

AVOCADO *link*

Apata
AVOCADOS

November 2017



HARVEST UPDATE

This harvest is proving to be a tricky beast; the weather has not been playing ball and it has been somewhat of a challenge to work the picking around the weather events. However, we have largely been able to meet our targets as we shift the days of harvest around the rain. We appreciate the co-operation and understanding of Growers as we make these changes and sometimes have to delay picking an orchard while we catch up. With all this manoeuvring we have managed to come within spitting distance of our orders apart from one week where we overshot and one week where we were under.

Up until the 28-October we had packed 110,147 export trays and the average pack-out was running at 75%. The main defects that seem to be showing up are wind rub, blemish and rodent damage from either rats or possums.

AvoGreen

Growers wishing to export must be AvoGreen compliant on 1 November the year prior to fruit being exported.

To stay AvoGreen compliant, the grower must:

- Have a valid contract with an AvoGreen Operator who is responsible for monitoring (even if actual monitoring is reduced or suspended in a non-cropping season)

OR

- If you are an Owner-operator and do your own AvoGreen monitoring (or your employee does) you must:
 - hold a valid AvoGreen licence **and**
 - maintain records for audit **and**
 - record if you are not monitoring because you have no crop **and**
 - remain accredited as a pest monitor at all times
 - If your pest monitoring accreditation (or your employees') expires **you are no longer eligible for export**

The AIC's Glenys Parton says, 'At all times have a contract with an AvoGreen Operator OR keep your own pest monitoring accreditation up to date. As export markets demand more in regard to responsible on-orchard practice, greater verification will be undertaken of AvoGreen compliance. Growers intending to be eligible for export to China should expect their AvoGreen compliance to be audited.'

Additional compliance requirements for China Exports: Clarity expected soon

There are some additional grower requirements to meet the China Official Assurance Programme (OAP) and Glenys Parton will be hosting workshops to talk through the [new requirements](#). Dates and venues will be advised ASAP.

Understanding Maturity Clearance Areas

With the advent of the new [AIC maturity testing requirement](#) which limits the size of a Maturity Clearance Area (MCA) to 5ha, we have made some process changes to the Avocado harvest. These changes have enabled greater visibility of the harvest and also provide traceability. For instance, we are now using FreshPack software to manage the inventory through the shed, and we are also trying to move the management of the harvest into 'Harvest Manager,' an electronic whiteboard system already used extensively during the Kiwifruit.

With this in mind, we have updated our data base and have allotted all PPINs a Maturity Clearance Area (MCA) or more if they are over the 5Ha. We have also given each maturity two names; one for the first pick and another for the second pick.

Let's look at an example:

PPIN 12345 has 5 blocks and is 8ha in size and so will require 2 MCA's.

- Blocks 1, 2, & 3 total 4.5ha and will become MCA P12345/HA1 ('HA' denoting Hass and 1 the MCA)
- Block 4 & 5 total 3.5ha and becomes MCA P12345/HA2

For the second pick, the MCA will have an 's' added to the number. E.g.:

- P12345/HA1s
- P12345/HA2s

Ongoing, you will notice on the bin cards that your PPIN will be printed with the MCA

immediately following it. Also, each bin card has a large four-digit number on it; what we call a 'yard number.' This number is used for traceability from the orchard through to packing. The yard number is created randomly and so bears no resemblance to your PPIN. If you have any questions around this, please do not hesitate to talk to your Grower Rep.

YOUR APATA GROUP CONTACTS

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Spray Diary Data Bases:

For those who attended our workshop earlier in the year, you may recall Glenys talking about the new electronic spray diary that the AIC is developing. (When it is released I am sure it will be much more user friendly than as it was presented.) Glenys mentioned how critical it is to ensure the integrity of the data for it to work successfully. This means that data flowing between the Spray Diary, Eurofins, the AIC, Maps and Post-Harvest Facilities will all have to match exactly for the systems to be able to talk to each other.

What this means, on a practical level, for Growers and Packers is that we are going to need to ensure that Maps, Spray diaries and Eurofins all have matching names for blocks in the Orchard. We are pretty much 99% compliant with this now which is good. What we have to do next is get the blocks named alpha numerically. i.e. A, B, C, OR 1, 2, 3. This is going to be a requirement of the AIC and revolves around keeping the integrity of the data.

Where blocks have names such as "Cowshed" "River" or Terrace" there is a much higher chance of a "typo" occurring and thus when data is downloaded from one application to another the data will not match and we will have an error. This can give rise to us not being able to download a "Maturity clearance" or verify a spray diary and, as a consequence, we won't be able to produce a CTP (Clearance to Pick) until the error is remedied. I understand this will be quite a change for some, but in the quest for running a smooth and efficient system it is what is required.



INVITES YOU TO ATTEND A FIELD-DAY

Wednesday 15th November @ 2.30pm

Venue: Maria and Andrew Watchorn's orchard
at 62 Prole Road, Omokoroa

Andrew and Maria Watchorn have had production off their Prole Rd orchard for 12 years straight, winning numerous industry awards for their efforts. Over the years, they have evolved their pruning strategies to meet the needs of their orchard and maximise production. They are happy to share their philosophy on pruning and what has worked for them with other growers.

They welcome you to come and enjoy this sharing of knowledge and a guided tour.

Agenda

- John Carroll and Alistair Young will give an update on market performance so far this season
- Glenys Parton will present changes to Avogreen – this is very important to note, especially for 'Owner operators'
- Jerome Hardy will outline pest control options post-flowering
- Colin Partridge will remind growers about controlling the ever-present fruit rot threat
- Maria Watchorn will discuss their pruning philosophy
- This will be followed by an orchard walk



- Le Grande finale will be - the AVOCO awards presentation!

We hope you will join us for a BBQ and refreshments at the end of the day.

For catering purposes, please RSVP to:
Katherine Bolus: reception@southernproduce.co.nz
or 07 5526880

(Don't forget your wet weather gear)

Market Report: Local Regan Booth

The weekly volume packed for the NZ Local Market averaged over 45,000 TE for the past 3 weeks. These are similar volumes to this time last year at a significantly higher value. This is all good news however the market is starting to fill up somewhat and with BBQ season not quite here yet, we are starting to see values slip back – this has primarily been driven by market floors without retail homes for fruit. This does destabilize things somewhat but it's not unexpected. It's glass half full really as we still expect values to be at record levels for the season. This won't affect us too much at retail level but we still need to be mindful of other marketers and their 'shoot from the hip' approach to selling fruit. Thankfully this is less of an issue as it was in the past as more fruit is channeled through retail leaving the open market less likely to crumble under pressure.

Some things of note:

- Values for premium sizes from retail programmes still holding strong OGRs, but smaller fruit selling cheaply is placing pressure on retail values for larger sizes. Prepacking smaller fruit for retail is helping to keep the value on 39s and 42s from dropping further.
- Current returns are likely to soften for a time from now, as some suppliers try to move what may be a larger volume of fruit than they are used to, and are discounting accordingly
- Export packouts continue to be strong at 70% to 80%+
- Expect to start seeing avocado promotions as volumes allow, this is necessary to keep consumer interest and value.

