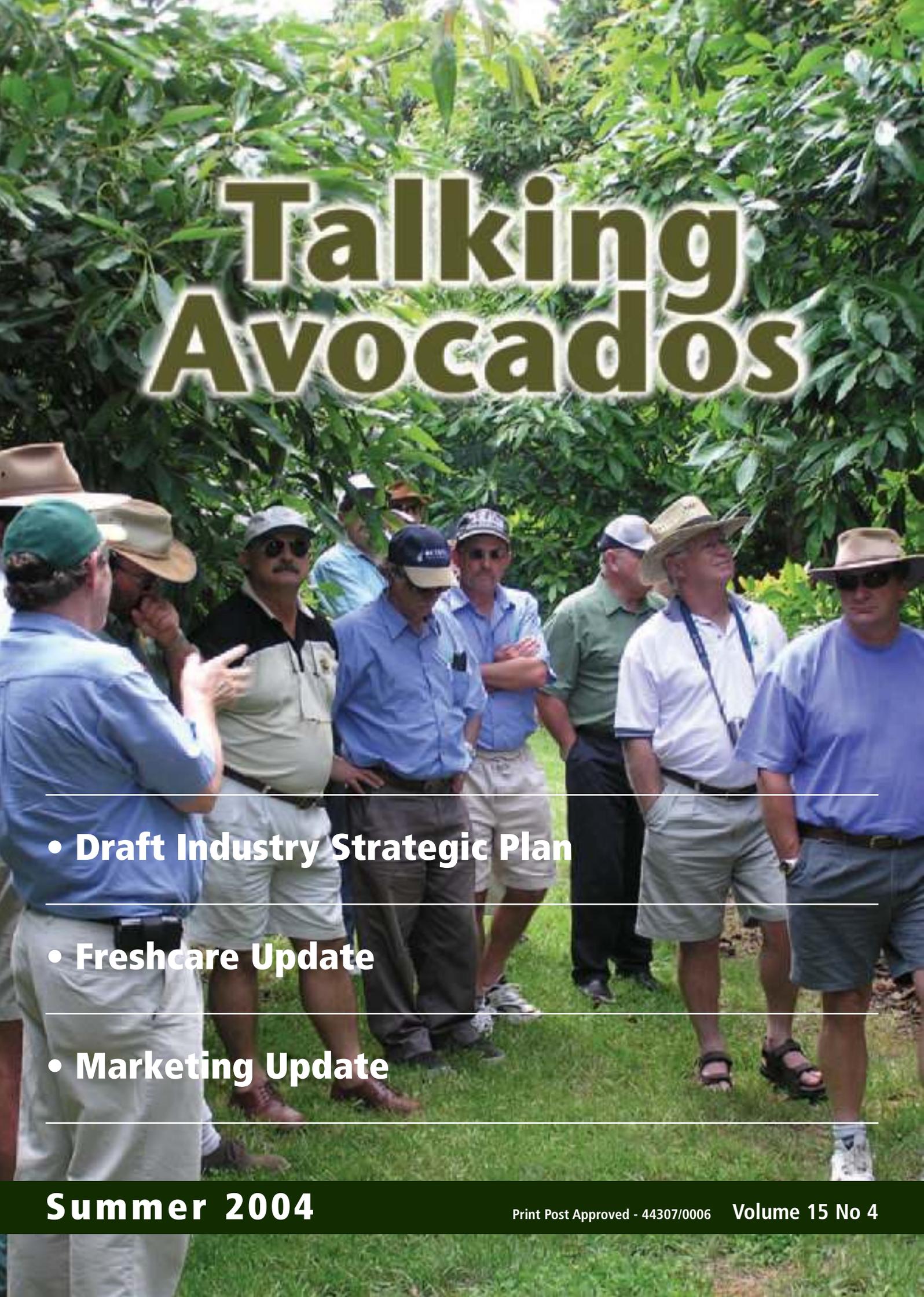


# Talking Avocados

- 
- **Draft Industry Strategic Plan**
  - **Freshcare Update**
  - **Marketing Update**

**Summer 2004**

Print Post Approved - 44307/0006

**Volume 15 No 4**





# Industry Matters

By Antony Allen

## HAL Award winners announced

HAL presented the 2004 Young Leader Award at an industry dinner held in conjunction with the HAL annual general meeting in Sydney.

Young Leader candidates must be under 35 and have demonstrated leadership in any discipline relating to horticulture. Mr Dring has shown strong commitment to progressing his industry, serving on committees for the Citrus Growers of SA and the SA Avocado Growers Association. Between 2001 and 2004 he served as a member of the HAL citrus industry advisory committee (IAC).

Mr Dring started work with Yandilla Park Ltd in 1996 and is today the company's technical manager for horticulture managing 1000 hectares of citrus, winegrapes and avocados in the Riverland and Sunraysia. In addition to this Ben provides commercial agronomic services to growers.

Mr Dring said he was surprised to have been given the Young Leader Award as he was "just doing his job".

"Being involved in industry organisations gave me a good understanding of the citrus and avocado industries and I want to see these industries succeed and move forward with change," he said.



## Australian Government Industry Partnership Program

The Australian Government is providing Tropical fruit industries up to \$750,000 to assist these industries build their capacity to improve their future opportunities. The Industry Partnerships Program steering committee met this week and has agreed on the outline of the projects to be funded and the process used to manage the program. The 4 key project areas include consumer research and market trends (domestic and export); industry organisational capacity, including the provision for assisting industry representatives to undertake skills development (such

as leadership courses, and other programs); Information network development; and international benchmarking to enable each tropical fruit industry to ascertain how it measures against other competitors.

## Data Protection

As of 1 January 2005 the APVMA will be implementing the new provisions relating to data protection as provided by the US Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act 2004 (Cth). These changes will effect how applications are made to the APVMA and how the APVMA uses data in its possession, including increasing the transparency of what information is used in making regulatory decisions. A more detailed explanation of the changes is available by reading "The New Data Protection Provisions and the Agvet Chemical Industry". For more information: [www.apvma.gov.au/registration/data\\_protection.shtml](http://www.apvma.gov.au/registration/data_protection.shtml)



## Strategic Planning

The 2005-2010 Strategic Planning Process is well underway. In the last edition of Talking Avocados we sort your input into. Now we have a Draft Strategic Plan for you to consider and comment on, please read through and consider the Draft Plan on page 14. Any comments should be sent to Fax: 07 3391 2388 or [a.allen@avocado.org.au](mailto:a.allen@avocado.org.au)

## 2005 Produce Executive Program

The 3rd annual Produce Executive Program is being held from 23 - 29 May 2005. The purpose of the annual horticulture program is to increase knowledge and skills of managers/entrepreneurs in the horticulture industry. The course is designed to examine changes in industry across the entire supply chain. International and domestic speakers with expertise in production, retail and marketing will provide valuable input into the course.

Horticulture Australia supports the program which is run by Professor John Morris and out of Monash University (Mt Eliza Business School).

For more information on your opportunity to participate, costs and other details please contact Monash University on phone 03 9904 4172, or email: [seminar\\_manager@yaboo.com](mailto:seminar_manager@yaboo.com)

## Biosecurity Australia becomes a Prescribed Agency

On 2 December, The Hon. Minister Warren Truss announced that Biosecurity Australia has been established as an independent agency within the agriculture, fisheries and forestry portfolio. Minister Truss stated "Establishing Biosecurity Australia as a prescribed agency has further boosted the independence of its operations and ensured appropriate financial autonomy. This change will further reassure stakeholders of Biosecurity Australia's capacity to ensure that quarantine policy will always be based on sound science."

Industry Matters  
continued

**Chemical Review Update**

The APVMA conducts comprehensive reviews of registered agricultural and veterinary chemicals to ensure those chemicals meet current standards of registration and do not pose unacceptable risks to people, the environment or trade.

Reassessment of older registered chemicals is important because regulatory standards have become more stringent over the years as more scientific data relating to the possible effects and longer term impacts of chemicals have become available. Older chemicals must, therefore, be re-evaluated to ensure they satisfy current registration standards of safety and performance.

For more information  
[www.apvma.gov.au/chemrev/chemrev2.shtml](http://www.apvma.gov.au/chemrev/chemrev2.shtml)

The APVMA is currently reviewing the following chemicals:

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1000            | endosulfan              |
| EAD             | benazolin               |
| CCA             | fenitrothion            |
| atrazine        | fenitrothion            |
| azinphos methyl | florfenidol             |
| benzoyl         | macrolide antibiotics   |
| carbaryl        | maldison (malathion)    |
| carbofendithion | methidathion            |
| chlorfenvinphos | methamidophos           |
| chlorpyrifos    | methidathion            |
| diazinon        | methidathion            |
| dichlorvos      | methidathion            |
| dimethoate      | paraquat                |
| dimethofosfate  | parathion methyl        |
| diquat          | sheep ectoparasiticides |
| disulfoton      | vinylpyridin            |

**Draft Cost Recovery Document Released**

Senator the Honorary Richard Colbeck, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has released a revised Draft Cost Recovery Impact Statement (CRIS) that outlines the proposed new fee structure for the APVMA. The revised draft CRIS has been developed in response to comments received on the previous draft and from the workshop on cost recovery held in August 2004. The Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry are managing the consultation process on the revised CRIS. Comments should be sent to [apvmacostrecovery@daff.gov.au](mailto:apvmacostrecovery@daff.gov.au) or to: Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals - Cost Recovery Framework Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health, Australian Government, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601.

The draft Cost Recovery Impact Statement can be accessed through the latest news section of the APVMA website at [www.apvma.gov.au](http://www.apvma.gov.au) or the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website at [www.daff.gov.au](http://www.daff.gov.au)



**Joint Australia-New Zealand Board Meeting**

On 2 December the Boards of the Australian and New Zealand avocado growers associations met in Toowoomba for a joint meeting. Many issues were discussed at the meeting such as information sharing the joint conference, crop estimation, packaging and possible promotion funding. While both Boards were in Brisbane we visited to a number of Coles and Woolworths stores, meeting the Managers and Produce Managers of the stores. We also met with the new Woolworths National Business Manager Produce (avocados) Greg Dhnaram. After the joint Board meeting we visited a number of orchards in the Blackbutt/Crows Nest area. Together we are developing a greater understanding of how we might solve the issues that affect growers on both sides of the Tasman.

*Photos show Board members investigating New Zealand fruit in Coles and Woolworths Supermarkets, Brisbane*

**One behalf of our small staff and the Board of Avocados Australia I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Successful 2005**  
**Antony.**

# Australian Roundup

## Tri-State Report

By Colin Fechner, AAL Director for the Tri-State Growing Area.

Most growers are now well into their harvest. The majority of Hass will be off by the end of the year with Reed and some Gwen still to be harvested. The crop has been good, about what was expected generally.

Up until late November growers were happy with the fruit set for this next season, but after a few hot days in late November growers are struggling to see any Hass. Other varieties don't appear to be as badly affected. It is still too early to have an accurate feel for next season.

## North New South Wales Report

By Peter Molenaar,  
AAL Director for the North New South Wales Growing Area.

The 2004 season has been highlighted by some harsh weather. The North Coast experienced the driest 5 month period between May and September, since recordings commenced in the 1880s.

Recordings were 80mm for the Tweed, 105mm for the Brunswick and 45mm for parts of the Richmond. These figures represent approximately 20% of average rainfall for this 5 month period. The good news is that the drought broke in the third week in October and the weather has generally been favourable since then.

Weather conditions had a major bearing on our 2004 crop and it would

appear that Mother Nature has delivered a mixed bag for 2005. Some growers are forecasting record high crops while others are forecasting a record low. Most appear to have inconsistent sets. The most common occurrence is where the early flowering trees have a good set and later flowering trees have little to zero crop. Hopefully we can work out what caused this situation. I suspect the weather to be responsible.

A successful Field Day was held at Barry and Vicki Kuhnell's property at Kyogle in late November. Simon Newett guided us through the updated Avoman system and John Dirou delivered a talk on management of Phytophthora. Growers were very impressed with the presentations and the farm walk. Many thanks to all for their involvement.

The NSW Avocado Growers Association is currently trying to form a North Coast Branch within NSW Farmers, solely for Avocado Growers. We require 20 financial members of NSW Farmers to make this possible, but are still short of numbers. If you are contemplating joining then ring Michael Burt on 0428 228 988 for more details.

Best Wishes to all for 2005.

## Central New South Wales Report

By Chris Nelson,  
AAL Director for the Central New South Wales Growing Area.

With most areas finished for the season, the summer provides time to concentrate on next year's crop, which in most areas is an improvement on the last. Recent storms have given some relief for the trees, but dam storages are still low. Further heavy falls are required to ensure a good irrigation supply for the summer months.

The occurrence of anthracnose appears to have been greater in the 2004 crop, and many growers are taking the opportunity to reassess their crop protection strategies for the coming season.

At our October meeting, John Temperley from Farmsafe provided us with plenty to think about and even more to do, with the introduction of Farm Safety Plans required for all growers. John provided growers with Safety Checklists for identifying all hazards to health and safety as well as templates for the induction of workers and visitors, and an example Farm Safety Plan. Those who took advantage of John's advice will have a clearer outline for their own safety plan.

A round of Freshcare courses have also just been completed in our area. This is an important course for growers to complete as it is the minimum level of Quality Assurance required of growers in order to remain competitive in the domestic market.

Our branch has now been successfully accepted by the NSW Farmers Association board, and is now known as the "Mid North Coast Avocado Growers" branch of the NSW Farmers Association. Growers can join by contacting NSW Farmers on 1300 794 000.

Growers enjoyed a very relaxing Christmas gathering at Cassegrain's winery on Saturday, 18 December.

All the best for 2005.



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*Australian Roundup  
continued*

**Central Queensland Report**

*By Lachlan Donovan,  
AAL Director for the Central Queensland Growing Area.*

At this point in time the 2005 season is looking very promising, but more so for the Hass than the Shepard crops. Hass fruit have set and are sizing up well. The weather has been kind to us so far and everything is on track for this to be possibly our largest Hass harvest. The Shepard crop is in a different position. It will be another year similar to last year where overall it looks like we will have a pretty average crop.

New Zealand is not having a big crop this year and is not holding Hass too long into the Shepard harvest period. This along with the upcoming North Queensland Shepard crop being average means the money could be along similar lines to last season. However, please be warned that the whole avocado market can be destroyed if growers are tempted to put immature fruit on the market in an attempt to chase the big dollars. It doesn't take much fruit to cause this kind of market destruction.

Water has always been a concern in the Bundaberg/Childers area. With the construction of Paradise Dam steaming ahead and the probability of being able to use water out of this facility in the next couple of years all is looking very positive for the long term production of avocados in this region. Where this fruit will be going to in five years time, whether it be domestic, export or processing, is anyone's guess and one that we should all be seriously thinking about.

**North Queensland Report**

*By Jim Kochi, AAL Director for the North Queensland Growing Area.*

The North Queensland region is now experiencing its fruit drop with Shepard and the Hass will soon follow. Some lucky members will actually have a fruit drop because they have had a decent set but many growers will still be looking for the shy fruit. The Shepard crop will be slightly less than or equal to last year, approximately 5-600,000 trays. The Hass crop is more predictable and will be similar to last year. We have had a long dry spell with some very hot days at the Mareeba end and this has tested out the irrigation programmes. Some eastern showers have started to come over the ranges so we look forward to some relief from the dry spell. Our next hurdles will be the late November hail storms and the forecasted cyclones in summer.

The impending changes to the carton design for Woolworths and other chain stores have not been finalised yet and it is hoped that the Shepard crop which starts in February will be supplied in the standard Open P84 or similar carton.

The Northern Avocado Growers Cooperative Association Ltd (known as Shepard Australia) had its AGM recently and the new board comprises Jim Kochi as Chairman, Daniel Vedelago as Vice Chairman and Eric Battistin, Sam Collins and Dennis Cazzola as board members with specific portfolio duties.

The Atherton Tablelands Avocado Growers Association annual dinner

will be held on Saturday, 11 December and we will all be looking forward to swapping avocado gossip and listening to Dr John Leonardi who hopefully will explain to us where we went wrong with canopy management this year.

The pressure is now on for all of us to have our Quality Assurance programs in place because without a QA program your access to markets is severely limited. I suggest all growers have at a minimum "Freshcare" in Queensland. Growers who supply the chain stores will know that they will require a higher standard of QA.

The North Queensland growers wish all the other districts all the best for the festive season and for the New Year. We hope the season is kind to you.

**South Queensland Report**

*By Rod Dalton, AAL Director for the South Queensland Growing Area.*

I mentioned in this column last issue that a warm moist spring would be needed for a good fruit set, but this did not eventuate in time for most growers. Thus many orchards have a light to poor crop set for next year. A period of hot and very dry weather as trees were flowering, in addition to it being an "off year" in many orchards, meant fruit set was poor on a light flowering. On some of the blocks I have seen recently this will be a good opportunity to undertake some serious canopy management.



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## Talking Avocados

### Australian Roundup continued

The AAL and NZAGA Boards visited a number of orchards in the area recently. The Kiwis certainly went away with a better appreciation of the challenges of avocado production in Australia and generally agreed they get it pretty easy in NZ. Although with the prices some of their orchards are being sold for, I doubt that the returns on investment as a farm will be positive.

### Sunshine Coast Report

By Henry Kwaczynski,  
AAL Director for the Sunshine Coast Growing Area.

As the Sunshine Coast avocado season comes to an end for this year, we again reflect on the year that has passed. I guess it could be summed up thus:

- Reasonable return for fruit
- Lower than usual crop sizes
- The start up of a number of avocado oil producing companies, giving an outlet for fruit that is not of market quality
- Relatively dry period followed by good rains in the latter part of the year – climate is always a challenge in the horticulture industry

This quarter has highlighted yet again the trend of the reducing number of avocado orchards in this region, giving way to 'tile farming'. A number of orchards have been sold and others are on the market – still others are awaiting decisions on rezoning applications

with the local council. There was an instance recently where a small orchard was subdivided into three residential blocks – two sold for \$700,000.00 each and one for \$500,000.00! It is hard for horticulture to compete with these very buoyant real estate prices.

Recently we have seen the end of an era – the Sunshine Coast Tropical Fruits Association Inc has ceased operation after 22 years (1982 – 2004). The final farewell function was held on Wednesday, 24 November 2004. This change appears to be symptomatic of drastic reduction in horticulture activities in this region, as interest in such bodies appears to be waning. Sunshine Coast Avocado Growers' Association (SCAGA) is perhaps the only commodity based association still functioning here.

On the export scene, AAL is pursuing the rather elusive entry into the USA. The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with US seems to have been interpreted in many different ways, and it has so far not expedited the export of our avocados into that market. However, we are not giving up and every effort is being made by AAL to progress this issue to a satisfactory conclusion. You will be able to read a full report on the recent visit to the Produce Marketing Association and US avocado peak body (Californian Avocado Commission) in the Autumn edition of journal.

I wish all of you a very happy Christmas and joyful 2005.

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# What's on in 2005

## FEBRUARY

- 10: AAL Varieties Committee Meeting. Brisbane.
- 10-12: FRUIT LOGISTICA. Berlin, GERMANY  
*www.fruitlogistica.com*
- 22: AAL Marketing Committee Meeting. Brisbane.
- 23: AAL R&D Committee Tele Conference.

## MARCH

- 1-2: Outlook 2005 - ABARE. Canberra, AUSTRALIA.  
*www.abare.gov.au*
- 22: Avocados Australia Board Meeting. Brisbane.
- 23: Avocado Industry Advisory Committee Meeting. Brisbane.

## MAY

- 10-13: HOFEX 2005. Wanchai, HONG KONG.  
*www.hofex.com*

## JULY

- 10: Foodpro 2005. Sydney, AUSTRALIA.  
*www.foodproexb.com/index.htm*

## AUGUST

- 23: AAL Researchers Workshop. Brisbane.
- 24: AAL R&D Committee Meeting. Brisbane.
- 30: AAL Marketing Committee Tele Conference.

## SEPTEMBER

- 19: Avocados Australia Board Meeting.  
Tauranga, NEW ZEALAND.
- 20-22: Australia/New Zealand Joint Avocado Conference.  
Tauranga, NEW ZEALAND.
- 21: Avocado Annual Levy Payers Meeting.  
Tauranga, NEW ZEALAND.
- 23: Avocados Australia Board Meeting.  
Tauranga, NEW ZEALAND.
- 23: Avocado Industry Advisory Committee Meeting.  
Tauranga, NEW ZEALAND.

## NOVEMBER

- 5 - 8: PMA Fresh Summit International  
Convention & Exposition.  
Atlanta, Georgia, USA [www.pma.com](http://www.pma.com)

If you have any local grower meetings, field days or events that you would like to include in "What's on in 2005", please contact us with the details.

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## News from around the world.....

### Mexican-imported avocados could hurt U.S. farmers

There's a potential threat to the food supply, and a devastating blow to American farmers.

The Department of Agriculture announced this week it would accept more Mexican imports of avocados. That could hurt American avocado farmers and bring pests into the United States, which might threaten our food supply.

It's a bitter defeat for American avocado growers. Except for two border cities, Mexico doesn't allow U.S. avocados into its market.

"I think our growers were extremely disappointed that this day ever arrived. California growers have been seeking access to Mexico since 1998, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture has done everything possible to facilitate trade in the opposite direction," Thomas Bellmore of the California Avocado Commission said.

American consumers could soon enjoy lower avocado prices, but that will hurt American growers who have much higher costs.

Farmers also say they face the threat of imported pests. That danger kept Mexican avocados out of the U.S. market for eight decades until 1997, when the U.S. allowed imports to 31 non-avocado growing states during winter months, to keep pests from spreading.

U.S. farmers say the Mexican imports will provide a cheaper product and bring foreign pests.

This week's ruling will allow Mexican avocados year-round in every state except California, Florida and Hawaii. And those barriers will be lifted in 2007.

The USDA admits some pests are likely to be imported along with Mexican avocados, but said there's little scientific likelihood they'll infect U.S. groves.

However, the issue has been discussed at the highest levels of both governments, including between President Bush and Mexican President Vicente Fox.

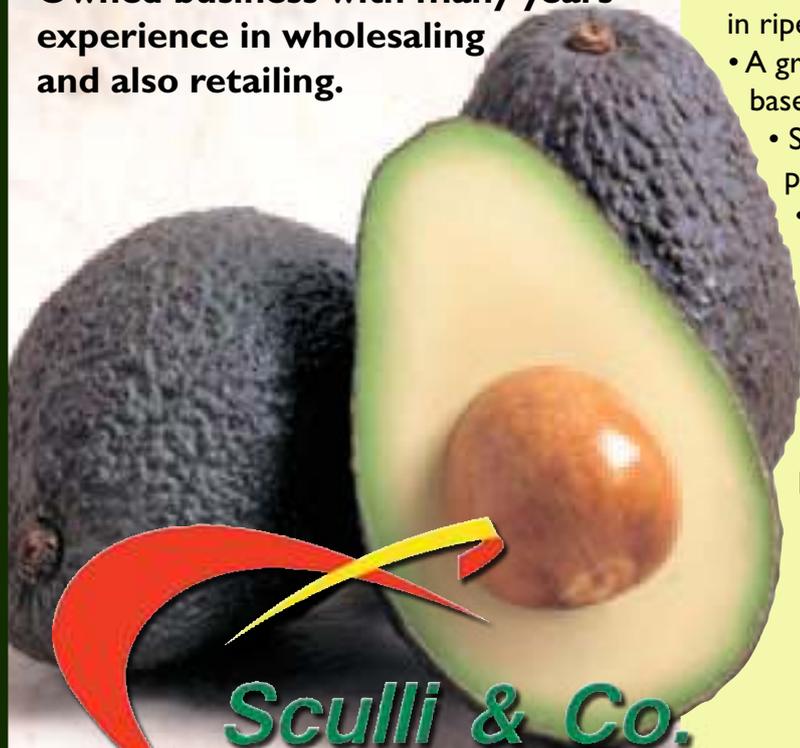
"I think it's very important for the United States to hold the Mexican government's feet to the fire for them to address this issue equally on a science-based premise, and therefore allow for the significant volume of two way trade that could occur,"

Jon Huenemann, a former assistant U.S trade representative, said.

The USDA cited ongoing litigation would not agree to an interview on the record. In 2001, the California Avocado Commission filed a lawsuit that seeks more scientific proof that Mexican avocados won't harm U.S. crops. A decision could come at anytime.

By: Casey Wian, CNN, 05/12/2004

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News from around the world...  
continued

### TV Show Boosts Japanese Avocado Sales

In the summer of 2003, a popular Japanese television health and lifestyle programme, Aruaru Dai Jiten, aired a segment that extolled the nutritional virtues of fresh avocados. Literally overnight, supermarkets were sold out of their avocado inventories and importers began scrambling to find additional supplies for orders they had no hope of immediately filling. So intense was the demand that, in some instances, avocados had to be flown in from Mexico at tremendous expense. And the impact on Japanese avocado consumption is still being felt a year later.

“Because of that programme, the base demand in Japan for avocados went to a whole new level,” said Hiroaki Don Okazoe of Japanese importer IPM Nishimoto. “For two months the demand was huge. We’ve kept importing 50 per cent more avocados since.” Mr Okazoe estimated that the net effect of the Aruaru programme increased avocado consumption Japan by 20 percent.

Statistics seem to bear this out. According to data derived from the Mexican avocado industry, imports of avocados increased by 166 per cent in 2003 from the previous year. Mexico has been the primary supplier of fresh avocados to Japan in the last decade, thanks to the high price of California’s production. Calavo Growers, now exclusively represented by IPM Nishimoto in Japan, has had a well-established export programme for Mexican-grown fruit for nearly two decades and currently is the market-share leader with an estimated 25 per cent.

“Our exports to Japan have essentially doubled since last year,” said Steve Hayworth, Calavo’s international sales manager.

Nishimoto’s Mr Okazoe said that the Japanese have traditionally enjoyed avocados in the thinly sliced sashimi style with soy sauce, or as the essential ingredient in the famous California roll. Lately, however, there has been a new spin on avocado consumption thanks to MOS-Burger – an up-scale Japanese hamburger chain.

In August of 2003, just as the avocado demand in Japan was exploding, MOS-Burger introduced the “Takumi” burger featuring fresh sliced avocados on top of a generous beef patty. Not an inexpensive item, the Takumi burgers sell for approximately US\$8 each, compared with the more famous Big Mac, which costs about US\$2. According to a MOS Burger spokesman, each outlet makes a limited number of Takumi’s daily and they always sell out. Evidently, the avocado and hamburger work well with the Japanese palate as MOS burger intends to make the Takumi a permanent item on its menu.

*Asiafruit Magazine – November/December 2004*

### Sobering View of Avocado Future

“Messy” in the short term then settling down, is the gut feeling of experienced exporter Alistair Young on future marketing of New Zealand avocados in the US – that’s providing we can raise consumption.

Alistair recently joined with Hugh Moore, chairman of the Avocado Industry Council and Avocado Growers Association, to give Katikati Fruit growers a candid talk – Market Outlook without the Hype. They

saw some encouraging signs but also sobering ones – like the fact that Chile, which already has 16 times the production of New Zealand, plans to plant another 1.75 million trees in 2004-2005 and can supply fruit from July – April.

“Chile has very sophisticated systems, big investors and professional growers and their production costs are about half of ours,” Alistair said. “They are now knocking on the door of the Australian market and if they can get their fruit declared free of bugs, they’ll be here in New Zealand.”

Mexico, which produced 168 million trays last season, can supply fruit year round and has also applied for entry to the Australian market. But Alistair believes Mexico is less of a threat to New Zealand, needing a large chunk of its production for home consumption and with the average age of its trees being 18-20 years.

“The prospects for Japan however are exciting – this is a new opportunity which could be worth a million trays to New Zealand over the next few years. Returns are moderate compared to Australia but it could be a good stable market for us. Chile is already quoting there but we have the advantage in that we can get our fruit to Japan twice as quickly as they can.”

### Export Groupings the Way to Go in the USA

Though the current exchange rate makes exporting to the US unprofitable, long term Alistair sees that market as critical for New Zealand and he believes export groupings will be the way to go.

“There is still huge scope to grow the market there and my gut feeling is that this is just a settling down phase. There’s been a lot of publicity in America recently about the obesity of its population and the need to eat healthy – California’s fast food chains are now pumping out salads and that’s a good sign. Governments internationally are picking up on the principle of 5-plus fruit and veggies a day.”

The biggest surprise for him in the US had been their slowness to pick

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## Talking Avocados

News from around the world...  
continued

up on ripe-fruit marketing of avocados. This had only really happened in the last 18 months but should have a good flow-on effect.

Both Alistair and Hugh said the declining volume of the New Zealand export crop since 2001 had caused serious problems and this was not helped by the decision of some large growers to sell their fruit on the local market instead.

“New Zealand must grow the Australian market by 400 percent in the next four years or we are in big trouble. West Australia is our main threat over there and it produces in the same time slot. We need a top marketing effort or they will compress us, but we can't do it unless growers give us the volume of fruit we need.”

Hugh Moore agreed it was critical for growers to ramp up the volume and keep export doors open – he had no worries about over-production.

### Production Per Hectare a Key Factor

“We won't survive as an industry unless we get over that eight tonnes per hectare mark – 15 tonnes should be the aim. The increase when it happens won't come gently – older trees will come back into production with a vengeance and will have more impact than the new plantings. This three year downturn in production has been a climate situation and I believe dryness has had a serious impact on those older trees.”

Figures now available showed it was a myth that the far North could

out-produce the Bay of Plenty per hectare. Avocados were harder to grow in the North, growers there were running out of suitable land and land values had tripled. But the fact they had to irrigate their orchards to survive might be the reason their cropping had been more consistent.

Hugh was adamant that growers must keep up their copper sprays to combat fruit rots and fungi.

### IMPORTANCE OF COPPER

“There is a problem with the resilience of our fruit if sales slow down – we are getting away with it now while fruit is in short supply but this is just a bit of an unnatural bubble. The industry is now starting to get two years of good research data that backs up the importance of copper. Growers need have no concern about copper build-up in the soil and we can deal with any residue at packing – my advice is to get those sprays on, don't miss out in June and don't forget that leafroller could be our Achilles heel in all markets.”

*Orchardist: November 2004 – Journal of the New Zealand Fruitgrowers Federation.*



**New Model with lots of improved features**

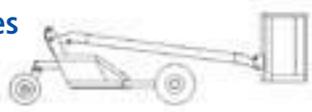
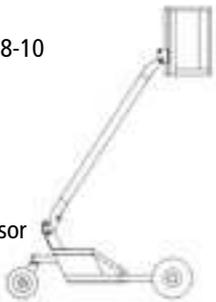
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# Marketing Program Update

Dec 2004

By Rogaya Alkaff, Rogaya is a member of the Horticulture Australia Professional Services team.

## Marketing Campaign Continues to Drive Consumers to 'Ave an Avo Today'

The Australian Avocados 'Ave and Avo Today' campaign continued to reinforce and build on the message that Avocados are an every day purchase, to be consumed and enjoyed regularly. This strategic message was developed to counteract findings from research that showed Avocados were perceived as a luxury item and an occasional purchase. The key components of the campaign included a television campaign in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide, in-store point-of-sale, a national public relations campaign and targeted magazine campaigns.

### Television

Television was the key driver of increased awareness during the Australian Avocados 'Ave an Avo Today 2003/2004' campaign. An impressive seven million people (all people aged 13 and over) viewed the Australian Avocados 'Ave and Avo Today' television campaign during 2003/2004. The television campaign targeted women 25 to 54 years of age with over two million viewers from this target market watching and potentially being influenced by the commercial.

Extensive media data and analysis meant specific programs and specific timeframes were chosen so that the main target market was



reached the maximum amount of times. The Australian Avocado 'Ave and Avo Today' commercial appeared in program genres including reality TV, drama, comedy and current affairs. Programs featuring the commercial included Today Tonight, Renovation Rescue, Friends and All Saints. These programs were chosen due to the high percentage of the 25 to 54 female target market watching.

Close monitoring of the campaign ensured all planned reach and frequency estimates were met and an additional bonus schedule to the value of \$33,703 was negotiated with the stations to boost the overall campaign impact. 15-second and 30-second television commercials were shown on Channel Nine and Channel Seven in four markets including Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide. As the largest market, Sydney received two bursts of activity.

### Public Relations

This year's successful public relations 'Eat Globally... Think Locally' campaign continued to drive the 'Ave and Avo Today' message home through print media. The media embraced the campaign wholeheartedly with articles appearing in publications such as Better Homes and Gardens, Women's Day, That's Life and Good Medicine.

The media relations campaign continued to educate consumers that Australian Avocados can be enjoyed in a wide variety of international dishes that are easy and simple to make, and hence 'eat globally' but with local produce. The international theme was of interest with the thoughts of many media focused on the international stage especially with the currency of the Olympics at the time.

## ANVASACCREDITEDNURSERIES

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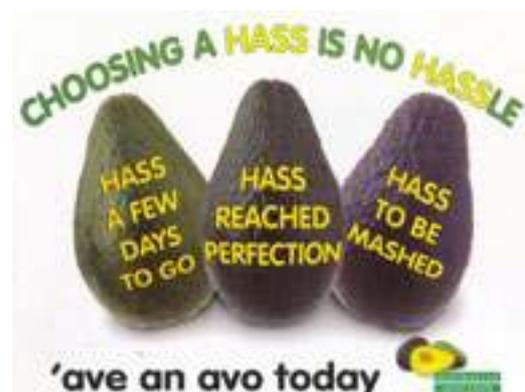
Greg Hopper  
Schulz Road,  
Woombye Qld  
Ph: 07 5442 2424

### 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



## Talking Avocados

### Marketing Program Update Dec 2004 continued

Here are three examples of print editorial secured where the recipes and key messages were successfully rolled out. Varieties also continued to grab the media's attention and proved popular as seen in the attached Better Homes and Gardens coverage.

### In-Store Point-of-Sale

While consumers viewed the Australian Avocado 'Ave and Avo Today' brand message on television, and in magazines and newspapers, they also viewed the Australian Avocado brand message while they purchased their groceries through point-of-sale materials.

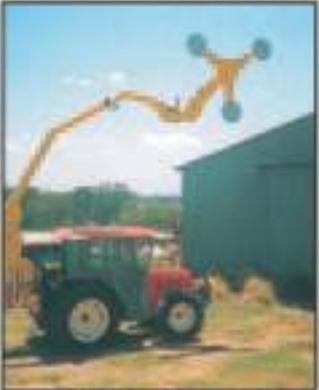
A 'Green Ripe and Ready' wobbler was featured in retail stores during the beginning of the 2003 Greenskin season to help consumers select a ripe Greenskin avocado, and a stylish Australian Avocado recipe leaflet was designed and distributed to independent stores in five cities. The new recipe leaflet included four recipes, nutritional, availability and variety information. The Heart Foundations' 'tick of approval' was used in the leaflet to further reinforce the health benefits of eating avocados. To help consumers choose the perfect avocado the 'Choosing a Hass is no Hassle' and 'Why is it still green?' Greenskin messages were also featured in the leaflet.

### Niche Magazine Advertising

On-going magazine advertising has continued to tap into selected niche markets. Specifically designed ads have been placed in publications such as the Heartwise Journal and the Bounty Baby Care Book that communicate important messages to the health conscious and new mothers. These ads will continue in the next season.

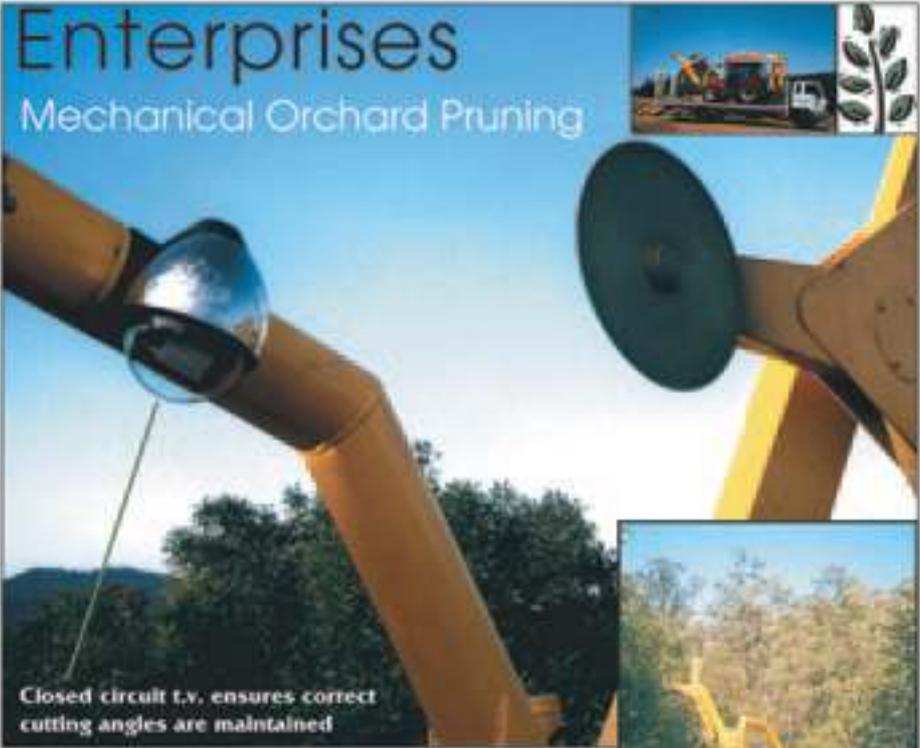
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# Australian Avocado Industry Draft Strategic Plan - 05/10

The following DRAFT Strategic Plan for the Australian Avocado Industry is for your comment. If you have any comments or input please contact Antony Allen: Email: a.allen@avocado.org.au or Ph: 07 3391 2344 or Fax: 07 3391 2388.

## The Big Picture -Our Strategic Intent

To make Australian avocados a priority purchase for consumers, thereby assuring the international competitiveness, future profitability and sustainability of the industry.

## Our Key Aspirations

- Annual average orchard gate returns to producers increasing by at least the equivalent of the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- 90% of fruit at retail level meeting or exceeding the fruit quality expectations of consumers.
- Cost effectively increasing average fruit yield per production hectare to 75% of the level achieved by the highest yielding Australian avocado orchards

## Our Preferred Positioning in the Marketplace

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Benefits to Consumers</b> (the consumer benefits that avocados will deliver – the industry’s value proposition to consumers):</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing enjoyment from year round availability;</li> <li>• Packed with health promoting nutrients;</li> <li>• Easy to use in a wide range of meals and snacks.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Domain</b> (the areas of consumer interest in which industry will seek opportunities to make sales):</p>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and well-being</li> <li>• Convenience</li> <li>• Pleasure and indulgence</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Target Markets</b> (the Australian and overseas markets/market segments in which avocados are to be sold):</p>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia – traditional, niche segments (dietary needs/age etc), food manufacturing; food service</li> <li>• Overseas – niche markets</li> </ul>                          |
| <p><b>Product Scope</b> (the nature and range of products to be offered):</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh whole – loose, packaged</li> <li>• Value-added/processed – oil, spreads, dips, etc</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Competitive Advantage</b> (the strengths and uniqueness of the products and/or industry relative to others):</p>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique, natural, fresh and healthy product available year round</li> <li>• United and well organized industry with funding for R&amp;D and market development</li> </ul>  |



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## Talking Avocados

Australian Avocado Industry  
Draft Strategic Plan - 2005 to 2010 continued

### Industry Priorities

| Industry Priority Area   | Goal  | Objective  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>1. REVENUE GROWTH</b><br>[Delivery of the benefits sought by consumers; beating competitors]                                    | R1 To build strong demand for an increasing level of production, at profitable prices.  | R1 By late 2005, to gain a detailed understanding of the critical factors affecting consumption of avocados in the domestic market - focused on fresh and processed products in the personal shopper and food service segments.  |
|  |   | R2 By 2010, to successfully demonstrate the effectiveness of avocado industry systems for maintaining a profitable balance between supply and demand, so that annual average orchard gate returns increase by at least the equivalent of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). |
| <b>2. PRODUCTION &amp; MARKETING SYSTEMS</b><br>[Excellence in business operations and relationships within avocado supply chains] | P1 To ensure that consumers can confidently purchase consistently high quality fresh avocados at retail level.                          | P1.1 By 2010, 90% of commercial avocado growers will be assessing their management practices against agreed industry guidelines for producing robust fruit with consumer-preferred characteristics.  |
|  |   | P1.2 By 2010, 90% of fruit at retail level will meet or exceed the fruit quality expectations of consumers.  |
|  | P2 To continuously improve the efficiency of avocado production and marketing systems.  | P2.1 By 2010, to cost effectively increase average fruit yield per production hectare to 75% of the level achieved by the highest yielding Australian avocado orchards.  |
|  |   | P2.2 By mid 2007, the key areas of inefficiency and waste in avocado supply chains will have been identified and an improvement process will have been initiated.  |
| <b>3. INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT</b><br>[Excellence in industry leadership and the coordination of agreed industry action]                | I1 To provide avocado producers with a range of benefits that will assist them to achieve their business goals.                         | I1 To achieve and maintain a satisfaction level of at least 80% with the services and activities provided to avocado producers.  |
|  | I2 To ensure appropriate organisation, resourcing and management of the affairs of the Australian avocado industry on an ongoing basis. | I2 To have sufficient resources available to implement all projects and activities rated annually as 'must do' by the industry's agreed prioritisation processes.  |

*Australian Avocado Industry  
Draft Strategic Plan - 2005 to 2010 continued*

**Objectives and Strategies**

**Industry Priority Area 1: REVENUE GROWTH**

**Goal R1:** To build strong demand for an increasing level of production, at profitable prices.

**Objective R1:** By late 2005, to gain a detailed understanding of the critical factors affecting consumption of avocados in the domestic market - focused on fresh and processed products in the personal shopper and food service segments.

| ID   | Strategies  |
|------|---|
| R1.1 | Prepare a detailed consumer research brief highlighting the specific questions about which the industry wishes to update and expand its knowledge, regarding consumer-purchasing decisions about avocados and any products they see as substitutes. |
| R1.2 | Identify how much of the required information is already available/remains current, and make arrangements for the information to be collated/analysed and for gaps to be filled.  |
| R1.3 | Extract the consumer priority purchasing factors and ensure they are communicated widely and effectively to participants in avocado supply chains and industry management.  |
| R1.4 | Undertake on-going monitoring and analysis of consumer behaviour to ensure early warning of significant changes that could present new opportunities or challenges for industry.  |

**Objective R2:** By 2010, to successfully demonstrate the effectiveness of avocado industry systems for maintaining a profitable balance between supply and demand, so that annual average orchard gate returns increase by at least the equivalent of the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

| ID   | Strategies   |
|------|--|
| R2.1 | Prepare a Marketing Plan to take the industry forward over the next five years, based on the outcomes of detailed consumer research (see Objective R1 above). Areas to be specifically addressed in the Marketing Plan will include the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The traditional market segments for Australian avocados;</li> <li>b. Identification and capture of new value creation opportunities in niche domestic markets, e.g. relating to age, special needs, nutrition etc – to spread industry risk and broaden the industry’s market base through diversification; and</li> <li>c. Development of remunerative niche markets overseas – to spread industry risk and broaden the industry’s market base through diversification.</li> </ul> |
| R2.2 | Based on the Marketing Plan, and commensurate with anticipated fruit supply implement a portfolio of promotional and other market development programs designed to deliver the best return on the funds available for these activities.  |
| R2.3 | Design and implement a market information system that, together with production forecasts (see Strategy P2.1.1, Production and Marketing Systems), will enable industry to monitor returns and assess its ability to maintain a balance between supply and demand.   |

## Talking Avocados

Australian Avocado Industry  
Draft Strategic Plan - 2005 to 2010 continued

### Industry Priority Area 2: PRODUCTION AND MARKETING SYSTEMS

**Goal P1:** To ensure that consumers can confidently purchase consistently high quality fresh avocados at retail level.

**Objective P1.1:** By 2010, 90% of commercial avocado growers will be assessing their management practices against agreed industry guidelines for producing **robust fruit with consumer-preferred characteristics**.

| ID     | Strategies   |
|--------|--|
| P1.1.1 | Encourage widespread understanding by industry of the fruit production implications of the findings of market research into avocado consumer priority purchasing factors (see strategies in Priority Area 1 – Revenue Growth).   |
| P1.1.2 | Accelerate the rate of adoption of currently available information regarding orchard management and post-harvest systems and practices for assuring that product quality meets consumer requirements, e.g. canopy management, crop nutrition management, irrigation management, disease prevention and treatment, crop protection. |
| P1.1.3 | Adopt a rigorous, consumer focused, approach to commissioning appropriate R&D projects to fill knowledge gaps about the major orchard management and post harvest determinants of fruit quality, e.g. rootstock selection, calcium uptake, varietal improvement.   |
| P1.1.4 | Create general industry awareness and rapid uptake of the successful outcomes from fruit quality improvement R&D.  |
| P1.1.5 | Develop and promote guidelines for use by producers in assessing their management practices for producing robust fruit with consumer-preferred characteristics.  |

**Objective P1.2:** By 2010, 90% of fruit at retail level will **meet or exceed the fruit quality expectations of consumers**.

| ID     | Strategies   |
|--------|--|
| P1.2.1 | Develop and use good quality industry production data and forecasts for timely harvesting of fruit, management of supply to processors and retailers, and timing of promotion activities.        |
| P1.2.2 | Ensure widespread adoption of product-handling and conditioning practices throughout avocado supply chains, to ensure optimal fruit quality is available to consumers at the retail shelf level. |
| P1.2.3 | Monitor on an on-going basis, and act upon, consumer behaviour/experience and satisfaction levels with their purchasing of avocados and avocado products.  |
| P1.2.4 | Encourage the development of the processing sector, to provide a viable market for fresh fruit that does not meet or exceed consumer expectations.   |

## Batson Avocado Nursery ANVAS accredited Avocado Trees

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*Australian Avocado Industry  
Draft Strategic Plan - 2005 to 2010 continued*

**Goal P2:** To continuously improve the efficiency of avocado production and marketing systems.

**Objective P2.1:** By 2010, to cost effectively **increase average fruit yield** per production hectare to 75% of the level achieved by the highest yielding Australian avocado orchards.

| ID     | Strategies  |
|--------|---|
| P2.1.1 | Develop a snapshot of current Australian yields and a system for monitoring changes over time.  |
| P2.1.2 | Gain a comprehensive understanding of the yields and critical success factors for the best Australian and overseas avocado producers.               |
| P2.1.3 | Accelerate the rate of adoption of currently available information regarding practices and approaches for driving yield increases cost-effectively. |
| P2.1.4 | Commission the development of appropriate R&D projects to fill knowledge gaps about the major determinants of yield improvement.                    |
| P2.1.5 | Create general industry awareness and rapid uptake of the successful outcomes from yield improvement R&D.   |

**Objective P2.2:** By mid 2007, the key areas of inefficiency and waste in avocado supply chains will have been identified and an improvement process will have been initiated.

| ID     | Strategies  |
|--------|---|
| P2.2.1 | Identify the specific production and marketing systems and practices that offer the greatest opportunity for improvement in efficiency.       |
| P2.2.2 | Accelerate the rate of adoption of currently available information regarding the areas identified as the highest priorities for improvement.  |
| P2.2.3 | Commission the development of appropriate R&D projects to fill identified knowledge gaps in the highest priority areas.                       |
| P2.2.4 | Create general industry awareness and rapid uptake of the successful outcomes from the R&D into production and marketing systems improvement. |



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## Talking Avocados

### Australian Avocado Industry Draft Strategic Plan - 2005 to 2010 continued

#### Industry Priority Area 3: **INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT**

**Goal I1:** To provide avocado producers with a range of benefits that will assist them to achieve their business goals.

**Objective I1:** To achieve and maintain a satisfaction level of at least 80% with the services and activities provided to avocado producers.

| ID   | Strategies  |
|------|---|
| I1.1 | <p>Represent industry interests in regard to government and commercial policies and actions that have the potential to have a major impact (positive or negative) on avocado industry businesses, e.g. in the areas of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agri-politics and industry risk management;</li> <li>• Market access (exports and imports);</li> <li>• Bio-security (disease freedom and emergency response);</li> <li>• Commercial partnerships and alliances at industry level.</li> </ul>  |
| I1.2 | <p>Provide industry participants with better access to the knowledge and advice that will add value to their business (including information customised to the needs of particular users), e.g. information relating to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• market intelligence (volumes, flows, estimates, dynamics);</li> <li>• new technologies and practices for improving production and marketing systems;</li> <li>• government and commercial policies with implications for the avocado industry;</li> <li>• industry events and activities.</li> </ul> |
| I1.3 | <p>Undertake on going monitoring of satisfaction levels with the services and activities provided and make the changes needed to deliver benefits in the highest priority areas for industry.</p>   |
| I1.4 | <p>Ensure an adequate pool of expertise is available from R&amp;D service providers to tackle the knowledge priorities of industry that arise from implementation of this Strategic Plan.</p>   |

**Goal I2:** To ensure appropriate organisation, resourcing and management of the affairs of the Australian avocado industry on an ongoing basis.

**Objective I2:** To have sufficient resources available to implement all projects and activities rated annually as 'must do' by the industry's agreed prioritisation processes.

| ID   | Strategies   |
|------|--|
| I2.1 | <p>Ensure that industry organisational structures for determining and implementing industry priorities remain appropriate and cost-effective.</p>  |
| I2.2 | <p>Ensure that adequate resources (financial and other) are available to provide the benefits and deliver on the priorities for action sought by avocado industry participants in working together.</p>                      |
| I2.3 | <p>Increase industry involvement in the leadership and implementation of industry affairs by encouraging the development of a culture of participation amongst all involved in the production and marketing of avocados.</p> |
| I2.4 | <p>Conduct a yearly performance review of progress with industry programs and priorities, in conjunction with preparing the HAL Annual Investment Plan and the AAL Annual Action Plan.</p>                                   |

# Freshcare Update – December 2004

By Clare Hamilton-Bate,  
Clare is Freshcare's National Program Manager.

The Freshcare AGM, held recently in Sydney was well attended by representatives of Freshcares' industry owner groups, including Antony Allen from Avocados Australia.

Since its launch in July 2000, as an industry owned not-for-profit program, Freshcare has grown steadily, to now be the most popular on-farm food safety program for Australian Horticulture. With over 3,200 members, Freshcare provides a practical cost effective mechanism for growers to assure their customers of safe food production.

During the AGM, Clare Hamilton-Bate, Freshcare's National Program Manager gave a detailed report of program activity in 2003/04 and provided an outlook on upcoming Freshcare initiatives.

In the year to November 2004, Freshcare membership grew by over 65%, with particularly strong growth in Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and WA. Of the current 3,200 Freshcare Members over 60% have achieved third party certification to the Freshcare Code of Practice, another 35% of members are in the process of training and implementation.

Over the last 12 months, Freshcare has not only achieved its membership and certification milestones, but has also made a number of improvements / changes to the Program to enable it to better serve Australian Growers, these include:

- An **increased number of Freshcare Trainers** nationally, delivering training in group sessions, one-on-one or as a distance education option.
- The **choice of four Certification Bodies** able to audit growers against the Freshcare Code of Practice
- The introduction of a **single certification anniversary**;

## WARNING

The Australia Avocado Industry has for a number of years paid a large amount of money for the industry's right to use the Heart Foundation "Heart Tick" on avocados.

If you are using a "Heart Tick" logo from anyone other than the label companies "**Label Press**" or "**Compass Labels**" you are acting illegally. No other label printers are able to legally print the "Heart Tick" for use on avocados.

Avocados Australia is undertaking a clean up of the "Heart Tick" printing. We will lose access to the "Heart Tick" logo if it is used illegally.

Avocados Australia, AUF and the Heart Foundation will enforce their Registered Trademark rights to the fullest extent.

If you have non-genuine labels do not use them. If you know of label companies offering to print non-genuine "Heart Tick" labels for you please let us know on 1300 303 971.

All growers could lose access to the "Heart Tick" logo if you don't act now.



Freshcare Annual Certificates are now issued in March, avoiding for most members the inconvenience of Certificates expiring mid harvest

- The introduction of **foreign language translations**; the Freshcare Code is now available in Khmer, Vietnamese and Punjabi, a Chinese translation is planned for early 2005.
- The release of the **Freshcare Code of Practice : 2nd Edition - October 2004**, updating the original Code to make it more practical and user friendly for members.
- Regular (quarterly) **Newsletters** to all members
- Launch of an updated **Freshcare web site** to deliver information more effectively to members with on-line access.

Looking forward, Freshcare has some exciting initiatives planned for 2005.

Additional (optional) program modules covering **environmental assurance and OH&S on-farm** are scheduled for release in mid 2005. The environmental assurance module is being developed with close links to the current 'Horticulture for Tomorrow Project' for environmental assurance, thus ensuring there is no unnecessary duplication or confusion.

The environmental assurance and OH&S modules will initially be trialed with a selected group of members, prior to wider release later in the year. The modules will be developed in consideration of both domestic market/Australian legislative requirements and the requirements of export market requirements such as EurepGap.

Another key initiative early in 2005, will be the launch of "**Freshcare On-Line**" an interactive web based management system, providing additional services to members both directly and indirectly.

However, for Freshcare, the most important task in 2005 is to continue to support its members, in implementing and maintaining their on-farm food safety systems and in providing an effective voice for industry on food safety and related issues.

Feedback on any aspect of the Freshcare program from members and

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### Freshcare Update – December 2004 continued

industry owner groups is always welcome. Contact Clare Hamilton-Bate or Angela Modafferi at Freshcare on Tel: 02 9764 3244 or by email: [freshcare@freshmarkets.com.au](mailto:freshcare@freshmarkets.com.au).

#### Freshcare On-Line

Freshcare - the On-Farm Food Safety Program for Fresh Produce is about to launch "Freshcare On-Line", providing additional services to members both directly and indirectly, through an interactive web based management system, as Freshcare's National Program Manager, Clare Hamilton-Bate explained.

"Freshcare On-Line" will provide a vehicle through which all the program's stakeholders will be able to access or update information quickly and easily.

The Freshcare Trainers will be able to register courses and enrol new Freshcare members directly into the system; Freshcare Auditors will be able to easily access and update their client's information following an audit and Freshcare members will be able to view their records, review any outstanding issues from audit and print copies of certificates, at the click of a button.

The system will also provide for improved communication between stakeholders, for example, trainers will be able to easily follow clients all the way to certification, whilst Freshcare members and auditors will be able to use 'notice board facilities' to coordinate groups for audit, maximising efficiencies of time / location".

However, the greatest users of the "Freshcare On-Line" are likely to



be an indirect stakeholder group, namely customers, such as central packing sheds, marketing groups and market wholesalers..

"As subscription users of the system, customer groups will be able to establish a list of their own suppliers within "Freshcare On-Line", as the Certification Status of any of their suppliers changes the customer files will be automatically updated – providing an accurate, up to date record of supplier certification.

This provides an ideal tool to manage a supplier base and ultimately should remove the need for Freshcare Members to send copies of Certificates to all their customers – the customers simply being able to access and verify information on-line".

The updated Freshcare web site is already active, whilst the "Freshcare On-Line" management system will be fully operational early in 2005.

## We still need more fruit!!

## PRICE INCREASED TO \$0.70/kg

Natures Fruit Company ("NFC"), in conjunction with Olivado International Ltd ("Olivado"), is still seeking process grade avocados for pressing to oil.

**Due to strong demand for marketable fruit, we have increased the price for process grade fruit from \$0.50/kg to \$0.70/kg. The price will henceforth be quoted on a weekly basis; please contact NFC or visit our website [www.naturesfruit.com.au](http://www.naturesfruit.com.au) for latest pricing.**

Olivado's processing plant in Cleveland is now operational

and oil is flowing. We would be only too happy to show you around. To organise an inspection, call Chris Nathan on the number below.

East Coast growers should have received a document from us regarding delivery points and specification for fruit. If you have not received a copy, or require clarification on any issue, please telephone NFC's Nambour office.

We look forward to your continuing support of this venture.

**Bryan Raphael**

NFC

P: 07 5441 3699

F: 07 5441 3688



**Chris Nathan**

Olivado

P: 0407 658 077



# A Horticulture Business Code:

## the facts to date    DECEMBER 2004

### A mandatory code for industry

The Federal Government recently supported a grower-led call for a mandatory horticulture code of conduct to oversee trading relations between fruit and vegetable growers and wholesalers.

Although this is an extremely positive step in the right direction, there is still much work to be done to achieve the best outcome for industry.

Over the coming months, industry will enter a code establishment process with government. This process involves comprehensive grower and stakeholder consultation to help ensure that at the end of the day, a workable solution that provides for the needs of industry is achieved.

### Why we need a mandatory code

A mandatory code is a set of business practices enforceable by law.

A mandated code between growers and wholesalers will lead to the introduction of a greater level of accountability and fairness within the horticulture industry and offer significant beneficial outcomes for all.

Currently, the fruit and vegetable sector is covered by a voluntary retail code. Its voluntary status means that industry participants can choose whether they want to accept and use the guidelines and dispute resolution processes.

While all major retailers are signatories to this voluntary code, no wholesalers from the fresh fruit and vegetable industry have signed up.

Under a mandatory code, parties are obliged to participate and must follow the guidelines of the code and, if there are problems, participate in the prescribed dispute resolution mechanisms.

These guidelines are not onerous responsibilities but common business practices found in every other industry. They simply ensure trading terms are clearly stated and agreed to.

### A mandatory code is the only answer

Horticulture representative groups have strived for years—in fact, decades—to find a co-operative solution to the ongoing trading issues in the industry. Some grower-representative bodies have worked closely with wholesaling groups to develop joint trading terms and voluntary codes of conduct. But these have not been effective across all of industry.

Two federal government inquiries recommended the introduction of a mandatory framework.

In September 2004, the Federal Government initiated a mediation session between grower-representative groups and wholesaler representatives as a final bid to find a fair and suitable solution. There were fundamental differences that could not be resolved between the parties and this led directly to the Coalition pledging to introduce a

mandatory code.

### What a mandatory code means for growers

A mandatory code will give growers:

- *A fairer trading environment*
- *improved contractual clarity* – you will now know whether your wholesaler is acting as an agent or a merchant
- *better transparency* – if your wholesaler is acting as an agent then you will be able to access information about who purchased your product and at what price
- *clarity* in regard to who has title and risk of the produce, and the subsequent impact of this. No longer will produce automatically be returned to the grower to bear all the risk if produce was over ordered or requirements changed.
- *Improved dispute resolution processes*

### A mandatory code won't give growers onerous paperwork or red tape

The proposal being taken forward into upcoming negotiations with the government is that the paperwork required comprises:

- a contract that could be seasonal, annual or ongoing.
- a simple one page document to accompany each consignment with consignor, consignee and product information as well as the terms and price (if a merchant transaction).

### Misinformation

Some wholesaler groups are opposed the introduction of a mandatory code and continue to promote a number of inaccuracies to undermine the position of the key horticulture grower groups.

These include the fact that there has no consultation between the growing and wholesaling sectors. In fact, the Federal Government facilitated a meeting between the parties in September, 2004.

There will be need for administrative changes but the impact on growers will be minimal as will the costs. The code may also impact on how growers currently do business – but these will be improvements. These impacts only need to be minimal. This is the trade off to have clarity and transparency in business transactions between growers and wholesalers.

It will not reduce competitiveness in the wholesaling sector, if anything it will allow growers to make more informed decisions about the range, cost and value of the services that wholesalers are offering.

Countless growers have told us the current voluntary code is not working. It was for this reason that a mandatory code was called for. Two government reviews have also recommended a mandatory code.

Retailers are signatories to the current Retail Grocery Industry Code of Conduct and as a result they are already bound by a code through which growers and wholesalers can seek redress should trading issues arise.

## Talking Avocados

### A Horticulture Business Code continued

#### What the code might contain -

Although negotiations are still to take place with the government, it is envisaged that a mandated code would introduce:

- *Minimum Terms of Trade – which would be enforceable and would dictate the minimum contractual obligations between growers and wholesalers*
- *A default agency clause: unless a grower and wholesaler agreed otherwise then their commercial relationship would be deemed to be an agency agreement.*
- *Improved dispute resolution mechanisms*
- *Increased reach and power to the Ombudsman to resolve trading disputes*
- *Clearer definitions related to labelling and packaging and preparation requirements.*

It is proposed the code will also address unlawful bullying practices.

#### Why Horticulture Australia Council (HAC) and National Farmers Federation (NFF) and their members are involved

HAC and NFF and their respective members have been pushing for reform in the wholesaling sector for many years. The reason is simple – despite forming the core link in the fruit and vegetable supply chain, growers have the least amount of power. They have

been unable to get contractual clarity and effective dispute resolution systems. While some growers have very good relationships with their wholesalers, there are common problems that stop the industry reaching its full potential and, in many cases, impede growers from earning a fair living.

#### What about retailers?

Some growers also experience trading problems with retailers.

The major retail chains—Coles, Woolworths and Aldi—are already signatories to the existing voluntary code and, as a result, they have to abide by its provisions.

This covers many issues including the major concern of ‘returns’ that are a common complaint. Both growers and wholesalers have access to a dispute resolution process on these issues by contacting the Retail Grocery Industry Ombudsman on 1800 004 444 or at [www.rgio.com.au](http://www.rgio.com.au) for more information.

The Ombudsman reports a good record of dealing with the issue of returns when complaints are made.

#### What happens next?

HAC and NFF will work with government, wholesalers and industry to develop a workable code that provides both contractual clarity and flexibility to ensure it meets industry needs.

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Phone/Fax: 07 4697 8142  
Mobile: 0408 987 199  
Email: [johntann@hotmail.net.au](mailto:johntann@hotmail.net.au)



For more information > contact John or Chris



*A Horticulture Business Code  
continued*

In broad terms, there is an established process prescribed by government for developing and implementing a code of conduct. It involves:

- *Early notification of stakeholders*
- *Draft regulatory impact statement*
- *Comprehensive program of consultation*
- *Final Regulatory impact statement*
- *Making regulations*
- *Notification of the Code*
- *Review of the code*

It is anticipated that the first step in this process will commence shortly. If you would like more information is available at : [www.consumersonline.gov.au/Content/selfregulation/codes/](http://www.consumersonline.gov.au/Content/selfregulation/codes/)

**How you can find out more about the new mandated code**

HAC and NFF through its members will keep you informed of developments in the consultation and implementation process ahead. If you have specific questions or want to know more about the proposed code please:

- contact your grower association (see below).
- contact HAC on 02 6273 9600
- contact NFF on 02 6273 3855
- or visit [www.horticulturebusinesscode.com](http://www.horticulturebusinesscode.com)

**For more information contact:**

Avocados Australia on 07 3391 2344 or [ceo@avocado.org.au](mailto:ceo@avocado.org.au)

*Horticulture Australia Council members include: Apple & Pear Australia Ltd, Avocados Australia Ltd, Australian Banana Growers Council, Australian Citrus Growers Inc, Australia Dried Fruits Association, Australian Mango Industry Association Ltd, Australian Mushroom Growers Association, Australian Nut Industry Council, Australian Passionfruit Industry Association Inc, Ausveg, Cherry Growers of Australia, Growcom, NSW Farmers Association, Nursery & Garden Industry Australia Ltd, Summerfruit Australia Ltd and Snackfruit Australia Inc.*



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[www.croptech.com.au](http://www.croptech.com.au)

# 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 **1300 303 971**

### Member Details

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

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

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

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

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

### Contact Details

Business phone no: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone no: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax no: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile no: \_\_\_\_\_

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 **1300 303 971**



## Avocado Recipes

### Whip it up

#### 3 quick ways with avocado

#### Avocado, barbecued chicken and hummus salad

Place the skin and flesh of a barbecued chicken (cut into 1cm-thick slices), 4 ripe tomatoes (cut into chunks), 1 large handful coriander leaves (roughly chopped), 2 avocados (cut into chunks) and a few handfuls baby spinach or rocket leaves in a large bowl.

Season and gently toss to combine, being careful not to squash the avocados.

Place salad on a serving plate.

Spoon over 1 cup good-quality hummus.

Squeeze over lemon juice and add a few splashes of olive oil.

For a tasty extra, toss through 1/2 preserved lemon (finely chopped).

#### Avocado and prawn cocktail salad

Place a few large handfuls iceberg lettuce leaves (finely shredded) on a large serving plate and top with 3 avocados (cut into long, thin slivers) and 16 large cooked prawns (peeled and de-veined).

Combine 1 cup sour cream, 1 tbsp lemon juice, 2 tsp tomato paste and a few splashes of Worcestershire sauce in a bowl.

Season with sea salt and cracked black pepper.

Spoon dressing over salad and serve with lemon wedges.

#### Warm avocado, tomato and crispy bacon salad

Preheat grill on high. Place 4 roma tomatoes (cut in half) on a baking tray. Brush with olive oil, season and grill for 8-10 minutes.

Cook 6 rashers rindless bacon in a non-stick frying pan for 5 minutes each side, being careful not to burn them.

Drain on kitchen paper and then break into pieces. Place 3 tbsp olive oil, 1 tbsp red-wine vinegar, 1 clove garlic (crushed), a few handfuls mixed salad leaves, 3 avocados (cut into chunks), salt and pepper in a large stainless-steel bowl over low heat.

Toss for 1 minute or until leaves just wilt.

Remove from heat and add tomatoes.

Place on a large serving plate with the bacon on top. Serve with toast.

All recipes serve 4

*Reference:*

*Author: Ross Dobson, Date: 14/11/2004, Publication: Sun Herald, Section: Sunday Life, Page: 47*

# www.avocadosource.com

## A web based virtual library of avocado

By Jonathan Dixon

As a grower being able to access the internet allows you to utilize a wide range of information sources that would normally be too difficult or expensive to use. Avocado growers and enthusiasts are very fortunate that there is a free to use website managed by Dr Mary Lu Arpaia funded through the Hofshi Foundation established by Reuben Hofshi. Both Mary Lu and Reuben are to be congratulated for the exceptionally useful website they have created. This website is unique because you can access the full text of thousands of articles published on avocados and not just those written in English. It is a resource that I use frequently and I would encourage all avocado growers to use the website to find information on almost anything to do with avocados. The following is a full description of the website written by Dr Arpaia.

With most homes connected to the internet the world of information is literally at one's fingertips. The international avocado industry, researchers and aficionados are fortunate; they have access to a unique website, www.avocadosource.com

The goal of avocadosource.com is to bring avocado knowledge from everywhere to all by providing an open and free one-stop collection of avocado-related information from around the world. Research, country specific data, useful tools and a historical record through publications and slides are available at absolutely no cost to the user. Some capabilities and short-term goals of avocadosource.com:

The site continues to add both current and historic articles from

the California Avocado Society, the South African Avocado Growers' Association, Florida Horticultural Society and many other sources.

The site provides complete articles and links to other external resources and will soon include hyperlinks to articles referenced within the article's text or citations. This capability puts all available information, which is permitted to be posted, literally at the user's fingertips.

The search capability allows the reader to search efficiently for specific information by word, title and author.

A group of useful tools have been created to help growers better understand and control aspects of cultural management such as fertilization, irrigation and salinity management.

The site has a growing inventory of photographic resources made available by leading scientists and others. This will provide the international community with the continued legacy of those that have greatly influenced the avocado knowledge base.

With the advent of online machine translation, papers written in a particular language can be readily translated to the preferred language of the reader. Access to materials in Spanish from Chile and Mexico, for example, are now available.

www.avocadosource.com is provided free of charge and without advertisement by the Hofshi Foundation to all those interested in the avocado. You will find a visit to the site an experience and a glimpse at the library of the future.

This article was first published in "Avoscene" September 2004.

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for more information ph 07 5441 3699  
or visit our website  
[www.naturesfruit.com.au](http://www.naturesfruit.com.au)

## Avocado Growers Organisations

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### Regional Avocado Grower Organisations

Col Cummings 07 4095 8121

#### Atherton Tableland

##### Avocado Growers' Association

Merrilyn Land, President 07 4093 2206  
Secretary 07 4086 6056  
Fax: 07 4086 6057

#### Bundaberg & District Orchardists' Committee

Geoff Chivers, President 07 4153 3007  
Fax: 07 4153 1322

#### Sunshine Coast Avocado Growers Association

Henry Kwaczynski, President 07 5442 1767  
Fax: 07 5442 1767

#### West Morton Avocado Growers' Group

Rod Dalton, Convener 07 5466 1316  
Fax: 07 5466 1497

#### Tamborine Mountain

##### Local Producers' Association

Bruce Bartle, President 07 5545 1527  
Bev Buckley, Secretary 07 5545 2617

#### New South Wales

##### Avocado Growers Association Inc.

Chris Nelson, President 02 6569 0924  
Alison Tolson, Secretary/Treasurer 02 6569 0872  
Fax: 02 6569 0885

#### South Australia

##### Avocado Growers' Association

Colin Fechner, President 08 8541 2819  
Greg Liebig, Secretary 08 8541 2174  
Fax: 08 8541 2174

##### Avocado Growers' Association of Western Australia

Alan Blight, President 0417 179 127  
Eleanor Press, Secretary 08 9776 1332  
Fax: 08 9776 1332

## Directory of Government Contacts

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### Australian Government Departments & Agencies

#### Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

02 6272 3933 [www.daff.gov.au](http://www.daff.gov.au)

#### New Industries Development Program

1300 884 588 [www.daff.gov.au/agribiz](http://www.daff.gov.au/agribiz)

#### Agriculture Portal

[www.agriculture.gov.au](http://www.agriculture.gov.au)

#### Austrade

13 28 78 [www.austrade.gov.au](http://www.austrade.gov.au)

#### Australian Bureau of Agriculture & Resource Economics

02 6272 3933 [www.abare.gov.au](http://www.abare.gov.au)

#### Australian Bureau of Rural Sciences

02 6272 3933 [www.brs.gov.au](http://www.brs.gov.au)

#### Australian Bureau of Statistics

1300 135 070 [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

#### Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

02 6243 1111 [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au)

#### Australian Customs Service

1300 363 263 [www.customs.gov.au](http://www.customs.gov.au)

#### Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority

02 6272 5852 [www.apvma.gov.au](http://www.apvma.gov.au)

#### Australian Tax Office

13 28 66 [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)

#### Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

02 6272 3933 [www.aqis.gov.au](http://www.aqis.gov.au)

#### Business Entry Point

[www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au)

#### Department of Employment and Work Place Relations

02 6121 6000 [www.dewr.gov.au](http://www.dewr.gov.au)

#### Department of Environment and Heritage

02 6274 1111 [www.deh.gov.au](http://www.deh.gov.au)

#### Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

02 6261 1111 [www.dfat.gov.au](http://www.dfat.gov.au)

#### Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources

1800 024 095 [www.industry.gov.au](http://www.industry.gov.au)

#### Department of Transport and Regional Services

02 6274 7111 [www.dotars.gov.au](http://www.dotars.gov.au)

#### Food Standards Australia New Zealand

02 6271 2222 [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

#### Grants Link

[www.grantslink.gov.au](http://www.grantslink.gov.au)

#### IP Australia

1300 65 1010 [www.ipaustralia.gov.au](http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au)

#### The Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs

[www.consumer.gov.au](http://www.consumer.gov.au)

### State Government Departments & Agencies

#### Australian Capital Territory

Business ACT  
1800 244 650 [www.business.act.gov.au](http://www.business.act.gov.au)

#### New South Wales

NSW Agriculture  
02 6391 3100 [www.agric.nsw.gov.au](http://www.agric.nsw.gov.au)  
Dept of State and Regional Development  
02 9228 3111 [www.business.nsw.gov.au](http://www.business.nsw.gov.au)

#### Northern Territory

Dept of Business, Industry and Resource Development  
[www.nt.gov.au/dbird/dpif](http://www.nt.gov.au/dbird/dpif)

#### Queensland

Dept of Primary Industries  
07 3404 6999 [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)  
Dept of State Development  
07 3225 1915 [www.sd.qld.gov.au](http://www.sd.qld.gov.au)

#### South Australia

Dept of Primary Industries and Resources [www.pir.sa.gov.au](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au)  
Food for the Future  
08 8226 0585 [www.food.sa.gov.au](http://www.food.sa.gov.au)

#### Tasmania

Dept of Primary Industries, Water and Environment  
03 6233 6496 [www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au)  
Dept of Economic Development  
1800 030 688 [www.development.tas.gov.au](http://www.development.tas.gov.au)

#### Victoria

Business Victoria  
13 22 15 [www.business.vic.gov.au](http://www.business.vic.gov.au)  
Dept of Primary Industries  
136 186 [www.dpi.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au)  
Food Victoria [www.food.vic.gov.au](http://www.food.vic.gov.au)

#### Western Australia

Department of Agriculture  
08 9368 3333 [www.agric.wa.gov.au](http://www.agric.wa.gov.au)