Government has stepped up pressure on Australia to remove the single desk for wheat exports. US Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns says export monopolies will have to go, if there is to be any progress in the Doha world trade talks.

Mr Johanns has met with Australian Trade Minister Warren Truss for talks on the world trade deal just days before the Bush Administration unveils its new farm bill. "Single desk monopolies are trade distorting in and of themselves and so we've always maintained the position that they just need to go away," he said.

"That's not directed necessarily at Australia alone. It is directed at those countries Australia, Canada, other countries that have single desk monopolies. But Mr Truss has called on the US to scrap the high level of subsidies it pays to farmers and to introduce significant reforms to farm policy. He has told media in the US that AWB's monopoly does not distort wheat markets as much as the US claims. Source: ABC

### **Mandatory Code of Conduct for Horticulture Industry**

Regulations contained in a mandatory code of conduct for the horticulture industry have been finalised by the Government ahead of their tabling in Parliament in early February next year.

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Peter McGauran, said the code, now publicly available, would give growers transparent terms

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### Industry Matters continued

of trade currently lacking in the fresh fruit and vegetable markets.

“The code will improve trading practices in the horticulture industry, and clarify the trading responsibilities of growers and wholesalers,” Mr McGauran said.

Mr McGauran said there was a campaign under way by the wholesale markets to discredit the code and they were circulating misleading information to both wholesalers and growers.

He said the key requirements of the code would be that:

- wholesalers publish their preferred terms of trade;
- growers and wholesalers use written agreements;
- wholesalers clearly identify themselves as either agents or merchants;
- wholesalers provide written transaction information to growers;
- independent assessment is available on transactions;
- compulsory mediation occurs if disputes arise.

“Agreements entered into on or after today, 15 December 2006, that continue beyond the code’s introduction next year, will be subject to the code from the date it comes into affect,” Mr McGauran said.

“And, contrary to misleading information being circulated by some groups, there will not be a levy on growers or wholesalers to fund the code’s administration.”

An extensive education and awareness campaign with all relevant parties is under way and will continue until the code is introduced.

Information about the code is available from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry’s website at -

### **Farm Group backs Managed Investment Schemes**

The Western Australian Farmers Federation says managed investment schemes are the way of the future for the agriculture industry and should continue to be supported by investors.

The Federal Government has cut tax breaks offered to investors who put their money into agricultural ventures such as olive growing and avocado plantations.

The decision has alarmed investors and pushed down the share price of companies running the schemes.

The farmers’ federation’s Ross Hardwick says the schemes attract money to country areas and more effort should be made by the Government to encourage them. “With all of the changes that are coming not only from the point of view of they’re producing food, they’re not just producing wheat or cattle or sheep and wool, things are changing and this is one way of working with those changes,” he said. Source: ABC

### **Growers see benefits in Managed Investment scheme decision**

Growers in the south-west of WA say the region’s industries will benefit from a plan to cut tax breaks for investors in the agricultural sector. The Federal Government has reversed its managed investment scheme policy, which will deny up-front concessions to investors who put their money into products like olives and avocados.

Western Australian Agriculture Minister Kim Chance says the Federal Government’s decision will hamper the development of new industries and investment companies in the eastern states are warning the cuts will cost jobs.

Manjimup avocado grower George Ipsen says the cuts will allow the region’s traditional industries to expand.

“We’ve held a second stage development for the last two years as a result of these schemes entering the industry, and now as we believe that they’ll leave the industry, we can confidently go and know our investment dollar will carry the same weight as a managed investment scheme,” he said.

### **ATO to crack down on MIS Investors’ Tax Breaks**

Investors in crop-based managed investment schemes are facing a crack down on tax breaks from July 1. The Australian Tax Office (ATO) is set to deny upfront tax breaks to new investors.

Some farmers claim city investors can rot the tax system, driving gluts in grapes and other crops, which creates unfair competition for land and water.

Federal Assistant Treasurer Peter Dutton says industry could challenge the tax office ruling through a test case.

“For people to gain a tax deduction for their investment into an MIS (managed investment schemes), they have to prove that they are carrying on a business and therefore they receive their tax deductibility,” he said.

“The ATO is of the view that they’re actually passive investors, the industry believes that the investors are carrying on a business and so the issue now can be decided by a test case between the ATO and the industry.”

Agribusiness investment consultant David Cornish says it is a win for farmers.

“We’ve got to ensure that dollars invested in Australian agriculture are invested for the right reasons, now whether that’s a family farm or corporate, or whether it’s some other entity it doesn’t matter,” he said.

“Where you have tax distortion in the investment decision-making you’re leading to bad investment decision-making and this will remove that for the industries, but my concern is it’ll concentrate it all on the timber industry.”

Industry Matters  
continued

### **Tax changes could mean agribusiness job losses**

The Prime Minister is being warned of mass job losses and bankruptcies in the agricultural sector resulting from a decision to end tax breaks for managed investment schemes in agribusiness.

The Government has decided investors in non-forestry managed investment schemes will no longer be able to claim up-front deductions from July. Agribusiness groups have written to John Howard, warning thousands of rural jobs will be lost and asking him to reconsider the changes.

The executive director of the investment company Great Southern, Cameron Rhodes, says unless something is done, many businesses simply will not be able to attract investment.

“The impact here is the flow-on effect to the subcontractors, the nurseries, the service providers to these industries that have all borrowed extensively on the back of the certainty that we had with these arrangements,” he said. “And the rug’s been pulled under those people and they’re the ones, the innocent ones, who’ll be facing bankruptcy and job losses.”

However assistant treasurer Peter Dutton has dismissed the concerns.

He says a transitional period will allow investments made before July

to operate under the existing system. “The courts are the best place to carry out an examination of these issues, to conduct a test case and, on the facts, they will decide whether or not people are entitled to tax deductions,” he said.

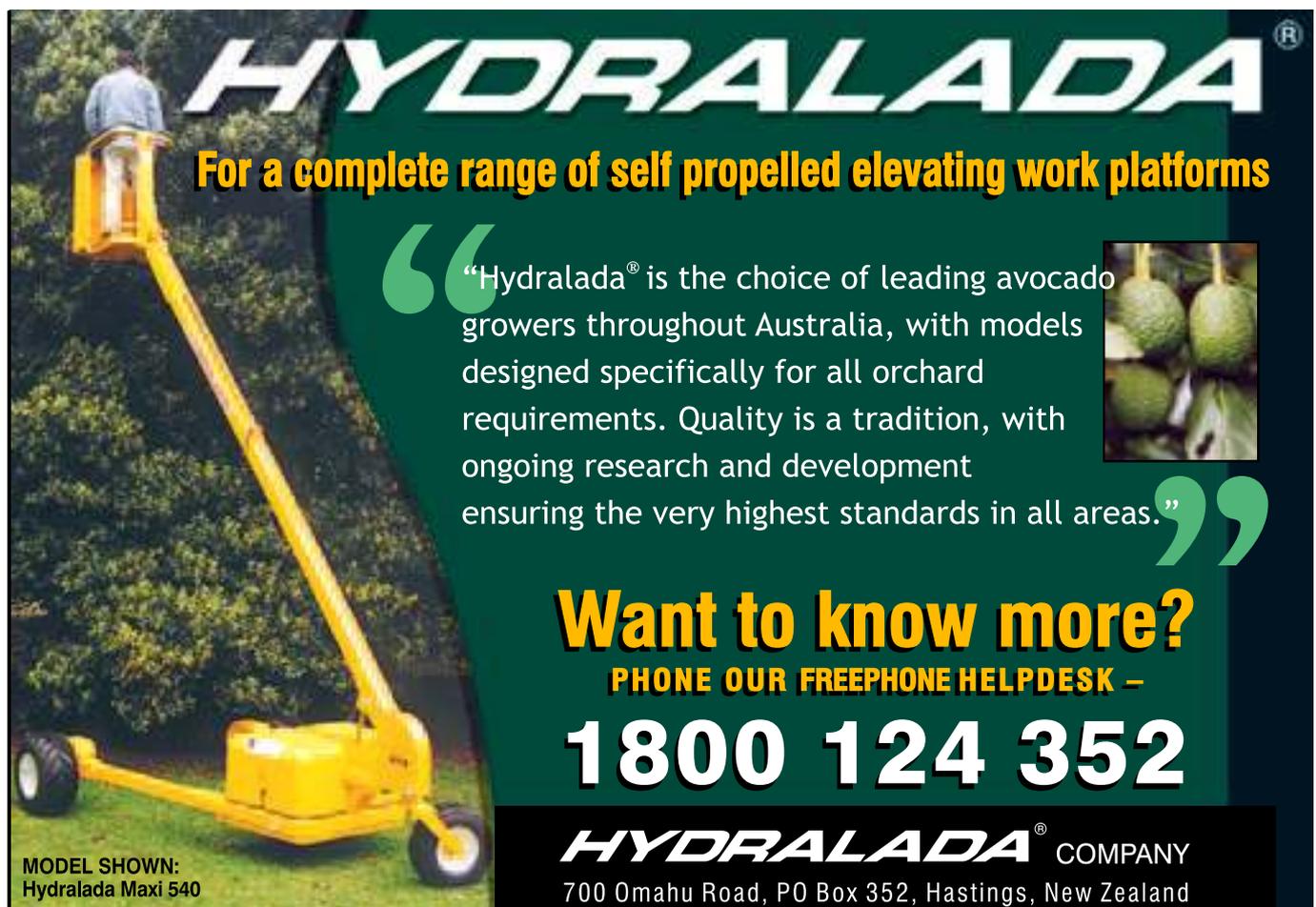
“It’s important though to point out that people who have invested already in managed investment schemes or who invest before June 30 this year, their arrangements will be protected and they are not being affected by the changes the governments are talking about at the moment.” Source: ABC

### **Tax Schemes backlash**

The Prime Minister will be pressured by coalition members to ensure a smooth transition.

Some call them tax rorts while others call them saviours of rural economies. Managed investment schemes are a hot topic. When Assistant Treasurer Peter Dutton announced on Tuesday the Australian Taxation Office would effectively end the lucrative tax breaks for investors in agribusiness tax schemes from June 30 there was uproar.

The next day \$400 million was wiped from the largest listed forestry and agricultural schemes and politicians took calls from outraged businesses, both big and small. Less publicly, there were calls of congratulations from other regional business people and farmers



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### Industry Matters continued

whose complaints about the tax-effective farm schemes had driven the government to act.

Still, both sides can agree on two things: the schemes are a political headache in an election year and the government should have hastened slowly. Prime Minister John Howard is now under pressure to smooth the restructuring of an industry blamed by many for contributing to Australia's water supply woes.

For months, coalition backbenchers split over non-forestry MIS which allow investors to reduce their annual tax bill by receiving an upfront tax deduction for their investment. There is no ideology here: Nationals fight Nationals and Liberals fight Liberals. Rural MPs disagree with their rural neighbours while MPs in metropolitan seats are similarly split. And Labor is yet to decide where it stands. There are good arguments either way, but inevitably the schemes' cost to taxpayers will win out.

The tax rule was introduced to encourage long-term investments in forestry plantations. Opponents said the tax breaks unfairly advantaged "Pitt Street" farmers, raised the cost of farming land, encouraged unsustainable gluts in horticulture markets and used up valuable water resources. Cabinet decided last December on a 70 per cent rule for forestry where a deduction would only be available if promoters could prove 70 per cent of the investment was spent on planting trees.

The future of schemes, such as avocados, olives, strawberries or pearls, was still uncertain until this week when cabinet decided to allow the

ATO to run a test case against the industry.

The giants of the agribusiness schemes, including Timbercorp and Great Southern, have complained their industry was not properly consulted and smaller operators and contractors, such as Victoria-based olive producer Boundary Bend, have already retrenched staff and fear financial ruin.

Dutton denies the government ever agreed to an inquiry but has agreed to meet businesses facing "extenuating circumstances".

In a letter to the Prime Minister on Friday, peak industry body Agriculture Investment Managers Australia urged him to extend the 70 per cent rule available to forestry MIS to agribusiness schemes for three years allowing the ATO to run its test case.

"Our industry is extremely concerned at the way in which this announcement has been made and the immediate negative impact it has had on our companies, particularly as the Minister had undertaken, in writing, to consult with industry on these matters before any decision was made by the government," AIMA wrote.

"To date, no such consultation or review has been undertaken."

Coalition parliamentarians are furious the decision was not raised with the backbench agricultural committee which has been discussing the issue for months and have complained to Dutton that his announcement was "an ambush". Kay Hull, Nationals MP for the Riverina, says the Productivity Commission should have at least had the opportunity to establish the facts and dispel myths about farming tax schemes.

And WA-based Liberal MP and former forestry minister Wilson Tuckey has pointed out the schemes are active across most electorates, including many marginal seats. Disgruntled backbenchers are expected to lobby for transitional arrangements this week.

NSW Liberal senator Bill Heffernan, an outspoken opponent of the schemes, defends Dutton and says it's impossible to flag the issue prior to a decision. Any earlier discussions outside cabinet could have resulted in "all sorts of jiggery pokery" on the share market, Heffernan says.

Acknowledging there will have to be arrangements to manage the fall-out, Heffernan says the government is right to stick by its guns. "It corrupts the capital markets; while there may be considerations of transitional arrangements, anyone who gets involved with one of these schemes should know there is a big 'buyer beware' sign over it," he says.

"It's fair to say there would be some sympathy for people who have blindly followed the fee-seeking carpet-baggers."

But for these unfortunate people, Heffernan says "intestinal fortitude" will see them back on the path of prosperity. Source: Australian Financial Review

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Industry Matters  
continued

### **Wanted! The next generation**

Australia's only national competition for schools about all aspects of food, The Young Gourmet Gastronomy Competition 2007, is now open for entries. Schools can compete in six categories the Le Cordon Bleu Farm to Table Challenge (All Students); Food Art (All Students); Food Technology (Recipe Writing - All Students); Food Literature (Poetry - Years 7&8); Food Literature (Short Story - Years 9 &10); and, Food Literature (Food Blog - Ages 16-18).

You can play a part by encouraging your local school to enter the Le Cordon Bleu Farm to Table Challenge which requires schools to grow, produce, package, market and sell their own regional food' using traditional or artisan methods, or an adaptation thereof. Challenge contestants have to research their local food industry, select and grow raw ingredients then produce a food product.

Interested in encouraging the next generation of food professionals? Contact Kay Richardson M: 0414 678818 or E: for competition details or visit

### **Avocado R&D Road Show 2007**

Avocados Australia is organising the four yearly regional Research and Development Road Show 2007. The Avocado R&D Road Show was successfully undertaken in 2003 with over 720 avocado industry attendees across the seven regional R&D Road Shows.

The R&D Road Show 2007 will be bigger and better than before, with a program that will look at research developments and horticultural techniques directly applicable to avocado grower. All R&D Road Shows will be held on orchard allowing you to walk through the orchard with the best avocado researchers Australia has to offer.

The program will involve researchers working on current avocado levy funded projects as well as the industry leadership. The presenters will include: Dr Tony Whiley, Mr Ken Pegg, Dr John Leonardi, Dr Lindy Coats, Mr Henry Kwaczynski and Mr Antony Allen as well as others.

Each day's schedule will include presentations, lunch, networking time, a panel discussion period with the attendees where all presenters will participate, along with a farm/orchard/packing shed session which will include the presenters.

ROAD SHOW REGION		DATE
South Queensland	Tuesday	10 July 2007
North New South Wales	Thursday	12 July 2007
North Queensland		To Be Confirmed
TriState		To Be Confirmed
Western Australia	Thursday	6 September 2007
Central New South Wales	Tuesday	25 September 2007
Central Queensland	Wednesday	3 October 2007

More details including registrations will be available very soon. Keep checking the Events section of the industry website

### **Avocado Levy changes finally in place**

The avocado levy change process was undertaken during 2005 and is now completed. The rate of levy and export charge on avocados, other than avocados directed to processing, will increase to 7.5 cents per kilogram, comprising 4.5 cents per kilogram for marketing and 3.0 cents for research and development, on 1 April 2007. The new rate will apply to avocados sold or exported on or after 1 April 2007.

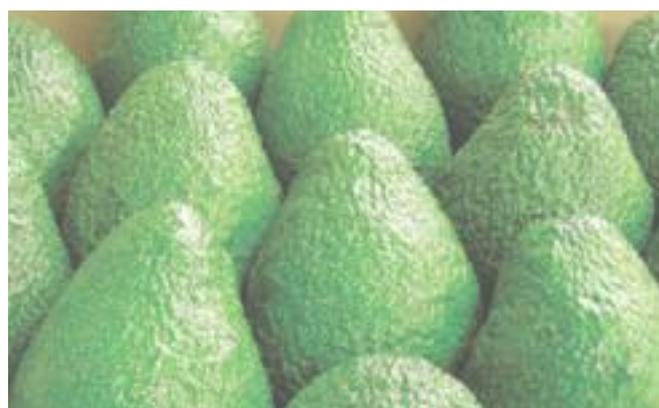
Also commencing on 1 April 2007 is a new research and development levy of 1.0 cent per kilogram for avocados directed to processing.

An administrative change exempting avocados sold by a producer by retail sale from levy if the producer would otherwise be liable for less than \$100 in levy on retail sales in a levy year takes effect from 1 April 2007.

Details of the levy from 1 April 2007 are as follows:

Commodity	Avocado
Method of levy calculation	(1) Per kilogram of avocado sold or exported (levy and export charge) (2) Per kilogram of avocados directed to processing (levy)
Rate of levy	(1) From 1 April 2007 onwards: <b>7.5 cents per kilogram</b> (2) From 1 April 2007 onwards: <b>1.0 cent per kilogram</b> Note: Levy is GST exclusive.
Distribution of levy	(1) From 1 April 2007 onwards: 4.5 cents for marketing 3.0 cents for research & development (2) From 1 April 2007 onwards: 1.0 cent for research & development

For more information contact the Levy Revenue Service at



# Canopy Management Field Days 2007

Avocados Australia is running a number of canopy management field days as a component of the extension activities of project AV04008, the national canopy management project. Results from pruning and plant growth regulator trials and a practical demonstration of pruning strategies used in your region. The field days will be conducted by Dr. John Leonardi of Avocados Australia.

The outcomes of the national project including the costs and timing of a range of canopy management operations being used by growers across Australia and the impact of these strategies on yield will be presented. The results of pruning and plant growth regulator application trials will also be discussed including implications for your region. A description of the demonstration sites followed by a farm walk to observe pruning strategies will give the attendees an example of a canopy management systems used in the region.

These field days will give growers an opportunity to observe a range of canopy management strategies and identify systems that may be suitable for their own production situations. Each participant will receive a handout of the presentation summarising the outcomes of national project and the results of the pruning and plant growth regulator trials. A handout illustrating the canopy management strategies used at the demonstration sites will also be provided.

## Field Day regions and dates are:

RENMARK REGION	Wednesday	9 May 2007
MILDURA REGION	Saturday	12 May 2007
PEMBERTON REGION	Wednesday	16 May 2007
ATHERTON REGION (Walkamin/Tolga)	Thursday	24 May 2007
SUNSHINE COAST (Beerwah)	Tuesday	17 July 2007
BUNDABERG REGION	Thursday	19 July 2007
ALSTONVILLE REGION	Friday	17 August 2007
MID NORTH COAST (Stuarts Point)	Tuesday	21 August 2007
GOSFORD REGION (Peats Ridge)	Thursday	23 August 2007
SOUTHERN QLD (Hampton)	Thursday	25 October 2007
PERTH REGION (Carabooda)	Thursday	6 December 2007

## Field Day Format

The field days will be conducted by Dr. John Leonardi of Avocados Australia. Evaluation of canopy management strategies used by growers across Australia giving details on the timing and costs of operations and the impact of these strategies on yield (Part 1).

Discuss the results of pruning and plant growth regulator trials with implications for the local region (Part 2).

Give a description of the demonstration site/s including a history of operations, timing and costs and the effect of these strategies on yield. Visit the site/s to demonstrate pruning strategies used by growers in the region (Part 3 and 4).

## The key components of a field day are:

- Start at 9.00 am  
Welcome by host and introduction to the issues  
Give out field day handouts
- **PART 1: Evaluation of canopy management strategies**  
Summary of operations including timing and costs  
Effect of strategies on yield
- **PART 2: Pruning and growth regulator trials**  
Results of trials in pruned trees  
Implications for local region  
Question time
- **PART 3: Visit demonstration site 1**  
Description of canopy management operations for this site  
Practical: Demonstration of pruning strategies being used  
Question time
- LUNCH from 12.00 – 1.00 pm
- **PART 4: Visit demonstration site 2**  
Description of canopy management operations for this site  
Practical: Demonstration of pruning strategies being used  
Question time  
  
In regions where 1 demonstration site will be visited due to distance, the field day will finish at 1.00pm  
  
In regions where 2 demonstration sites will be visited the field day will finish at 4.00pm

Details of workshop locations will be provided after registration.

- You must register for the workshop.
- Morning tea and lunch will be supplied.
- Please bring your own chair, a hat and a pen.

**For details on registration** call or email Avocados Australia on P: 07 3391 2344 E: [cmfd@avocado.org.au](mailto:cmfd@avocado.org.au)

## For canopy management field day details

call John Leonardi of Avocados Australia on: P: 07 3391 2344 E: [j.leonardi@avocado.org.au](mailto:j.leonardi@avocado.org.au)

**This field Day is funded using avocado grower R&D levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia. Project AV04008**



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[www.avocado.org.au/events.asp](http://www.avocado.org.au/events.asp)



# Spray Application Workshops 2007

## For Independent Horticultural Services including Tree Crop Pest Monitoring, Integrated Pest Management, Airblast Sprayer Calibration and Industry Communication.

The workshops will be conducted by Dr Henry Drew of Growing Greener Growers. The workshop will cover improved spotting bug management (except in WA) and spray application.

The spotting bug session will involve identification of spotting bugs and their damage, monitoring, hotspot management and control using pesticides. Many of the principles outlined can be applied to other pests.

The spray section of the workshops will be “hands-on”, looking at the effects of speed, pressure, nozzles and water volume on spray coverage throughout the avocado canopy. The aim is to fully understand the processes by which droplets reach their targets. Coverage will be assessed using water-sensitive papers. An airblast sprayer will be demonstrated and the advantages and disadvantages of different types of sprayer will be discussed. The calculations for determining the appropriate concentrate chemical rate for the new label concepts of “Dilute” and “Concentrate” spraying will be explained. These calculations and records are critical to your QA/Freshcare accreditation.

The number of participants will be strictly limited to a maximum of 20 growers per session. At the workshop each participant will be given a comprehensive “Sprayer Calibration Update Manual” to complement the DPI Workshop Manual on “Efficient Pesticide Use in Tree Crops”, first distributed in 1997. Each participant will also get a free desktop analysis of their own sprayer setup if the information is supplied within 12 months.

### Workshop Regions and dates are:

PERTH REGION (Carabooda)	Tuesday	1 May 2007
PEMBERTON REGION	Thursday	3 May 2007
BLACKBUTT REGION	Wednesday	9 May 2007
COMBOYNE REGION	Wednesday	16 May 2007
GOSFORD REGION (Peats Ridge)	Thursday	17 May 2007
BUNDABERG REGION (Childers)	Thursday	24 May 2007
ATHERTON REGION (Walkamin)	Wednesday	18 July 2007

### Workshop Format

The spotting bug session (PART 1) will involve identification of spotting bugs and their damage, monitoring, hotspot management and control using pesticides.

The spray section of the workshops (PART 2) will be “hands-on”, looking at the effects of speed, pressure, nozzles and water volume on spray coverage throughout the avocado canopy.

### The key components of each workshop are:

- **START AT 9.00 am**  
Welcome by host and introduction to the issues  
Give out Workshop Manuals
- **PART 1: Managing spotting bugs**  
Identifying bugs and their damage  
Identifying hotspots & risks  
PRACTICAL: Monitoring for spotting bug
- **PART 2: Key issues in airblast spraying**  
Results of trials in very large canopies  
Sprayers, nozzle types, droplet size and kinetic energy  
PRACTICAL: Coverage assessment using water sensitive papers  
Routes by which droplets reach their target
- **LUNCH** from 12.00 – 1.00 pm
- **PRACTICAL:** Measuring the basics (speed, pressure / flow rates, canopy volumes)
- **PRACTICAL:** Effects of changes in speed / air & spray volume and droplet types on coverage  
Legislative issues relating to spray volumes, chemical rates and product labels
- **PRACTICAL:** Calculation of Concentrate chemical rates for your sprayer & orchard  
Chemicals for spotting bug control  
Question time  
Give out Evaluation forms
- **FINISH at 4.00 pm**

Follow-up analysis of participants own sprayer setup (free for up to 12 months)

Details of workshop locations will be provided after registration.

- In 2008 Further workshops will be held on the Sunshine Coast, Atherton Tablelands, Alstonville and NSW Mid North Coast.
- You must register for the workshop. Strictly 20 people per workshop.
- A \$33 (incl GST) registration fee is payable to Avocados Australia. First come first served on registrations.
- Morning tea and lunch will be supplied.
- Please bring your own chair, a hat and a pen.

**For details on registrations** call or email Avocados Australia on P: 07 3391 2344 E: [sw@avocado.org.au](mailto:sw@avocado.org.au)

**For spray workshop details** call Henry Drew of Growing Greener Growers on P: 07 5445 0032 E: [hjdrew@ozemail.com.au](mailto:hjdrew@ozemail.com.au)

**This field Day is funded using avocado grower R&D levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia. Project AV04008**



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# R&D Road Shows to help avocado growers work smarter

## Avocado R&D Road Show 2007

Avocados Australia is organising the four year regional R&D Road Show 2007. The R&D Road Show was last successfully undertaken in 2003 with over 720 industry attendees across the seven regional R&D Road Shows.



This years R&D Road Show 2007 will focus on the latest industry research and show participants how they can turn research findings into practical on-farm benefits. The industry has invested considerable funds on research and development initiatives and it is important that growers have the opportunity to turn this investment into real benefits, in their business. It will also allow researchers to learn from growers the issues facing the industry and enable them to refine their research based on "on farm conversation and examples".

The R&D Road Show 2007 will improve on the last round held in 2003, with a program that will look at research developments and horticultural techniques directly applicable to avocado growers. All R&D Road Shows will be held on farm allowing you to walk and talk in the orchard with the best avocado researchers Australia has to offer.

The program will involve researchers working on major current avocado levy funded projects as well as industry leadership. The presenters will include: Dr Tony Whiley, Mr Ken Pegg, Dr John

Leonardi, Dr Lindy Coats, Dr Fiona Giblin, Mr Henry Kwaczynski and Mr Antony Allen as well as others.

Each day's schedule will include presentations, lunch, networking time, a panel discussion period with the attendees where all presenters will participate, along with a farm/orchard/packing shed session which will include the presenters.

ROAD SHOW REGION	DATE	
South Queensland	Tuesday	10 July 2007
North New South Wales	Thursday	12 July 2007
North Queensland	To Be Confirmed	
Tristate	To Be Confirmed	
Western Australia	Thursday	6 September 2007
Central New South Wales	Tuesday	25 September 2007
Central Queensland	Wednesday	3 October 2007

We look forward to seeing you at the R&D Road Show 2007 closest to your farm during July, August, September and October.



More details including locations, the program and registrations will be mailed directly to you very soon. Keep checking the Events section of the industry website [www.avocado.org.au](http://www.avocado.org.au) over the coming weeks for the latest updates.



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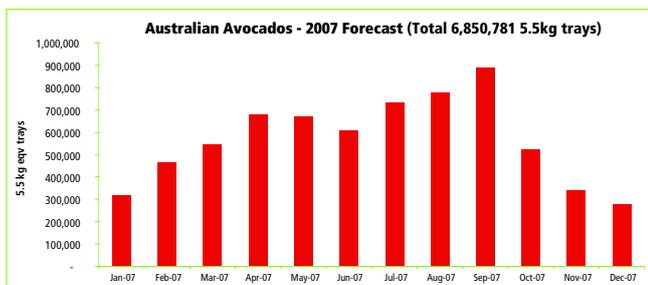
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# Infocado update

By **Joanna Embry**  
of *Avocados Australia*

## 2007 Crop Forecast

The first quarterly report developed to communicate long term forecast data as well as longer term historical data was sent to all Infocado contributors in January 2007. It included a snapshot of dispatches by growing region for 2006 and the forecasts for 2007 also by growing region. Below is a summary of the crop estimate for 2007.



Crop forecasts by growing region for the calendar year 2007 (as at 30-12-06)

Region	Forecast 5.5kg tray eqv
North Queensland	941,524
Central Queensland	2,661,222
Sunshine Coast	720,140
Southern Queensland	809,748
Northern NSW	274,176
Central NSW	528,318
Tri State	234,094
WA/NT	681,559
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,850,781</b>

## Weekly reports

Weekly reports to Infocado contributors now include charts illustrating the proportion of fruit dispatched against the total seasonal forecast by region as well as a weekly snapshot of retail prices in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

If you are a member of Avocados Australia and pack and/or market avocados but currently do not contribute to the Infocado system or receive Infocado reports and would like more information about this product please contact Joanna Embry ph: 07 3391 2344 or email: [infocado@avocado.org.au](mailto:infocado@avocado.org.au)

## Avocado Productivity Collection Project

**Growers, who submit their survey before the due date, will go into a draw to win fantastic prizes, which are being awarded to each region.**

Avocados Australia is currently piloting in Western Australia what is to become a national annual survey of all growers to collect information about the total number of avocado trees growing in Australia and their associated productivity.

The overall aim of both collecting and reporting this data is to provide better information to individual growers regarding estimated future

production to assist their long term business decision making. It will also ensure that as an industry we are well prepared to market future volumes of fruit.

### Grower Benefits

1. **Easier monitoring and comparison of productivity.**
2. **Increased ability to forecast your future production.**
3. **Access to current and forecasted industry productivity.**

#### At the individual grower level:

- a. The information collected will provide a tool to assist growers in monitoring their own productivity over time and between blocks, varieties and tree ages.
- b. historical data will assist growers forecast their own future production.
- c. The aggregated industry reports will provide growers with industry productivity information to compare their own productivity against, as well as give growers information about future production in their region and market window.

### Industry Benefits

4. **Planning & assessment of promotion programs.**
5. **More effective R&D investment decisions**
6. **Resource and capacity planning.**

#### At the industry level:

- a. The data will be used to develop a long term production forecasting model which in turn will become part of the information used to assess and update long term marketing and promotions plans. It is important to have this information so that as production at a national level increases enough resources are put into developing the markets that will best suit both the level and timing of increased fruit availability. This will ensure marketing and promotions resources are allocated to the markets which are best suited to available production at that time
- b. A significant proportion of research and development in the avocado industry is aimed at increasing crop productivity. In order to ensure that your R&D levy dollar is being spent affectively we need to track productivity over time to determine if the current R&D is producing the desired results.

This survey offers many benefits to growers. At the individual grower level the information collected will provide a tool to assist growers in monitoring their own productivity over time and between blocks, varieties and tree ages. The access to historical data will also assist growers forecast their own future production. Aggregated industry reports will provide growers with industry productivity information to compare their own productivity against, as well as give growers information about future production in their region and market window.

For each region, surveys will be sent to growers the month after harvesting finishes and there will be a number of options for completing the survey, either by email, fax or post.

# Australian Roundup

## Central New South Wales Report

By *Chris Nelson* Avocados Australia Director for the Central New South Wales Growing Area



The first few months of 2007 have provided good growing conditions for the majority of the central NSW growing region. Although not drought breaking in nature, we have had frequent good falls of rain which has been a welcome assistance in filling out this year's crop. The 2007 harvest at this stage looks likely to be the regions biggest yet with the warmer coastal areas managing to hold a medium to heavy fruit set throughout. Fruit quality is also very high this year, due mainly to an absence of damaging north-easterly winds over the summer period. The challenge will be in marketing the crop, given overall volumes forecast this year are significantly higher than previous years.

As growers are still enjoying a quieter period of the year, the next couple of months are a good time to conduct leaf sample analysis and ensure your trees are set up well for flowering in September. I will also take this opportunity to remind growers to take advantage of the various activities and workshops sponsored by Avocados Australia/HAL this coming season. The first of these is Henry Drew's fruit spotting bug and orchard spray workshop to be held at Gordon Burch's Comboyne property on 16 May (see pages 13 & 14).

At the time of writing, the North Coast Avocado Growers Branch of NSW Farmers were about to embark on a study tour of Western Australian avocado growing regions. We trust that the tour was successful and a good time was had by all.

## North Queensland Report

By *Jim Kochi* Avocados Australia Director for the North Queensland Growing Area



The North Queensland season has begun with the expectation of a season of lighter supply and therefore a season of reasonable returns. This is the hope of farmers everywhere so why should the blokes and shielas in the North be any different. We were tantalised for months by visions of \$30 then we started to drool at the thought of something better and finally we had whispers of sales at \$40 for stuff from Western Australia only a day ahead of the start of our season. Well, that was the dream!

The reality was that as soon as the Shepard season started, prices began to ease and quickly fall below \$30 for 5.5 kg tray size 22-25 and in February and by early March the price had fallen to just under \$20. Some growers are getting a slight premium above this and still some are way below. How can this be so when the Northern supply is less than last year's, and we have had an early end to New Zealand and Western Australia supply? I believe the market gossip line is to blame. There is perception that "someone" out there has a massive supply and needs to be cleared. This is the market gossip. The reality may be different but who really knows.

The Shepard Australia group have spent the past 11 years honing their forecasting skills and being able to accurately supply a picking schedule on a weekly basis. This forms the basis of a marketing programme for the supply to the chain stores. However, as much as this group attempts to organise supply and store promotions their efforts are often thwarted by the gossip from the central markets. The losers at this time are the growers, all growers, as always.

The only solution to this perennial problem is better knowledge of the supply of avocado to the central market and chain stores from all regions on a weekly basis, and, for this information to be reasonably accurate to four weeks ahead of supply. This sort of information will put some accuracy to the market gossip, and possibly allow merchants and wholesalers to plan ahead for promotions. The data coming from the Infocado programme is starting to show promise already and I urge all avocado growers to participate and use the information.

On a more local basis, the Atherton Tableland Avocado Growers Association Limited (ATAGA) has begun a survey of avocado growers to gather information of who is growing what varieties, and some other basic information. Again, I urge all growers to contribute to this survey so the industry can develop at least a base level of information that we can use when the ATAGA committee approaches Avocados Australia, QDPI, transport operators, carton manufacturers, farm supply businesses, Queensland and Federal governments and all the other bodies that affect our business.

The Shepard Australia group has used this old saying on many occasions:

"Failing to prepare is preparing to fail".

As growers, it is in our own hands how well we prepare for success.

## North New South Wales Report

By *Peter Molenaar*, Avocados Australia Director for the Northern New South Wales Growing Area



Following an excellent Spring, the weather has not been so kind throughout Summer. The official average rainfall figures for Summer were well down in each area. These figures ranged from 63% to 82% of long term averages, the driest since 1984/85. As a result fruit size may be an issue in heavy bearing orchards.

Most growers are reporting good quality fruit. Maybe the consistently below average maximum temperatures have had something to do with this. Hopefully quality will be maintained through till harvest and with some good Autumn rain, as predicted, fruit size will improve.

With predictions of an increased Australian and a predicted large New Zealand crop it is imperative that we market sound fruit. Our aim should be to give the consumer a positive experience when purchasing an avocado.

Let's give the consumer every reason to come back for more!

## South Queensland Report

By Daryl Boardman, Avocados Australia Director for the South Queensland Growing Area

Rain or lack of it, in Southern Queensland is still the case, with Brisbane and most areas having severe water restrictions.

The crop in this part of the world looks as if volume will be reasonable, as you would have all seen in the February edition of Guacamole and Infocado.

Fruit quality from the orchards I have been into looks good and those with plenty of water have good fruit size.

From early reports it looks like New Zealand has a reasonable crop that will no doubt be heading this way around the mid to end of our picking time. Please keep this in mind when you are thinking of harvesting your crop and try not to overload the market when everyone starts saying the "Kiwis are coming". This has happened over the past years causing the price to fall and taking quite a while to recover.

We have a busy season ahead with a number of informative meetings coming up in our region.

Henry Drew's spray workshop at Blackbutt is on Wednesday, 9 May. This day is limited to 20 participants so get your name in soon if you want to learn more about improved spaying and the latest technology in spraying and spotting bug identification and control.

Then we have the R&D Roadshow for South Queensland and the Sunshine Coast which is being held on the Tuesday, 10 July at Sunnyspot Packhouse at Ravensbourne.

Also John Leonardi will be holding a Canopy management field day in this region in October.

I look forward to meeting some of you at these events.

## Sunshine Coast Report

By Henry Kwaczynski, Avocados Australia Director for the Sunshine Coast Growing Area

Unlike most parts of Australia (except North Queensland), the Sunshine Coast has begun the year with excellent ongoing rainfalls. Indications are that trees in the region are carrying a good crop.

You will note that the estimate for this year's crop has been reduced to around 750,000 trays from around 850,000 last year. This is the result of the ongoing reduction of farming in the area and is an indication of things to come. I doubt if this trend will be reversed as there is enormous pressure for land for housing, rather than land for farming, making the cost per acre out of reach. There are three parcels of undeveloped land near to me – the cost is a staggering \$700,000 for 10 acres.

Recently I was informed by the management of Nature's Fruit Company that they will soon be moving to a new premises in the Glass House Mountains area. I wish them all the best with the move



and the new location, and I am sure the change will bring a marked advantage compared to the confines of suburban Nambour.

Finally, I encourage you to come along to the avocado study groups, to be run by Simon Newett. For any queries regarding the study groups, please call Simon at QDPI in Nambour on 07 5441 2211.

## Tri State Report

By Colin Fechner, Avocados Australia Director for the Tri State Growing Area



Avocado growers in this region finished their harvest during January, and growers are looking for wide spread rain to come to put much needed water back in the river system. Forecasts look hopeful but it still has to rain in the right areas, if not, things look desperate with little or no water to start the year.

The Annual General Meeting for South Australian Avocado Growers Association is to be held at the Renmark Club on Wednesday, 9 May starting at 9am. As in other years, this meeting includes a guest speaker, lunch, and field visits. The guest speaker is John Leonardi from Avocados Australia talking on his work on canopy management and holding a field day, in this area and other areas around Australia. All growers are welcome, both from South Australia and the Sunraysia district.

In this issue of *Talking Avocados* the dates are published for the upcoming Avocados Australia 2007 R&D Roadshows. This time, for our area, they will be held in the Sunraysia district during August 2007.

Also, Simon Newett from QDPI is working on a project entitled "Study groups to achieve globally competitive Avocados." This project involves study groups in each avocado growing area discussing problems for that area and trying to find solutions to them. At the AGM it will be decided when we hold our area's study group meeting and what we would like to find out and discuss. I encourage growers to support this project by becoming involved.



## So much more than just a market

The Brisbane Produce Market is Queensland's fresh fruit and vegetable hub, trading over 625,000 tonnes of produce each year and ensuring the most efficient and effective marketing and distribution of Queensland's fresh fruit and vegetables.

To find out more about the Brisbane Produce Markets visit [www.brisbanemarkets.com.au](http://www.brisbanemarkets.com.au) or phone the free Grower Hotline on 1800 631 002.



# Food Value Chains and the Concept of Lean

(Part 1)

By Joanna Embry  
of Avocados Australia

Adapted with permission from materials published by Andrew Stewart, InteLog

Increasingly business has become aware of the reality that individual organisations cannot remain sustainably competitive on their own. They are one element within a larger collection of businesses involved in delivering a product, typically referred to as a supply chain. The supply chain starts with the supply of the first raw materials and finishes with the final point of consumption, involving all processes in between. It is therefore critical to the performance of the supply chain that all the entities or businesses understand their role and responsibility in the performance of the supply chain – delivering the right product at the right price at the right time.

As this supply chain awareness has matured there has been a shift in recent years in thinking about the alignment of the supply chain to the consumer. This is now expressed in terms of the creation of value, not only in financial terms, but in terms of value as perceived by the consumer. This transition in thinking significantly changes the role of the businesses within the supply chain.

The focus of the supply chain has shifted from cost reduction to value creation. Examples of this can be seen in the ready meals packaging and presentation of fresh food such as salads and fruit, the packaging and added value presentation of meat, the single serves of food and the increasing adoption of shelf ready packaging.

This change in focus has resulted in supply chain businesses re-evaluating their views and understanding to focus on the creation of value, hence the conception of the Value Chain.

It demonstrates the complexity and the inter-dependencies of a Value Chain. Clearly no one entity can be wholly responsible for the fulfilment of the consumer's value requirements. The question therefore is how a Value Chain achieves the alignment of the businesses to create the value as perceived by the consumer, not as they would think it should be.

The Value Chain needs a framework and set of guidelines to come together and the methodologies and tools to understand how the chain does deliver value and how it can improve the value offer.

A key element of this is the removal of waste along the whole chain and improved flow of the product or service.

Lean Thinking is an approach which has been used successfully by a number of supply chains across a broad range of industries to achieve this.

## What is Lean Thinking?

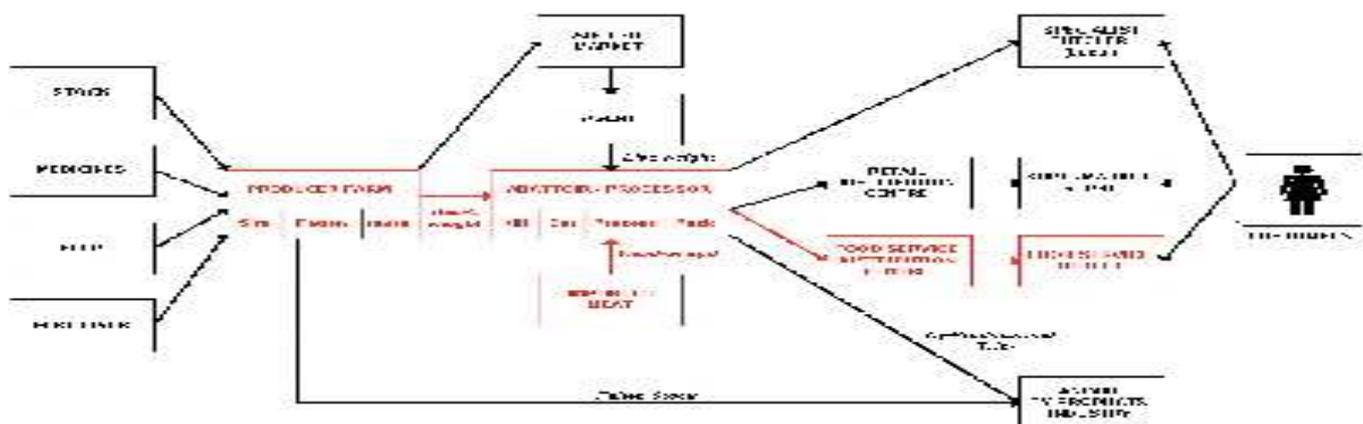
Lean production methods were pioneered by Toyota in Japan. The essence of the lean approach can be explained by five key principles whose concepts can be extended beyond automotive production to any company or organisation, in any sector, in any country.

## The five lean principles

- 1 Specify** what does and does not create **value** from the customer's perspective and not from the perspective of individual firms, functions and departments
- 2 Identify** all the steps necessary to design, order and produce the product across the **whole value stream** to highlight non value adding waste
- 3** Make those actions that create value **flow** without interruption, detours, backflows, waiting or scrap
- 4** Only make what the **customer demands**.
- 5** Strive for **perfection** by continually removing successive layers of waste as they are uncovered.

These principles are fundamental to the elimination of waste. They are easy to remember (although not always easy to achieve!) and should be the guide for everyone in the organisation who becomes involved in the lean transformation.

**Part 2** of this article will be published in the Winter edition of *Talking Avocados*. It will provide more detail on identifying waste and developing value within your business and supply chain to improve profitability as well as an example of an Australian Food Business which has successfully implemented lean principles in its everyday operations with positive results.



# Canopy Management Strategies

(AV04008)

**By John Leonardi**  
of Avocados Australia

In the summer edition of *Talking Avocados* an analysis of canopy management strategies adopted by growers in Central and South-East Queensland was reported. In these environments pruning operations can be performed after harvest and prior to the onset of flowering. However in the cooler climates of Southern Queensland, Central NSW, the Tri-State region and South-West Western Australia it is normal for trees to carry two crops for a period of time (mature fruit from the previous season as well as the current season's fruit). In these regions the decision on when to prune is often more difficult. In many cases growers perform pruning operations after harvest and when trees are

going into an "off" year so branches can be pruned with minimal fruit loss. However due to the light crop load (in an "off" year) managing the regrowth from these pruning operations can be more difficult. Growers in these regions typically adopt a selective limb removal method to reduce tree size and improve light penetration. However strategies involving mechanical pruning, stag-horning, tree removal and plant growth regulators have also been used.

A summary of the growth cycle (timing of flowering, flushing and harvesting), canopy management history (timing of operations), canopy management costs (\$/ha) and yield (t/ha) for four sites from Central NSW, the Tri-State and South-West Western Australia are outlined below.

## Site 10: Selective pruning (Hass) – Central NSW

Growth cycle	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Flowering												
Spring flush												
Summer flush												
Harvest												

### Block details:

Variety: Hass; Size: 4.5 ha; Planted: March 1999; Spacing: 9 x 5m (222 trees/ha); Orientation: E-W

### Canopy Management History:

Year	Canopy Management Operations	Costs of Operations (\$/ha)	Yield (t/ha)
2005/06	Trees were selectively pruned in June/July 2005. Limbs from the middle of the tree were removed to reduce height and improve light penetration. Height was reduced from 5½-6m to 4½-5m. Cutting up and chipping of branches.	3200	5.7
2006/07	Nil	0	18.7
2007/08	Plan to selectively remove limbs in May/June. Trees are in an "off" year so branches can be pruned with minimal fruit losses.		

## Site 12: Selective pruning and tree removal (Hass) – Tri-State

Growth cycle	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Flowering												
Spring flush												
Summer flush												
Harvest												

### Block details:

Variety: Hass; Block size: 1.84 ha; Planted: 1998; Spacing: 6 x 3m (555 trees/ha) thinned to 12 x 3m (278 trees/ha) in 2004; Orientation: N-S

## Canopy Management Strategies continued

### Canopy Management History:

Year	Canopy Management Operations	Costs of Operations (\$/ha)	Yield (t/ha)
2002	Trees were lightly trimmed to maintain orchard access during February – April.	200	8.4
2003	Trees were lightly trimmed to maintain orchard access during February – April.	300	3.4
2004	Every second row removed after harvest. Trees were going into an "off" year.	1650	11.2
2005	Nil	0	2.1
2006	Nil	0	7.6

### Site 13: Selective/mechanical pruning and plant growth regulators (Hass) – Tri-State

Growth cycle	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Flowering												
Spring flush												
Summer flush												
Harvest												

#### Block details:

Variety: Hass; Size: 2.46 ha; Planted: 1991; Spacing: 6 x 5m (333 trees/ha); Orientation: N-S

#### Canopy Management History:

Year	Canopy Management Operations	Costs of Operations (\$/ha)	Yield (t/ha)
2004	Trees were selectively pruned in May. Immature vegetative growth that would not flower this year was removed to improve light penetration and maintain tree size at 5-6m high and 4m wide.	1600	13.8
	Light mechanical hedging in August/September to maintain tree size.	300	
	Application of Sunny® at flowering in mid October.	2700	
2005	Trees were selectively pruned in May.	1600	20.3
	Application of Sunny® at flowering in mid October.	2760	
2006	Trees were selectively pruned in late May.	1720	8.2*
	Application of Sunny® at flowering in early October.	1085	

\* In 2006 yields were affected by heat wave (47°C) in January and severe frosts in June/July.

### Site 16: Selective limb removal (Hass) – Pemberton

Growth cycle	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Flowering												
Spring flush												
Summer flush												
Harvest												

#### Block details:

Variety: Hass; Block size: 5.18ha; Planted: 1995; Spacing: 8 x 7m (178 trees/ha); Orientation: E-W

## Canopy Management Strategies continued

### Canopy Management History:

Year	Canopy Management Operations	Costs of Operations (\$/ha)	Yield (t/ha)
2005/06	Selective limb removal to allow orchard access, reduce tree height and improve light penetration was carried out in February/March. Cutting up and chipping/mulching of branches.	3800	17.4
2006/07	Plan to do a major limb removal after harvest (March/April) to reduce tree height to 5-6m and width to 4m. Trees are in an 'off' year and pruning can be done with minimal fruit loss.		Completed in March 2007

### Field Days

Canopy Management field days will be conducted in all of the major growing regions during 2007. These field days will give growers an opportunity to observe a range of canopy management strategies that are being used in their regions. The outcomes of the national canopy management project and results from plant growth regulator trials will also be presented. Invitations will be sent out to growers four weeks before the event as numbers are required for catering purposes.

For more details see page 12. Field days will be held at:

Renmark	Wed, 9 May
Pemberton	Tues, 16 May
North Queensland	Thurs, 24 May
Sunshine Coast	Tues, 17 July
Bundaberg	Thurs 19 July
Northern NSW	Fri, 17 Aug
Mid Nth Coast NSW	Tues, 21 Aug
Central Coast NSW	Thurs, 23 Aug
Southern Qld	Tues, 30 Oct
Perth	Thurs, 6 Dec

### Acknowledgements

Thanks to all growers who provided information on their canopy management operations and yields for the 2006 season. This project is funded using avocado grower R&D levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia.



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# Control of Phytophthora Root Rot in young avocado trees

**Tony Whiley**

of Sunshine Horticultural Services, Nambour QLD

This article reports the control of Phytophthora root rot achieved in young avocado trees growing on a replant orchard site in north Queensland. The site and experiment were previously described in an earlier article published in the autumn 2006 edition of (An early result when Phytophthora root rot invades a rootstock experiment, pp. 24-25).

The experiments had been established to evaluate genetic interactions between ‘Hass’ and ‘Shepard’ and a number of different rootstock lines. The trees were planted in April 2005 (approximately 200 trees for each variety) and by October 2005 the health of many trees was beginning to decline. Individual tree health was assessed in mid-November 2005 by visually rating health on a 0-10 scale where 0 = healthy and 10 = dead. In a few severe cases trees rated 9 but those showing symptoms mostly rated between 2-5. A Phytophthora root rot control program was implemented which included soil application of Ridomil®, foliar sprays of phosphorous acid and trunk sprays of a phosphorous acid/ Pulse® mixture. Ridomil® was applied once at label rates and all healthy trees (a rating of 1 or less) were sprayed with 0.1% phosphonate at 3-weekly intervals except when trees were flushing strongly. Trees with obvious health problems were trunk-sprayed with a formulation of 20% phosphonate/2% Pulse® at 8-9 weekly

intervals. Care was taken to avoid spraying the foliage with the trunk-spray formulation as this will cause significant burn and defoliation if brought into contact with leaves.

In March 2006 the experimental site was struck by Tropical Cyclone Larry which caused damage through leaf shredding as well as loosening some trees in the ground. Tree health was again rated in May 2006 and December 2006 using the 0-10 health scale described above.

## Results

There was minimal commercial damage to trees that had mean health ratings of 1 or less. In the population of ‘Hass’ trees on both cloned and seedling rootstocks the overall health rating of trees declined between November 2005 and May 2006 (Table 1). This was likely due to the momentum the disease had picked up prior to effective control treatments being introduced and the effects of Tropical Cyclone Larry. However for the most part there was a clear improvement in tree health in the period between May 2006 and December 2006. This is attributed to the combination of foliar and trunk sprays being applied in a timely program, giving the young trees the protection needed to fend off the disease. Within the cloned rootstock experiment Hass on its own roots and Nabal were the least responsive to phosphonate treatments while with seedling rootstocks, ‘Duke 7’ and ‘Reed’ trees had the poorest health rating (Table 1).

**Table 1** Tree health ratings from a rootstock experiment planted on the Atherton Tableland. The health ratings are scored for each tree from 0 to 10 where 0 = healthy and 10 = dead. The health ratings are mean values from 10 trees. The scion variety is ‘Hass’. Values in columns with different letters are significantly different ( $P \leq 0.05$ ).

Mean tree health rating (0-10)							
	Cloned rootstocks			Seedling rootstocks			
	Nov 05	May 06	Dec 06	Nov 05	May 06	Dec 06	Dec 06
A8	1.8 <sup>bc</sup>	3.6	0.5 <sup>a</sup>	A8	2.6 <sup>b</sup>	6.4 <sup>c</sup>	0.7 <sup>b</sup>
A10	0.6 <sup>ab</sup>	2.2 <sup>a</sup>	1.4 <sup>b</sup>	A10	1.9 <sup>b</sup>	4.7 <sup>b</sup>	0.6 <sup>b</sup>
Barr Duke	2.6 <sup>c</sup>	4.3 <sup>ab</sup>	1.1 <sup>ab</sup>	Barr Duke	0.8 <sup>a</sup>	3.3 <sup>ab</sup>	1.2 <sup>b</sup>
Duke 7	0.9 <sup>b</sup>	2.2 <sup>a</sup>	1.1 <sup>ab</sup>	Duke 7	2.3 <sup>b</sup>	7 <sup>c</sup>	3.4 <sup>c</sup>
Hass	0.3 <sup>a</sup>	1.5 <sup>a</sup>	2.5 <sup>b</sup>	Nabal	2.2 <sup>b</sup>	4.9 <sup>bc</sup>	0.5 <sup>a</sup>
Nabal	4.7 <sup>c</sup>	8 <sup>b</sup>	6.3 <sup>bc</sup>	Reed	2.9 <sup>b</sup>	7 <sup>c</sup>	3.2 <sup>c</sup>
Reed	2.3 <sup>c</sup>	6 <sup>b</sup>	1.1 <sup>ab</sup>	Rigato	1.0 <sup>a</sup>	2.8 <sup>a</sup>	0.3 <sup>a</sup>
Thomas	0.6 <sup>ab</sup>	4.1 <sup>ab</sup>	2.1 <sup>b</sup>	SHS-R 01	0.4 <sup>a</sup>	1.8 <sup>a</sup>	0.2 <sup>a</sup>
Velvick	0.1 <sup>a</sup>	1.9 <sup>a</sup>	0.4 <sup>a</sup>	Velvick	0.4 <sup>a</sup>	2.1 <sup>a</sup>	0.2 <sup>a</sup>
Zutano	0.9 <sup>b</sup>	1.9 <sup>a</sup>	0.1 <sup>a</sup>	Zutano	1.5 <sup>ab</sup>	3.2 <sup>ab</sup>	0.2 <sup>a</sup>

The ‘Shepard’ experiment generally had a higher level of tree health so ratings were not carried out in May 2006. For the most part trees propagated on either cloned or seedling rootstocks responded well

to the phosphonate treatments. The trees on seedling ‘A8’ were the exception with the health rating not changing between November 2005 and December 2006.

## Control of Phytophthora Root Rot in young avocado trees continued

**Table 2** Tree health ratings from a rootstock experiment planted on the Atherton Tableland. The health ratings scored for each tree are from 0 to 10 where 0 = healthy and 10 = dead. The health ratings are mean values from 10 trees. The scion variety is 'Shepard'. Values in columns with different letters are significantly different ( $P \leq 0.05$ ).

Mean tree health rating (0-10)				
	Clonal Rootstocks		Seedling Rootstocks	
	Nov 05	Dec 06	Nov 05	Dec 06
A10	1.8b	0a	A8	2.5b
Barr Duke	0.7a	0.6ab	A10	2.0b
Duke 7	0.5a	0.2a	Duke 7	1.1ab
Nabal	2.1b	1.3b	Nabal	2.4b
Shepard	0.3a	0a	Reed	1.3b
SHS-R 02	1.1ab	1.1b	SHS-R 01	0.3a
Thomas	0.7a	0.1a	SHS-R 02	1.8b
Velvick	0.7a	0.1a	SHS-R 03	0.5a
Zutano	3.9b	2.4b	Velvick	0.9a
			Zutano	1.6b

### Discussion

The results reported in this article confirm the importance of implementing an effective disease control programme when replanting orchards on sites where trees have previously been lost with Phytophthora root rot. This "fungus" can survive several years in the soil without access to host plants. While there are benefits from fallowing/cover-cropping the ground following orchard removal, the disease will still be present when new trees are planted. Thorough site preparation including the incorporation of 20-30 L of cagebird manure/m<sup>2</sup> four months prior to planting, Ridomil® treatment of the planting site and a judicious phosphonate program once trees have been planted will provide the best chance for re-establishment of a healthy orchard. Additionally for the long term performance of the orchard choose rootstocks with a reported level of tolerance to Phytophthora as these will be easier to maintain in a healthy condition.

### References

Whiley, A.W. (2006) An early result when Phytophthora root rot invades a rootstock experiment. 17(1): 24-25.

***This project is funded using avocado grower R&D levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia.***



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### Avocado Coast Nursery

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Schulz Road,  
Woombye Qld  
Ph: 07 5442 2424

### Birdwood Nursery

Peter and Sandra Young  
71-83 Blackall Range Rd  
Nambour Qld  
Ph: 07 5442 1611

### Rainforest Nursery

Ron and Joan Knowlton  
25 Reynolds St  
Mareeba Qld  
Ph: 07 4092 1018



# IMPORTANT INDUSTRY NOTICE

## Changes to the Avocado Levy & Export Charge

### Effective from 1 April 2007

Avocados Australia Limited and Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) have successfully made representations to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon Ms Sussan Ley MP, for changes to the levy and charge payable on avocados.

**The rate of levy and export charge on avocados, other than avocados directed to processing, will increase to 7.5 cents per kilogram, comprising 4.5 cents per**

**kilogram for marketing and 3.0 cents for research and development, on 1 April 2007. The new rate will apply to avocados sold or exported on or after 1 April 2007.**

Also commencing on 1 April 2007 is a new research and development levy of 1.0 cent per kilogram for avocados directed to processing.

An administrative change exempting avocados sold by a producer by retail sale from levy if the producer would otherwise be liable for less than \$100 in levy on retail sales in a levy year takes effect from 1 April 2007.

Details of the levy from 1 April 2007 are as follows:

Commodity	Avocado
Method of levy calculation	(1) Per kilogram of avocado sold or exported (levy and export charge) (2) Per kilogram of avocados directed to processing (levy)
Rate of levy	(1) From <b>1 April 2007</b> onwards: <b>7.5 cents per kilogram</b> (2) From <b>1 April 2007</b> onwards: <b>1.0 cent per kilogram</b> <i>Note: Levy is GST exclusive.</i>
Recipient organisations	Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL)
Distribution of levy	(1) From <b>1 April 2007</b> onwards: 4.5 cents to HAL for marketing 3.0 cents to HAL for research & development (2) From <b>1 April 2007</b> onwards: 1.0 cent to HAL for research & development

Levy is payable on:

- I. avocados produced and sold in Australia (7.5 cents per kilogram)
- II. avocados produced and sold in Australia for processing (1.0 cent per kilogram)

Export charge is payable on avocados produced and exported from Australia (7.5 cents per kilogram). No export charge is payable if domestic levy has already been paid on the avocados to be exported.

The producer (the person who owned the avocados immediately before sale) is liable to pay the levy.

Where a producer sells avocados via an intermediary, such as a first purchaser, buying agent or selling agent; the intermediary is liable to pay levy on behalf of the producer. The intermediary must forward the levy to LRS along with return forms that are available from all LRS offices or by accessing our website at [www.daff.gov.au/levies](http://www.daff.gov.au/levies). The intermediary can recover the amount of levy paid from the producer, by offset or otherwise.

Where a producer sells avocados to a processor, the processor is liable to pay levy on behalf of the producer. The processor must forward the levy to LRS along with return forms. The processor can recover the amount of levy paid from the producer, by offset or otherwise.

Levy is not imposed in relation to a sale of avocados if:

- (a) avocados are sold by retail sale and the total levy liability on retail sales would otherwise be less than \$100 in levy in a levy year
- (b) levy has been imposed on the avocados because of a previous sale – avocado levy is only payable once, if it is resold or exported after it's initial purchase, no further levy or charge is payable

Producers who sell avocados directly to the public via retail sale are required to submit returns and payment directly to LRS on an annual basis if they incur a levy liability greater than \$100 in a levy year.

Producers who use avocados in the production of other goods are required to submit returns and payment directly to LRS on a quarterly basis.

In the case of the Export Charge, the producer, defined as the person who exports the product from Australia (the owner of the product at the time of export), is liable to pay the charge. This person must forward export charge to the LRS along with return forms. If the product is exported through an exporting agent, the agent is liable to pay the charge on behalf of the producer and submit it along with return forms to LRS. The exporting agent can recover the amount of charge paid from the producer.

## Changes to the Avocado Levy & Export Charge continued

### Quarterly Returns:

Quarterly returns must be submitted to the Levies Revenue Service (LRS) on or before the 28th day after the end of the quarter in which the avocados were sold or exported. For example, if the avocados are sold or exported in April 2007, May 2007 or June 2007, the due date for the return with payment is 28 July 2007.

### Annual Returns:

The annual return with payment must be submitted to LRS on or before 28th February in the next levy year\*. For example, the return and payment for the 2007 levy year\* must be lodged by 28th February 2008.

Producers who sell avocados directly to the public via retail sale are required to submit returns and payment directly to LRS on an annual basis if they incur a levy liability greater than \$100 in a levy year.

**A first purchaser buying agent selling agent exporter exporting agent or producer who sells avocados other than by retail sale may apply through LRS for an exemption from the requirement to lodge quarterly returns for a levy year\* if that person has reasonable grounds for believing that the total volume of avocados they will become or are likely to become liable to pay levy on in the year will be less than 36 tonnes. If exemption is granted returns must be lodged on an annual basis.**

## **\*LAMB HASS, \*GWEN, REED, SHARWILL, FUERTE, BACON, RINCON, RYAN, WURTZ & HASS**

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\*A levy year for avocados is the same as the calendar year (i.e. 1 January to 31 December).

**If you would like to receive information and reminder notices electronically from LRS in the future please ensure that you include your business email address on your return form.**

### Completed levy returns and payments should be forwarded to:

**The Secretary  
Levies Revenue Service  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
Locked Bag 4488  
KINGSTON ACT 2604**

Where payment of levy is made by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), please fax your return to (02) 6272 5695 on the day you make your payment. If you would like to make a payment by EFT, please call (toll free) 1800 020 619 for more information. (Please note calls to this number may incur charges if made from mobile or public telephones).

Please contact your nearest LRS Regional Office if you have any questions about this notice.

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**Melbourne** Telephone 1800 683 839  
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**Canberra** Telephone: 1800 020 619  
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**Email** [Levies.Management@daff.gov.au](mailto:Levies.Management@daff.gov.au)

**Web** [www.daff.gov.au/levies](http://www.daff.gov.au/levies)

Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) is an organisation whose aim is to develop Australian horticulture by providing comprehensive and professional research and development (R&D) and marketing services to over 30 different organisations from the fruit, vegetable and nursery industries.

HAL was formed in February 2001 from the former Horticultural Research and Development Corporation (HRDC) and the Australian Horticultural Corporation (AHC). HAL is an industry owned company that the Australian Government has contracted to deliver marketing and R&D services for the horticulture industry.

**Notice Issued: March 2007**

# Clonal propagation of avocado rootstocks

## – Progress Report II

By **Tony Whiley**

of Sunshine Horticultural Services Pty Ltd, Nambour QLD

Sunshine Horticultural Services has continued to evaluate avocado rootstock cloning as part of the industry R&D program (AV04007). Unfortunately, uptake of nursery trees on cloned rootstocks has not caught the attention of Australian growers who admittedly at this stage have no data to make commercial judgements. Higher prices for trees on cloned rootstocks need to be justified through improved tree performance both from the point of view of disease tolerance and higher cropping. The avocado rootstock improvement project is entering its fifth year and along with identifying higher performing rootstocks it also is comparing the performance of cloned and seedling rootstocks from the same maternal source. Experimental trees planted in some locations will produce their first crops from both cloned and seedling rootstocks this year (2007) and the results will be reported in the spring edition of .

'Velvick' has previously been identified as a rootstock with some tolerance to Phytophthora root rot (Giblin ., 2005; Kremer-Köhne and Duvenhage, 2000; Kremer-Köhne et al., 2001 & 2002; Whiley, 2006). While difficult to clone, progress has been made in rooting this line which was reported in an earlier article (, 17(1): 23). Other rootstocks identified in the rootstock improvement project with apparent useful Phytophthora tolerance are Rigato (Guatemalan), SHS-R 01 (Guatemalan) and SHS-R 03 (Guatemalan x West Indian hybrid). Recent research has evaluated cloning techniques for these rootstocks using a modified micro-propagation system as described by Ernst (1999). The results are summarised below:

1. A range of KIBA (potassium salt of Indole butyric acid) concentrations from 0.4 to 1.2% were used on this material following removal from the etiolation chamber. KIBA was applied as Clonex®.
2. Previous research has demonstrated that the temperature clones

were exposed to following etiolation was important for successful rooting of Guatemalan and West Indian race lines. Two temperature treatments were imposed on the material being evaluated: 1) ambient - a mean temperature of 20.5° and 2) an artificially induced temperature – a mean of 27°C.

3. A self-cincturing or strangulation treatment was imposed on the material once it was removed from the etiolation chamber.

In general, across all of the rootstock material the most successful KIBA strength was 0.6 to 0.8% which confirms previous research results (Ernst, 1999; Whiley, 2006). At ambient temperatures and following 8 weeks post-etiolation the rooting success of the experimental lines was less than 17%. However, holding material at 27°C for 8 weeks post-etiolation improved the rooting success to 35% for SHS-R 01 and 98% for SHS-R 03. The self-cincturing technique was not always successful and improvement methodology will be investigated. However, where self-cincturing was effective it resulted in 100% rooting with the exception of SHS-R 01 which generally performed poorly across all treatments. The reason for the difficulty with SHS-R 01 is not fully understood but may be related to boron deficiency which is known to occur in the parent tree. Boron is an essential nutrient for meristem activity which occurs in rootlet primordia. Further research will be conducted using material with elevated B concentrations.

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***This project is funded using avocado grower R&D levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia.***



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# Avocado Study Groups to achieve globally competitive avocado production

**Simon Newett and Peter Rigden**  
*Extension Horticulturists, QDPI&F, Nambour*

## **New avocado extension project commencing - Competing with Overseas**

Avocado consumption must keep pace with expansion in production to keep the industry profitable. This can be achieved by improving fruit quality to encourage repeat sales and lowering, or at least containing, the per unit production costs to keep fruit prices affordable and competitive.

Avocado production is expanding rapidly in countries with low production costs and imports of this fruit pose one of the greatest challenges to the Australian industry. It is therefore essential that we improve our competitiveness for the long term viability of our industry.

Much of the technology and information that Australian growers need in order to achieve better quality and productivity is already available. The aim of this project is to improve the productivity and fruit quality of the Australian avocado industry through better communication of technology and production knowledge.

### Avocado Study Groups

The three year project will establish and support 10 regional avocado study groups across Australia. Each group will be asked to identify issues that are preventing them from achieving good productivity and fruit quality, the study groups will then serve as the vehicle for conducting regular workshops that address these issues.

Avocado Study groups will be formed in the following regions:

1. North Queensland (Atherton Tablelands)
2. Bundaberg/Childers
3. Sunshine Coast
4. West Moreton (Toowoomba Range/Gatton)
5. Northern NSW
6. Mid north coast NSW (Stuarts Pt/Comboyne/Woolgoolga/Coffs Harbour)
7. Central Coast NSW (Gosford/Kulnura/Somersby)
8. Tri-state (Sunraysia & Riverland)
9. WA metro (Perth/Bunbury)
10. South West WA (Manjimup/Pemberton)

Amongst Australian avocado growers and across the range of research, development and extension officers there already exists a valuable source of knowledge, experience and practical know-how to solve production and quality problems. Quite often the solutions are already within the industry.

Advancement of the avocado industry depends on the cooperation and coordination of people involved in a range of activities across the supply chain and good communication at all levels. The project will draw upon existing knowledge and skills within the Australian industry as well as new information from both here and overseas.

To help this happen, the study groups will bring industry members and experts together to share ideas, learn from each other, receive new information, observe and debate.

### **Workshops**

Meetings will be as participatory as possible. They will mainly be held



## Avocado Study Groups to achieve globally competitive avocado production continued

on orchards, involve a farm walk, presentations and other activities and last for half a day.

Small regional committees will be formed for each study group to help plan meetings. Project leader Simon Newett will be assisted in organising regional workshops by Peter Rigden (QDPI&F) at Nambour, Danielle Le Lagadec (QDPI&F) at Bundaberg, Matthew Weinert (QDPI&F) at Mareeba, Phil Wilk (NSW DPI) at Alstonville, Greig Ireland (NSW DPI) at Coffs Harbour, Sandra Hardy (NSW DPI) at Gosford, Lisa Martin (EE Muir & Sons Pty Ltd) at Robinvale and Alec McCarthy (Dept of Ag WA).

Researchers and other experts will take part in meetings as determined by the issues being addressed.

### AVOMAN

Users of the AVOMAN orchard management software will be supported through the project and new users will be encouraged. Shane Mulo (QDPI) at Nambour will be providing technical support and where needed will make enhancements to the software.

### Initial Workshops Commencing in April

Workshops are commencing in April and are being co-ordinated so they coordinate with Avocados Australia's Canopy Management Field Days, by John Leonardi, the Spray Application Workshops by Henry Drew and

the Avocados Australia R&D Roadshows all being held during 2007. Invitations to local workshops will be mailed to individuals a couple of weeks before the event. If you are a new grower, not a member of Avocados Australia, or not known to your local extension officer please contact the latter or Simon Newett to ensure you get on the mailing list and receive an invitation.

### For Further Information

Contact Simon Newett, Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Maroochy Research Station, Nambour, Queensland. Phone: 07 5444 9619, fax 07 5441 2235, or email [simon.newett@dpi.qld.gov.au](mailto:simon.newett@dpi.qld.gov.au)

### Acknowledgements

This project is being made possible by support from Avocados Australia and the officers from the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries Queensland, New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, Department of Agriculture West Australia and EE Muir & Sons.

This project is funded using avocado grower R&D levies which are matched by the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia.

We are all looking forward to your participation in the workshops!

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# The Avocado Replant Problem

By Ken Pegg and Fiona Giblin

Horticulture and Forestry Science, QDPI&F

## Summary

Replanting Phytophthora infested avocado land presents a significant challenge as avocado trees are extremely sensitive to root rot during their first two years in the field. Under severe infection conditions all current commercial rootstocks will be severely damaged. Once in a vigorous growth state trees are less sensitive to the pathogen and they will, with appropriate management, be able to co-exist with Phytophthora for many years. A combination of management strategies is recommended to supplement the moderate resistance found in some rootstocks.

## Introduction

Young avocado trees are extremely sensitive to Phytophthora root rot, and inoculum left in old avocado orchards after trees are removed can severely damage a young avocado planting. The size of the pathogen population will initially be high and then will decline quite quickly. However, the pathogen will persist at a low population level for many years and increase rapidly when conditions are favourable (i.e. when soil moisture is at field capacity or full saturation and warm soil temperatures (24-28°C) prevail). We offer practical advice on how to integrate different components of a disease management strategy to reduce the impact of Phytophthora on young trees in avocado replant land. The fundamental strategy involves using healthy planting material with selected rootstocks in a soil with improved beneficial soil biology where conditions strongly favour root growth and plant development.

Fungicides are a vital component of the management strategy. Once in a vigorous growth stage the avocado trees are much less sensitive to Phytophthora root rot and, with appropriate management practices, should develop into productive trees.

## Resistant Rootstocks

The best method for controlling a Phytophthora root disease is to use a resistant rootstock. However, resistance in avocado rootstocks is difficult to find. This is because:

- (a) *Phytophthora cinnamomi* affects well over 1000 different host-plant species, and generally it is more difficult to find host resistance to pathogens which have a wide host range rather than a narrow host range.
- (b) The gene pool at centres of origin of avocado in Central America has not developed in the presence of *P. cinnamomi*. *P. cinnamomi* is thought to have originated in Asia. Thus, there has been no opportunity for resistance to develop over long periods of evolution and selection.

Although the gene pool in Australia is limited compared to Central America, the disease pressure on rootstocks here can be extremely high and there is merit in the continuing selection and evaluation of disease escape trees for resistance. *P. cinnamomi* has been present in Queensland since 1872 and avocados have been grown here since late in the 19th century. This gives ample opportunity for resistance to have developed in seedling populations as a result of pressure from the pathogen. In Australia and overseas, some rootstocks (e.g. Velvick, Merensky II, Duke 7) have been consistently ranked with a lower disease incidence when compared to other rootstocks, but under extreme disease pressure and in young trees, this resistance is likely to break down. Thus resistance is not absolute and the term tolerance is often used to define the ability of rootstocks to withstand infection. Some of the resistance identified in avocados is due to the restriction

of growth of Phytophthora in the roots (e.g. Duke 7); in others it is due to the ability of the rootstock to rapidly regenerate new feeder roots in the presence of the pathogen; i.e. the ability of a tree to recover from feeder root loss largely depends on its vigour.

It seems that some scion-rootstock combinations are not as physiologically compatible as others and thus the nutrient status and vigour of the roots may be greatly affected. This may explain why in our rootstock evaluation field studies, clonally propagated 'Hass' planted on its own roots (i.e. no graft union) appears to be one of the easiest plants to establish in heavily infested soils. However, the long-term performance of such rootstocks is yet to be determined.

## Cultural practices

In replant land reducing the soil inoculum level particularly at the planting site is a key element

in preventing a Phytophthora epidemic. It has been demonstrated that increased soil microbial activity will reduce the survival of *P. cinnamomi* chlamydospores and mycelium in soil and rotting root debris. Bare fallowing old avocado soil may also decrease the population of Phytophthora but it will also reduce the population of beneficial organisms. When the general level of antagonistic organisms is low, an explosive increase in the Phytophthora population may occur. This rate of increase can be extremely high when compared with the rate at which new avocado feeder roots are initiated and grow. Thus don't bare fallow but use cover crops such as a legume/sorghum combination for at least one year (preferably two) before planting to increase soil organic matter and improve the beneficial soil biology.

Avoid planting directly into sites where trees have been removed as there will be a high level of soil inoculum. To strongly increase root growth and make plants more tolerant to root pruning by *P. cinnamomi* make planting sites nutrient rich, high in organic matter and with high levels of beneficial soil microorganisms.

*P. cinnamomi* is inhibited by a range of organic materials (e.g.



Plate 1: The avocado replant problem – severely affected trees in foreground where disease pressure is high

## The Avocado Replant Problem continued

lucerne meal, cotton waste, wheat straw, chicken manure). Ammonia and volatile organic acids released by decomposing organic material kill *Phytophthora* and the residual organic matter stimulates beneficial soil microorganisms. Studies have found that chicken manure (fresh or composted) is more effective in suppressing *P. cinnamomi* than cow or sheep manure. Therefore:

- dig fresh or composted chicken manure plus green manure into the site six to eight months prior to planting. This will allow time for any salt present in the chicken manure to leach from the soil.
- incorporate gypsum into the planting site as this acts as a weak fungicide by reducing the size and number of sporangia produced by *P. cinnamomi*.
- layer organic matter (e.g. wheat straw, sorghum stubble) on the surface of the site and replenish at planting. This will increase the activity of beneficial organisms, the nutrient availability and the health of the top soil.
- use a balanced fertiliser program to maintain the correct nutritional status of plants to aid replacement of damaged roots. Phosphorus, calcium and boron are particularly important for root growth.
- remove fruit from young trees as they are a significant source of competition for resources. More energy will then be available for root growth.



Plate 2: Evaluating the field resistance of rootstocks in replant land

There is still no good field evidence that artificially introduced organisms (e.g. *Trichoderma* sp.) to the planting site will control *Phytophthora*. They may not survive nor provide additional benefit where there is already a large population of antagonistic microorganisms.

Soil solarisation has been found to be useful as a pre-plant treatment in the Canary Islands. It reduces but does not eliminate the pathogen but is effective when combined with other management strategies.

### Chemical Control

Fungicides should also be used in the integrated management program. Two fungicides, metalaxyl (Ridomil) and potassium phosphonate, have been found to be effective for the control of avocado root rot. At the planting site, dig in Ridomil granules prior to planting and repeat applications to the soil surface at 3 monthly intervals. Ridomil is highly water soluble, directly toxic to *P. cinnamomi* and readily absorbed by avocado roots. It will suppress populations of *Phytophthora* in the soil. If used for a prolonged period, Ridomil may become ineffective due to:

- resistance developing in the *P. cinnamomi* population
- or
- degradation by other microorganisms which reduce its persistence and effectiveness.

If biodegradation is a problem it can be addressed by injecting the EC formulation of Ridomil into the irrigation system. This will be effective

if the roots are concentrated around the mini-sprinklers. Most of the chemical will be taken up by the roots within one week and there will not be sufficient time for it to be degraded.

Drench nursery trees with potassium phosphonate prior to planting (5mL/litre of 20% potassium phosphonate). Then apply as monthly foliar sprays until trees are well established. Experiments are continuing using potassium phosphonate plus a bark penetrating compound as stem paints or sprays as an alternative method of application. Potassium phosphonate has only weak direct activity against *Phytophthora* (it causes some disruption to phosphorus metabolism in the pathogen resulting in fungistasis) and it does not suppress populations of *P. cinnamomi* in the soil. Its effectiveness is due mostly to its ability to enhance avocado defence systems.

### Nursery Trees

Control of root rot begins with the production of high quality, disease-free nursery trees on rootstocks with field resistance to root rot. Such trees are available from ANVAS nurseries (see page 23). Field resistance to *P. cinnamomi* root rot has been found in rootstocks such as Velvick, Merensky II and Duke 7. Other rootstocks are being evaluated in our research program.

### Conclusion

This paper provides practical advice on how to integrate several control methods to enable growers to establish avocado trees in replant land. Intensive care of young trees may be required for up to two years after planting.

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# Australian Avocados Promotions in full swing:

2007 marks the second year of our campaign which is based on the results of the consumer research carried out in 2005. The objective of the current campaign is to encourage occasional users to increase purchase frequency, and at a minimum maintain the purchase frequency of high users.

The strategic direction set for 2007–2008 continues to be focused heavily on versatility, demonstrated by recipe usage. Targeting the female grocery buyer aged 20-39 years. The promotion aims to produce new uses for avocados supported always by specific recipe ideas.

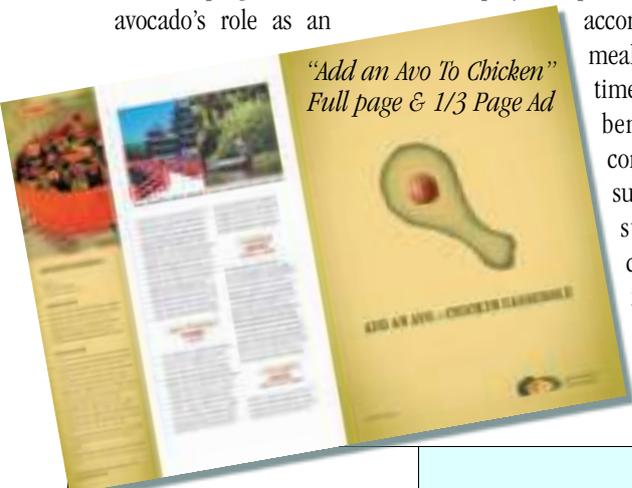
The campaign line, 'Add an Avo' plays perfectly to the avocado's role as an

accompaniment to meals. At the same time, the health benefits will continue to be supported with a supplementary campaign focused towards vitamins and mineral content. This



strategy delivers two key messages to the market: that avocados are both 'Versatile' and 'Good for You' supporting the overall positioning that avocados are amazing.

The current program is still underway, with the next phase beginning on 1 July 2007 is focused strongly on print media due to its ability to give detailed new use ideas, i.e. recipes. Life style and mass magazines in conjunction with parenting magazines are being utilized. You will find Australian avocado promotions in Woman's Day, New Idea, Cosmopolitan, Notebook, New Women, Who Weekly, Delicious, Super



MEDIA/MARKET	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER
<b>MASS/LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES</b>						
Woman's Day						
New Idea						
Cosmopolitan						
Notebook						
Who Weekly						
New Woman						
<b>FOOD MAGAZINES</b>						
Delicious						
Super Food Ideas						
Good Taste						
<b>WORD OF MOUTH + SAMPLING</b>						
Fitness First TV Network + Club Sampling						
Fernwood Magazine + Club Sampling						
PPC Mum's Group + Sampling						
<b>HEALTH, EXPECTANT &amp; MUMS K-U3</b>						
Mother & Baby						
Practical Parenting						
WW Aust Parents						
Pregnancy & Birth						
<b>TELEVISION</b>						
STV - Lifestyle/Lifestyle Food/Arena/W)						
Channel 10 - Ready, Steady, Cook						
Channel 7 - Good Chef/Bad Chef						
<b>ONLINE</b>						
Mass/Health/Lifestyle/Retail						



## Does the mandatory Horticulture code apply to your business?

A mandatory Horticulture Code, that becomes law on 14 May 2007, has been introduced by the Australian Government. The Code applies to all trade between growers and traders of horticulture produce with the exception of transactions between growers and retailers and growers and exporters. The Code prescribes the way business will be done, sets minimum terms of trade and requires written contracts. If you are a grower or trader (i.e. an agent or a merchant), trading in horticulture produce, it is important that you understand your rights and obligations under the Code.

To understand your rights and obligations under the Code you need to understand the key principles governing the Code. In short, the Code ensures that:

- traders develop and make available to growers their general written terms of trade
- grower and trader agreements are in writing and signed by the parties
- growers and traders address key issues in written agreements with each other
- merchants agree to a price with growers before or immediately on delivery of produce

- important information, particularly regarding prices obtained by agents for a grower's horticulture produce in wholesale markets is provided to growers
- a cost-effective and timely way to resolve disputes between growers and traders is available.

It is important to note that your rights and obligations under the Code are determined by the nature of your transaction rather than the label that each party uses in that transaction (i.e. whether you call yourself grower, packer, marketer or a wholesaler). The Code places different obligations on agents and merchants, making it important to understand the differences between the two. An agent is defined as a person who sells horticulture produce on behalf of a grower to a third person for a commission or fee. A merchant is defined as a person who buys horticulture produce from a grower to resell that produce. A merchant does not however include a person who exports or retails the produce.

### Transactions in which growers sell produce on behalf of other growers

In a situation where one grower is selling another grower's produce, in order to 'top-up' his own produce to meet an order from a wholesaler,

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*Does the mandatory Horticulture code apply to your business?  
continued*

the grower is acting as an agent for the other grower for the purposes of the Horticulture Code. In these circumstances, the Code requires the two parties to enter into a horticulture produce agreement before they trade. If such transactions occur on a regular basis the parties may wish to enter an agreement that provides for a number of transactions rather than an agreement for each transaction.

**Packing sheds**

The Horticulture Code does not contain any specific reference to packing houses or sheds, rather it focuses on the nature of the transactions that take place between growers and traders of horticulture produce – whether acting as either agents or merchants. Therefore, a transaction involving a packing house will be covered by the Horticulture Code only where the house acts as either:

- a merchant - purchasing and then on-selling a grower's horticulture produce or
- an agent - selling horticulture produce on behalf of a grower.

Where a packing shed purchases horticulture produce from a grower as a merchant, or where it sells produce on behalf of a grower as an agent the transaction will be covered by the Code.

However, if a packing shed is involved in a transaction where the produce is altered from its original state, for example by flavouring or cooking it, that transaction may not be covered by the Code because

the produce could be said to be processed.

**The role of the ACCC**

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (the ACCC) is responsible for compliance with the Trade Practices Act and the Horticulture Code. The ACCC achieves this by providing information on its website, through educational publications and presentations and where necessary, enforcement action.

The ACCC has been working with a wide range of industry associations to ensure that all industry participants will have an opportunity to access the information they need in order to comply with the Code. In particular, the ACCC has been assisting associations to educate their members regarding their rights and obligations under the Code.

For information about the Horticulture Code visit the ACCC website [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au) or call the ACCC Infocentre on 1300 302 502.



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## News from around the world

### US: Mexican avocados finally head to Florida, California

Mexican trucks laden with avocados headed north to the border on Friday, marking the final elimination of a decades-old U.S. ban on imports of a fruit that plays a central role in Mexican cuisine.

Hundreds of locals in the western town of Uruapan, Mexico, waved at two trucks carrying Hass avocados bound for California and Florida, which along with Hawaii were the last states to lift a ban put in place at the start of the 20th century, ostensibly to prevent plant disease.

The ban has been gradually lifted since 1997 when Mexican avocados, the base for guacamole dip, were first allowed into some states.

Mexico, which is a close trade partner of the United States under the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement, is the world's biggest exporter of avocados.

While Mexican producers were delighted at being able to export to the entire United States, Thursday's final lifting of the ban was too late to let Americans use Mexican avocados in guacamole popular during Super Bowl football game festivities on Sunday. Source: Reuters

### Mexico expects 10% increase of avocado exports

The 2005/2006 avocado season represented 200K MT of exports with a value of US\$ 400 million, with exports directed to the US (65%), Japan (15%), the European Union (7,5%), Canada (6,5%) and Central America (6%). In the new exporting season, the Mexican Secretary of Agriculture (Sagarpa) announces an anticipated increase of 20K MT to 220K MT with respect to the previous season.

This year new US markets like California, Florida and Hawaii will be opened for Mexican imports, which will allow for an 150K MT of US avocado sales according to Sagarpa. Recently, Mexico achieved market access to Chile, China and South Korea, and an additional increase of exports to the traditional EU markets like France, Spain and Germany is expected.

The region of Michoacán is the worldwide leader of production and exports of avocados with a total production acreage of 90,000 hectares, of which 20,000 hectares concern protected cultivation. Also the Michoacán avocado surpasses other competitors from Chile, the Dominican Republic and the US in taste, freshness and quality, according to the federal department of Agriculture from Michoacán. Source: Freshplaza

# Looking for an easier method for controlling Phytophthora?

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\* Quoted by Tony Whaley, Industry Consultant at the Australian and NZ Avocado Growers Conference 2001

News from around the world  
continued

### **Calavo Growers pick San Antonio for Avocado Ripening Center**

A California food-packaging and technology company has opened a new advanced ripening center in San Antonio that will allow the company to ship more fresh avocados nationwide.

Santa Paula, Calif.-based Calavo Growers Inc. has launched new Value Added Depots in the Alamo City as well as in Swedesboro, N.J. The local operation is located at 2001 S. Laredo St. on the city's South Side. It consists of 40,000 square feet of space and has 30 employees. These facilities, equipped with the company's ProRipeVIP technology, rely on acoustic firmness sensors to gauge the firmness and internal pressure of the avocado. This allows Calavo Growers to sell only the ripest avocados, according to Calavo CEO Lee E. Cole.

"The investment in new facilities and technology underscores Calavo's commitment to initiatives that advance our focused business agenda," he says. "We've long believed that ready-to-eat fruit will be a driver for higher consumption, as mainstream acceptance and usage grows and the Hispanic population, which regards avocados as a staple, continues to expand in the United States." Founded in 1924, Calavo Growers procures and markets fresh avocados and other perishable foods to distributors, produce wholesale companies, supermarkets and restaurants. It also manufactures and distributes processed avocado products. Source: San Antonio Biz Journals

### **Peru will export more than 4,000 tons of avocados to Europe**

As a part of its agricultural development program "Sierra Exportadora", Peru will export 4,140 tons of avocados (paltas) to Europe during the first seven months of 2007. Starting next week, containers filled with avocados produced in Peru's poverty stricken farming areas in the Andean highlands are shipped to international markets such as Spain, France and England.

The president of the program, Gastón Benza Pflucker, commented that the important thing is the promotional aspect. During the last couple of years, exports of Peruvian "Hass" avocados have increased by a remarkable 70 percent. Benza Pflucker emphasized that "this is the avocado's moment" and that the Verde Flor Company is coordinating production and shipping with 12 producer associations from the regions of Ayacucho and Huancavelica. Peru avocados have registered an annual production growth of 7.3% between 1999 and 2004. Production in 2006 reached 107,000 tons.

As in many other South American countries, avocado is called "palta" in Peru. Native varieties, oily black skinned selections of the Mexican race are referred to as "Topa Topa" and are found in the higher elevations where rainfall abounds and in irrigated areas along the coast. The jungles of the eastern Andes have tropical varieties similar in form and color to the familiar greenskin varieties similar to the West Indian race.

The Hass variety is planted in Peru for export purposes; although in the

# **Grower Member Application Form**

## **Avocados Australia Limited**

ACN 105 853 807

For Associate and Affiliate membership application forms please go to [www.avocado.org.au](http://www.avocado.org.au) or call **07 3391 2344**

### **Member Details**

Business name and/or trading name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ABN: \_\_\_\_\_

Key contacts: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred address (postal): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address of property (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Contact Details**

Business phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Corporate Structure**

How would you describe the nature of your operations (please circle)?

Individual	Partnership	Company	Trust
Lessee	Cooperative	Other (please specify)	

Please indicate the area of property that you crop for avocado production (please circle)

0.5 - 5 ha	6-19 ha	20-49 ha	50-99 ha
100-149 ha	150-199 ha	200-499 ha	500 ha+

### **Special Interests**

Please tick your main areas of interest from any of the following:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer information                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Production management   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental management/ sustainability | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Assurance       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organic farming systems                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology/innovations  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water management                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field days                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Supply chain management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pest management                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Key political issues    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food safety                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)  |

### Payment Options

Grower Membership of Avocados Australia is \$110 pa (including GST). You can pay your membership by cheque or credit card. To pay your membership fee, please choose one of the following options:

Cheque

Please find enclosed a cheque for \$110.00 made payable to Avocados Australia Ltd.

Please charge \$110.00 to my credit card. Details are listed below.

Credit card (please circle):

Bankcard    MasterCard    Visa

Credit card number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on credit card: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Privacy Options

Avocados Australia Ltd adheres to privacy rules with respect to the way we collect, use, secure and disclose personal information. Please indicate below (tick) if you do not wish to receive additional information.

I do **not** give Avocados Australia Ltd permission to allow my postal contact details to be accessed by other organisations other than Avocados Australia Ltd which offer beneficial products and services.

**•NB - No personal details other than name and postal address will be given out under any circumstances.**

Once you have completed this form please place it in an envelope addressed to:

**Avocados Australia  
Reply Paid 663  
Stones Corner Qld 4120**

(no stamp required within Australia):

For more information or assistance please go to [www.avocado.org.au](http://www.avocado.org.au) or call on **07 3391 2344**



### News from Around the World continued

recent past it was planted as a backyard variety. In 1993 there were only 30 commercial hectares (75 acres) in Peru. In 2003, there were 2200 hectares (5500 acres). The Peruvian avocado industry is organized under the umbrella of ProHass ([www.prohass.com.pe](http://www.prohass.com.pe)) with the goal to advance the local avocado industry and the marketing of quality Peruvian Hass avocados.

### Avocado exports to the EU dominated by Israel and South American countries

The Association of Young Farmers (ASAJA) from Malaga (Spain) explained that the Spanish exports of avocado suffer a decrease due to the oversupply from Israel and South American countries. The main exporting countries: Mexico, Chile, some South African countries and Israel export an avocado with an outstanding size and stable ripening process to the EU.

Benjamin Faulí, technician of the ASAJA argues that the rivalry with third producers is “hard” but the Spanish production has an advantage with regard to the harvest period which is continues from December to May. The Spanish production of the Hass variety for this campaign is estimated at 37,000 tons distributed in areas of Malaga, between 3 and 4 hectares. The Hass variety is black and has a smaller size than varieties from competitors. Therefore, ASAJA asks to governmental agencies for more promotion in Spain and the whole Europe. Some farmers from the region are changing their traditional production with subtropical production as avocados and mangos with the hope to obtain better benefits.

The main importing country of avocados in the EU is France who absorbs more than third quarters of the whole production. Other importing countries are Germany, The Netherlands and the UK.



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News from Around the World  
continued

**Damage to California avocados  
nearing 30%**

Damage to the California avocado crop during the week-long January freeze that affected most growing areas now appears to be approaching 30 percent, according to industry sources.

Any shortfalls are expected to be made up, to a great extent if not entirely, by fruit from Mexico and Chile. Suppliers are quick to reassure buyers that there will be adequate supplies of fruit available for Super Bowl and other promotions, and in general to meet market demands throughout the season. Additionally, they said that there would be sufficient California fruit available for any customers who have a preference for California fruit.

As of Jan. 14 after the initial nights of the cold spell, the California Avocado Commission said that "early estimates suggest that losses could reach 10 to 20 percent" of the projected 400 million-pound crop. But the freeze continued for two or three successive nights, and the damage toll climbed.

At a commission meeting Jan. 18, board members and growers cited anecdotally a wide range of damage estimates from all the state's growing regions, varying according to location, elevation and terrain. But the consensus, admittedly unscientific, seemed to be that the losses were more in the range of 20-30 percent industry wide.

On Wednesday, Jan. 24, Tom Bellamore, senior vice president and

corporate counsel for the commission, told The Produce News, "We've been talking to a lot of people out in the field. We are hearing today and yesterday ... as people get out and look more [at the avocado groves] that [the crop loss] is probably 25 to 30 percent and leaning towards 30 percent industry wide. It is probably not higher than 30."

Still, not everyone is convinced that the damage will prove to be quite that extensive, Mr. Bellamore said. At least two industry veterans who have seen several freezes during the course of their careers believe that the final number could prove to be closer to 20 percent, and they "could well be right," Mr. Bellamore said. But so far, "as people get out and look, and more people report in and we have conversations," the consensus on the percentage of loss for the industry "hasn't fallen; in fact, it has drifted up slightly." Source: The Produce News



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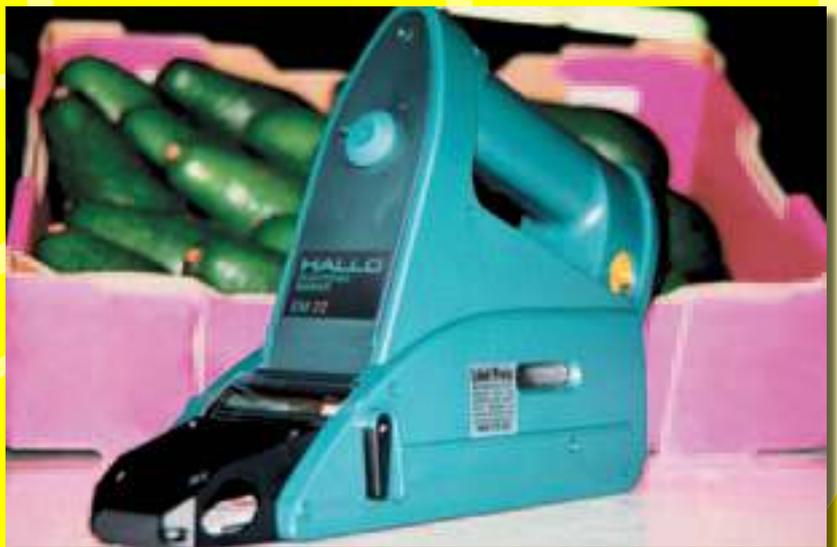
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