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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Friday, 10 February 2012

The latest industry news at your fingertips

'Guacamole' is the Australian avocado industry's monthly email newsletter, it is intended to be a topical and industry specific newsletter.

Guacamole is separated into two sections: [Industry Communication](#) and [Industry News](#).

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

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

Industry Communication

INDUSTRY UPDATES

Antony Allen resigns as Avocados Australia CEO

Avocados Australia's Board of Directors today announced that Antony Allen has resigned as Chief Executive Officer, a position he has held for almost a decade. The Board has begun an intensive selection process to appoint a new CEO in the coming months.

"Antony's extraordinary vision and leadership guided Avocados Australia to its position as a strong and effective peak industry body, envied by many other industries in horticulture" commented Jim Kochi, Chairman of Avocados Australia, on behalf of the Avocados Australia Board. "He will certainly be missed here at Avocados Australia for the quality of the work he did on behalf of all Australian avocado growers and for the friendship he shared with many of them. We wish Antony great success as he seeks new challenges."

Antony joined the avocado industry in 2002 as the CEO of the Australian Avocado Growers Federation (AAGF). Antony was instrumental in a move to restructure the AAGF to allow grower-members direct and equal access to their national organisation, and in 2003 became CEO of the newly formed Avocados Australia. His decision will end a distinguished career with the organisation.

Antony's strong focus has been on guiding the industry's 'research and development' and 'promotion' program to assist sustainable growth and development within the Australian avocado industry. From 2002 to 2012 the Australian avocado industry has grown from a farm gate value of \$60 million to \$205 million.

Antony is also the President of the International Avocado Society, Chair of the International Avocado Research Consortium and has served on numerous committees within horticulture, including the Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) Across Industry Committee.

"It's been fantastic working with Avocado Australia, we have achieved so much over the years. The Australian avocado industry is a growing, progressive, profitable and sustainable industry and a leader in product, supply chain and industry development innovation. It will only continue to grow," said Mr Allen.

Mr Allen will stay on board at the Avocados Australia office to smooth out the hand over process to the new CEO.

For more information please contact:

Antony Allen - CEO, Avocados Australia

P: 07 3846 6566, M: 0438 132 477, E: ceo@avocado.org.au

Courtney Vane - Communications Officer, Avocados Australia

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Branding Australian Avocados



Avocados Australia have taken the step of branding locally grown avocados with an 'Australian Avocados' sticker, allowing consumers to choose home-grown avocados at the supermarket.

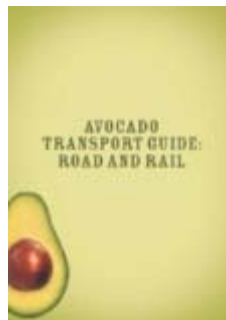
"Identifying where produce comes from can cause a lot of confusion for shoppers. It's regulation for produce to be clearly marked with its country of origin at the point of sale, but that's not always the case," commented Antony Allen, CEO of Avocados Australia.

The new stickers will offer shoppers the reassurance that they are buying Australian avocados and by doing so supporting local growers, their families and regional communities across Australia.

"We are really excited to get a more Australian branded sticker for the whole industry; the sticker will be fully supported within the marketing program and will be the key identifier for consumers for Australian avocados."

The sticker is currently being rolled out across authorised label companies and will be available with and without a barcode. For more information please contact the Avocados Australia office on (07) 3846 6566 or email at admin@avocado.org.au

New supply chain education materials now available!





Avocados Australia in conjunction with Agri-Science Queensland have been developing a number of new education materials to fill information gaps within the supply chain.

The industry will soon be receiving, along with your copy of Talking Avocados, a copy of the new 'Avocado Transport Guide: Road and Rail' booklet and the 'Avocado Transport Guide: Road and Rail Quick Reference' poster. The transport guides provide guidance on how to ensure the fruit is pre-cooled to the correct core temperature. It also provides recommendations for in-transit temperatures and emphasises the importance of maintaining good air flow during transport.

Avocado harvesting guides for growers, managers and pickers have also been developed. The first guide, 'Avocado Harvesting: Growers and Managers' includes information on things to be aware of in the lead up to and during harvesting. The second guide, 'Avocado Harvesting: Pickers' has been developed targeting the picking crews and includes information about the importance of not dropping the fruit more than 30cm, emptying the picking bags carefully and listening to the grower or manager's instructions. To help reinforce these points, two bumper stickers have also been developed which can be used in the field.

To view and/or download the guides or stickers please visit the [Education Materials](#) page on the Avocados Australia website.

For more information or to order copies please contact Avocados Australia Program Manager Julie Petty at supplychain@avocado.org.au or 07 3846 6566.

How is quality tracking?

For some years Avocados Australia has been monitoring quality at the retail level. Essentially, this project measures how much fruit at the retail end is fulfilling consumer's quality demands. The project also measures where there are significant differences in quality, between store types, growing regions and/or seasons. The project plays a crucial role in benchmarking the industry's performance against consumer expectations.

Results of the project up until July 2011 are now available on the [Quality Program](#) page of the Avocados Australia website.

GROWER UPDATES

An equal marketing levy for imported product

Dear Australian Avocado Grower,

As the peak industry body for the Australian avocado industry, Avocados Australia has been lobbying the government for over two years to implement an equal marketing levy on imported product. It is only with your full support and active participation that we can hope to achieve such action and stop Australian avocado growers investing in marketing for imported product.

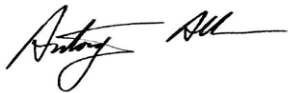
We have developed a letter for you to fill out and send to your local MP and/or Senator in order to further lobby the Australian Government for an equal marketing levy on imported product. We have also created an example of a completed letter for you to use as a guide when filling out your letter.

A list of your local MPs and Senators is available on the industry website and we strongly urge you to send as many letters to as many representatives in your region as possible.

Please visit [Grower Notices](#) on the Avocados Australia website to download the letter and

a list of MPs and Senators in your region. If you have any questions please contact the Avocados Australia office on (07) 3846 6566 or email at admin@avocado.org.au

Yours Sincerely,



Antony Allen
CEO, Avocados Australia

How to test Dry Matter at home

All growers are urged to make sure new season Hass fruit reaches a Dry Matter reading of 23% or above and Shepard reaches 21% before being sent to market. These standards were set based off of consumer research which showed that consumer acceptance of the quality of avocados declined from approximately 95% to 70% if the DM is below 23% (for Hass) and that up to 70% of consumers would choose 26% DM avocados over 22% DM avocados (for Hass).

Avocados Australia has implemented a project to randomly sample avocados on a monthly basis from the Sydney wholesale markets to test for DM percentage as a measure of maturity. The aim is to provide data to illustrate how the current level of maturity available to consumers' stacks up against consumer preferences as determined in the consumer testing. Individual results are sent to each of the grower's whose fruit is tested in any one month.

Instructions on how to conduct Dry Matter tests at home and the aggregated results of the maturity tests are available on the [Maturity Monitoring](#) page of the Avocados Australia website.

MEMBER UPDATES

New Avocados Australia member logo available
Promote your support of the industry today!



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

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

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

- Bio-security - lobbying the Government to protect your business
- Submissions and lobbying - approaching Federal and State Governments on industry matters

- Avocados Australia website - providing information about retail prices, dry matter testing etc.
- Infocado - expanding and improving the national avocado crop flow information system
- Avocado export plan - developing a strategy and tools to help exporters access new markets
- Talking Avocados - continuing to improve industry communication via our quarterly magazine

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

For more information or to become a member please visit the [Membership](#) section of the website.

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

Industry News

[NZ: Poor results from avocado season](#)

Tuesday, 7 February 2012

It has been a very average avocado season for growers in the Bay of Plenty. Harvesting is almost over now, but the volumes have been so high that prices have generated returns half of what they usually are.

Some growers stand to make a loss on the production of avocados this year. Much of the produce went to Australia, but a surplus of domestic produce there meant that the market practically collapsed in the face of additional imports.

[Avocado growers stop the rot](#)

Saturday, 28 January 2012

A better understanding of phosphonate fungicide use in avocado can improve crop yields and the business bottom line for northern producers.

The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) has initiated a study with funding from the Atherton Tablelands Avocado Growers Association and Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) into how best to use phosphonate on Shepard avocado, the commercial variety commonly grown in north Queensland.

[Don't cripple horti exporters](#)

Wednesday, 11 January 2012

Our horticultural exporters need all the help they can get. The sky-high Australian dollar has hugely reduced the price-competitiveness of Australian exports compared to produce from Chile, South Africa and more. And our cost of production is already much higher than that of our competitors.

Yet stupid and stubborn policies from both the Federal Government and its Australian Quarantine Inspection Service continue to cripple the sector. It's difficult to see how exporters can go on.

[Do australians need more transparency on modern farming practices?](#)

Monday, 9 January 2012

Australian farm groups could take on a US initiative to build public trust in farming to address consumer concerns about modern agriculture and food production.

The initiative, which also addresses developments for the environment, productivity and food safety, is now being closely examined by Australian experts.

Can't wait for Guacamole? You can read all the latest [Avocado News](#) and industry-

related [National & International News](#) on the Avocados Australia industry website.

This email was sent by Avocados Australia, Level 1 / 8/63 Annerley Rd, Woolloongabba, Australia 4102
to co@avocado.org.au

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