

Avocados Australia

Infocado: Industry data collection

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Overview

One of the key roles of Avocados Australia is to develop and offer valued services to their grower members and other stakeholders.

The Infocado system has been developed by Avocados Australia (AAL) to meet an identified need to collect more meaningful and timely data to allow the industry to make better informed management and marketing decisions. The collection of seasonal forecast data, actual volume throughput, weekly forecast throughput and wholesale receivals and sales data on a national basis assists with this process and is particularly beneficial to participating packhouses and wholesalers and consequently the growers supplying these businesses.

The Infocado system is an internet based program. Currently, Infocado has four modules:

- **Seasonal forecast module:** In this module packhouses and grower-packers contribute expected monthly dispatch volumes for a fifteen month period on a monthly basis.
- **Weekly forecast module:** This module allows the collection of data on expected dispatches by packhouses and grower packers for the next four one-week periods.
- **Dispatch module:** Data on actual dispatches is entered weekly by individual packhouses and grower-packers. Consolidated data from NZ exporters is also entered.
- **Wholesale module:** Weekly opening stock, receivals and sales data is entered by participating wholesale businesses in major wholesale markets across Australia.

In all modules the data from individual businesses is aggregated with data from other participating businesses and the aggregated reports are made available to participating businesses.

The data supplied by individual businesses is not identifiable in the aggregated results.

There is no cost for participating in this service, but access will be limited to those businesses that are members of Avocados Australia and accept the terms and conditions of use.

Obviously the results are only as good as the data submitted by the participating businesses hence Avocados Australia is keen to ensure that as many eligible packhouses, grower-packers and wholesalers as possible support the initiative on a consistent basis.

Businesses should also be aware that there is a requirement for administration staff to enter the required data. For seasonal forecast data this would be no more than 2-3 minutes per month and for dispatch, weekly forecast and wholesale data it is expected to be approximately 15 minutes per week during their season.

In the following pages we outline processes and conditions of participation in more detail. We also provide instruction for administration staff in regard to system access and data input, as a supplement to this document.

Objectives

Infocado: data collection

The key objective for industry in relation to this initiative is to provide marketers, packhouses and growers with meaningful and timely information to assist with management and marketing decisions.

This will be achieved by:

- Providing a robust system to collect, aggregate and distribute information – the Infocado system.
- Providing a set of conditions of use to ensure those that participate are rewarded
- Encouraging consistent and accurate data input by participating businesses
- Providing timely feedback of aggregated results to participating businesses
- Providing the required support to ensure uptake, ongoing participation and address any issues or concerns with the initiative. This will include an instruction package for administrative staff entering data into the system.
- Supplementing this information, where applicable, with other sources of information that might assist businesses with management / marketing decisions.
- Since 2006, we have more than 80% of Australia's avocado production logged through Infocado.

Participants

One of the keys to success of this initiative has been to ensure that a significant proportion of the Australian avocado crop is recorded in Infocado. This assists in ensuring that the aggregated results available weekly provide an accurate reflection of what is really happening in the marketplace.

In the initial phase of the rollout, packhouses and grower packers were targeted, rather than individual growers, as this ensured that significant volume targets were met quickly. The rollout was then phased according to production areas coming into harvest.

Aggregated data is only available to those businesses that meet the terms outlined in the terms and conditions of use.

Outcomes and benefits

There are several outcomes and benefits of having aggregated data to see expected and actual volumes of avocados entering the market. This includes:

OUTCOMES

- Industry has an indication of expected volumes of fruit entering the market over the next fifteen month period.
- The industry has an indication of volumes of fruit entering the market in the next four week period.
- Industry has more accurate data on volumes and varieties moving through the market in any given week of the year.

BENEFITS

- The industry is able to use this data to determine the impact of an event on the industry's production level.
- Marketers, packhouses and grower-packers are able to use the information to assist with marketing and management decisions in their business.
- Avocados Australia is able to use the information to assist with industry promotional activities.

Process

In the initial instance Avocados Australia invited packing houses and grower packers to participate in the initiative.

Once a business agrees in principle to participate, written material is provided to the business. This outlines:

- Overview of Infocado
- Conditions of participation (see section "Terms and conditions of use")
- Data required for inclusion in the system (see information below)
- Timing requirements in regard to input of information / access to aggregated data (see information below)
- Information on the type of report to be received (see information below)
- Instruction on accessing the system and inputting data
- Incentives for businesses and individuals to participate

The following information is also sought:

- key contact for management issues for Infocado
- key administration contact for Infocado
- expected dispatched window for the business

The administration person is contacted to ensure that they have received material on Infocado and know the process for accessing support from Avocados Australia, when required.

Data to be collected

Data is collected based on the following parameters:

SEASONAL FORECASTS (projected dispatches over the next fifteen one-month periods)

- Variety (Hass, Shepard, Other)
- Packing type set at 5.5kg tray equivalents
- Quantity (number of units)

WEEKLY FORECASTS (projected dispatches over the next four one- week periods)

- Variety
- Packing type / use (5.5 kg trays, Bulk, Prepack, Oil, Processing and other)
- Quantity (number of units, number of kilograms)

DISPATCHES (actual previous week's dispatches)

- Variety
- Packing type / use (Mod 6, 5.5 kg trays, Bulk, Prepack, Oil, Processing and other)
- Quantity (number of units, number of kilograms)
- State (QLD, NSW etc)
- Supply chain partner (trader, direct, exporter, consolidator)

Where:

TRADER: A trader is central market wholesaler, produce merchant or other wholesaler

DIRECT: Direct refers to produce being sent directly to supermarkets

CONSOLIDATOR: Are businesses that co-ordinate and control where product is to be sent. These businesses may or may not pack fruit and would include businesses such as One Harvest, Sunfresh, Natures Fruit and Fruitology.

WHOLESALE CROP FLOW

- Variety (Hass, Shepard, Other)
- Packing type / use (5.5 kg trays, Mod 6 trays, Bulk and Prepack)
- Opening stock
- Receipts (from growers/packshouses, other wholesalers)
- Sales (to other wholesalers, supermarkets, other retail, non retail, export)
- Waste

When to enter data

To ensure that data is collected from participating businesses and reports made available on a consistent basis, the following rules have been developed.

SEASONAL FORECAST

TIME PERIOD	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY
Between the 10th & 31st day of month. <i>Note: On the 10th of each month an email will be sent to you with an attached form so that you can amend previously entered seasonal forecast data and enter new month's data. You have until the end of the month to complete and send this form back to Avocados Australia</i>	Expected monthly forecast data to be updated and new months data to be entered and sent to Infocado.	Packhouse / grower-packer
Between 1st and 7th day of following month	Data will be checked, obvious inaccuracies checked with data source, data approved for aggregation	Avocados Australia
8th day of following month	Reports (aggregated data) available for participating businesses. Notification email sent to participating businesses to alert them Reports are available	
January/April/July/Oct (before end of month)	Quarterly report summarising last 12 months dispatches and forecast for coming 12 months sent to all contributors	Avocados Australia

WEEKLY FORECASTS AND DISPATCH DATA

In both the weekly forecast and dispatch modules a week is considered to be from Saturday to Friday.

DAY AND TIME	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY
By Monday 11am <i>Note:</i> <i>Weekly forecast and dispatch data should be recorded no later than 11am each Monday commencing a month before the the packing season and throughout the duration of the season.</i>	Weekly forecast and dispatch data entry to be completed. In the weekly forecast form the expected dispatch data for each of the next four one-week periods should be entered or amended, as necessary. For the dispatch form, the actual dispatch data from the previous week should be entered. Therefore as a week is defined as Saturday to Friday, any produce dispatched on or between the previous Saturday through to previous Friday should be recorded.	Packer / grower-packer
Monday 11am – 3.30pm	Data checked, obvious inaccuracies checked with data source, data approved for aggregation.	Avocados Australia
Monday 4pm	Reports (aggregated data) available for participating businesses.	
Tuesday	Email with weekly summary updates sent to participating businesses.	Avocados Australia

WHOLESALE DATA

In the wholesale module a week is considered to be from Saturday to Friday.

DAY AND TIME	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY
By Monday 11am <i>Note:</i>	Weekly crop flow record to be completed. The opening stock figure should be the same as the closing stock	Wholesaler

<i>Weekly crop flow data should be recorded no later than 11am each Monday.</i>	figure from the previous week. The receivals and sales figures relate to any fruit received or sold in the week just gone. Therefore as a week is defined as Saturday to Friday, any produce received or sold on or between the previous Saturday through to previous Friday should be recorded.	
Monday 11am – 3.30pm	Data checked, obvious inaccuracies checked with data source, data approved for aggregation.	Avocados Australia
Monday 4pm	Online reports (aggregated data) available for participating businesses.	
Tuesday	Weekly Infocado report including retail prices sent to participating businesses.	Avocados Australia

Industry summary reports

The following information will be provided in summary reports:

SEASONAL FORECASTS (projected dispatches over the next fifteen one-month periods)

- Variety (Hass, Shepard, Other)
- Packing type set at 5.5kg tray equivalents
- Quantity (number of units)

WEEKLY FORECAST REPORTS (projected dispatches over the next four one- week periods)

- Variety
- Packing type / use (4kg trays, 5.5 kg trays, Bulk, Prepack, Oil, Processing and other)
- Quantity (number of units, number of kilograms)

DISPATCH REPORTS (actual previous week's dispatches)

- Variety
- Packing type / use (4kg trays, 5.5 kg trays, Bulk, Prepack, Oil, Processing and other)
- Quantity (number of units, number of kilograms)
- State (QLD, NSW etc)
- Supply chain partner (trader, direct, exporter, consolidator)

SALES REPORTS (actual sales to retail outlets including direct from packhouse and sales by wholesalers)

- Variety (Hass, Shepard, Other)
- Packing type / use (all trays, Bulk, Prepack)
- Destination market (QLD - supermarket sales, non supermarket sales, export; NSW – supermarket sales, non supermarket sales, export etc)
- Quantity (number of units, number of kilograms)

Users of Infocado can access complete reports from the Avocados Australia website, showing all of the aggregated data in the fields above. There is the ability to filter data if specific reports are required by the user.

Weekly reports are also emailed to all contributors. These reports include summarised and graphed versions of the online reports and are supplemented with further information including retail prices, comments and avocado maturity results.

Individual participants' data is not identifiable in any of the industry summary reports.

Terms and conditions of use

The success of Infocado is dependant upon the number of contributors and the quality and consistency of the data they provide throughout their season.

Access

Access to Infocado, in the first instance, is limited to packhouses and grower-packers and growers that pack in their own right. These businesses will be encouraged to provide all their seasonal forecast, weekly forecast and dispatch data. Access has also been extended to wholesalers who contribute receivals and sales data on a weekly basis.

For businesses to be considered 'current participants', they must:

- act in 'good faith'
- provide accurate data
- provide and maintain their seasonal forecast data (packhouses)
- contribute at least 80% of their season's weekly forecast and dispatch data, or crop flow data (wholesalers) on a weekly basis (ie. for 8 out of 10 weeks during the season),
- meet the necessary timelines required for the input of all data.

Ideally businesses should contribute 100% of their data.

Only businesses that are 'current participants' will have access to aggregated industry reports. In other words those that participate will be rewarded with access.

It is intended that the reports generated are solely for the use of packhouses and their growers; and individual growers to make more informed management and marketing decisions. It is not intended for distribution to other supply chain participants.

Avocados Australia reserves the right to exclude parties that do not meet the terms and conditions of use.

Users should read the full set of Terms and Conditions that apply to the use of Infocado. These are available in the Infocado system by clicking on the "Terms and Conditions" button on the menu page. Users that do not accept the terms and conditions of use should not use Infocado and should contact Avocados Australia.