

THE Smashed Avo

AUTUMN 2018 *Apata*
TOGETHER WE'RE BETTER

**KEVIN EVANS'
INCREDIBLE
3000 KM
TOUR**



CHINA
What you need
to know

PLUS: Global GAP, Health & Safety, Market Updates, and more.

Kevin Evans' Slice of Heaven

After six months' physical preparation, well known avocado grower Kevin Evans recently cycled the length of New Zealand, beginning February 28th, from Cape Reinga to Bluff.

More than 600 people joined the organised event, known as "Tour Aotearoa," following 3,000 km of cycle trails, tracks, paths and lanes, with just 30 days to reach Bluff - an average of 100km a day.

(By way of comparison, the Tour de France is 3,300km over 21 stages; so this really is quite a remarkable challenge.)

Of course there was a lot of training time in the saddle beforehand, over 4,000 km in fact, but Kevin credits an active lifestyle on the orchard to keeping him healthy. "A full day on the orchard gives you a pretty good fitness base," he says.

Now, one month on from the event, Kevin is reflecting upon the experience and recalls the camaraderie of the tour as being a particular highlight. As an example; after one particularly long hard day he was preparing to crawl into his tent only to have a hot meal and shower offered to him by a member of the public who was tracking the ride and offered meal and accommodation for riders passing through. He also pays tribute to the "trail angels" at the well set up fuel stops along the way offering fruit or muesli bars for riders.

His daughter, Rochelle, managed the orchard in his absence, but lost brownie points when they met on his way through Paeroa for lunch: she'd forgotten to bring a ripe avocado. Rochelle believed that it was the longest length of time he has gone without his regular avocado food companion.

Kevin thrived on the challenge and the support he received along the way from strangers as well as friends who were tracking and meeting him along the way.

"It's easy to get anxious about the feat ahead," said Kevin during the journey, "but I've come to the conclusion as long as the bike wheels are going around, I'm getting there."

While most riders used digital mapping technology, Kevin chose to self-navigate using

the Kennett Brothers Cycle Tour Book to keep him mentally active. "And it gives you a rest while you stop at intersections to double check."

After the first 1,500 km Kevin was met by his wife Ann-Marie in Blenheim. Not coincidentally, he duly gave himself the whole day off and took time to celebrate his birthday by enjoying lunch with Ann-Marie and some friends.



As there are only about 2,000 km's. of sealed highway in New Zealand, riders were often sent out on to some fairly remote tracks that most people would never know existed unless they had toured by bike.

One of the most difficult sections on the ride was the Mangatapu Hill which Kevin ended up having to walk 14 of the 18 km and, as the track was so steep, even the ride down was a challenge.

Another time, an 11 km tramping track, it was so rutted that it was more prudent to walk. Kevin saw many riders' injuries were from falls and knew that, given any injury could put you out of the ride, it was better to stay within your capabilities. One of the tracks was so difficult it took him 8.5 hours to complete 32 km. Even the first 100km leg of the journey, which took in 90-mile beach, was described by Kevin as the hardest 100 km he has ever cycled.

Kevin found himself getting fitter as the ride progressed. On day 12 he was riding up a hill and realised he was riding 2 gears higher than he normally did. Some riders slept out rough throughout the ride, but Kevin said he didn't do the ride to be miserable and only slept out in his tent twice. Most nights he would find a country pub to stay the night and he said you never felt like you were to remote from anywhere. Riders are tracked for the entire ride and have an emergency button if they ever got into trouble or had a fall.

Kevin completed the ride in 26 days and he said

some days were too short, so he would ride 120 km or 140 km and still be finished by 4pm so they could sit around and enjoy a beer. 75% of riders finished in 24 – 26 days.

One element of the ride that Kevin was amazed at was how many women did the cycling tour. Many were aged between 40 to 60 years old and there were also younger woman in their 30's who had taken a month off from work, or raising children, to do the tour.

When Kevin finished the tour he had an overwhelming feeling of wellbeing and said that cycling through New Zealand was like "living in a cocoon of delight."

"All life's noise recedes when you take on something like this," he said, "When you're on your bike you are making decisions all the time. Which gears to use, how fast, how slow, what route. Each day you get up and put on the same clothes and pedal for another 8 to 12 hours. You were kind of in a bubble, but in a good way. You could follow a blue dot on GPS or follow the precise instructions booklet given to you; which I chose to do."

As far as injuries were concerned, most injuries were butt related, but given Kevin's butt cheeks have the "consistency of Rhino hide," he came out of it all pretty well.



Made it! Kevin in Bluff.

Would he do it again? No. Because it would never be as good as this time. Kevin had no gear failures, only a couple of days rain and because everything was new the first time, it was special, so he feels satisfied to have completed and enjoyed it without feeling the need to complete it a second time.

This is such an inspiring achievement and, from the entire Apata team we congratulate Kevin for completing this challenge.

About Kevin's Fund Raising for the Event

While completing the ride was a massive personal accomplishment, Kevin also raised \$2,200 to support a local Katikati group who offer eye screening at Katikati Primary school for Irlen Syndrome.

Apata has decided to match the money Kevin raised, so the total amount raised was \$4,400.

To find out more about Irlen Syndrome, go to:

<https://irlen.com/>

FROM SATURDAY'S NZ HERALD...

Two men snapped allegedly harvesting an Auckland resident's avocado tree on a mobility scooter have been reported to the police.

Bret Glazer, 52, said his wife was in the kitchen at their Sandringham home about 10.30am yesterday when she spotted two men prodding their avocado tree with a stick over the fence.

"There's a park over the fence, and they were on the other side with a long 12ft pole reaching over the fence to pull them out," he said.



For the full story, follow this [link](#).

And we thought Smashed Avo was expensive.
Vegemite and Toast (deconstructed)... \$7



COMPLIANCE

Kate Truffitt



GLOBAL GAP CHANGES

"Upcoming changes should not affect the growers too much," is the message from Graeme Munroe AVOCO's Quality Manager. "You will need to complete some extra check sheets for some of the new sections".

The new grower manual pages are being printed shortly and Apata will assist you in updating your manuals and working out what other documents you may need if there are any differences.

AVOCO Grower audit system, due to customer requirements, has had to change to the internationally recognised Global Gap Audit system. AVOCO have invested in a new electronic auditing system for the auditors to use, at present Apata are assisting in trialling this system.

We will work together to ensure a smooth transition to the new system.

HASS - Health & Safety Support

There are still a lot of growers that do not understand their duties under the new HSWA (Health & Safety Work Act 2015) legislation. I highly recommend getting some advice or making use of the information available on the [worksafe website](#).

Working out the extent of your duty

Extent of duty – some questions to ask yourself:

1. Who controls the risk? I.e. Is the hazard on your property therefore under your control?
2. Do you share the risk with another company? E.g. Does someone come to your property to trim your hedges?
3. Who has the most influence over the risks?

This simple assessment will determine the ability your business has to influence and control the health and safety matters. And the more influence and control your business has over a health and safety matter, the more responsibility you are likely to have.

For example, a business can have influence and control over health and safety matters through:

- control over work activity: a business in control of the work activity may be in the best position to control the health and safety risks.
- control of the workplace: a business who has control over the workplace (and/or plant and structures at the workplace) will have some influence and control over health and safety matters arising from work carried out by another business.
- control over workers and visitors: a business will have more influence and control over its own workers and contractors (visitors) than those of another business.

A business with a higher level of influence and control (and with the greatest share of the responsibilities) will usually be in the best position to manage the associated risks.

A business with less control or influence may fulfill their responsibilities by making suitable arrangements with the business with the higher level of influence and control.

BUSINESS UPDATE

Operations: Chris Alderson

Bay of Plenty; this will allow us to use anyone who may be in New Zealand on a holiday visa – because everyone wants kiwifruit work on their holidays!

Staff issues aside, we have already packed 17% of our expected volume as a group – that's an incredible 2m trays! The fruit will keep running now through until midish-June and, currently, the fruit is looking good to roll into GA mainpack. It's been a bumpy start, but every season seems to be, but we're already a hell of a lot of trays closer to the big green things we all love!

Well, with all the caps closed, and kiwistart not just started but finished, we can safely say that we are well into the 2018 kiwifruit season. And, as the fruit pours in, we are still anxiously watching the gate for the flurry of staff to arrive to pack the fruit. Every year is different and has its challenges and this year it's labour. It is looking more and more likely that a labour shortage will be announced by MSD for the

ENTRY TO CHINA

What you need to know

Entry to the World's largest market obviously provides enormous opportunity, but rather than being excited at the prospect, we are hearing that many are concerned about the additional compliance required to open the doors.

The good news is that if you're currently exporting, you're already doing most of the work. In fact, when one looks at the "[AvoGreen Owner-operator China compliance assessment checklist](#)", of the 35 points, just 4 are new and they are minor.

Point No.	Control Point
20	Has the recording sheet been filled in completely – including "zero" for no pests detected?
23	Has a copy of the monitoring results been sent to the packhouse monthly as required by the OAP
31	Is the Owner-operator/pest monitoring familiar with the China action requirements? Guidance: Don't have to remember off by heart but are familiar with Section 9 of the AvoGreen Manual.
32	Have actions (spraying or re-monitoring) been carried out in relation to Section 9 of the AvoGreen manual?

All other points are covered by AvoGreen already; although there are some Control Points that will require stronger recording discipline. I.e. know and understand what chemicals are applied for specific pests on your orchard.

Apata strongly encourage our growers to support our industry's push into China. Yes, at the moment, we're only talking about 50,000 trays, but the potential is enormous when China's scale is considered. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact your grower rep.

**A SNEAK PREVIEW OF
OUR NEXT AVOSCENE
BACK PAGE...**

CROP ESTIMATION

Grower Services

Niko, Peter and Kevin have been traipsing around orchards for the last month with a new crop estimate sheet counting trees and assessing crops for the coming season. Their gym memberships have been canceled due to the number of steps taken each day!

The crop estimate looks like it will sit in between the last two seasons. More growers have crop this year, but not being a boomer year, returns should again be rewarding. Fruit size is looking good which bodes well for Apata to be able to meet the size profile for China of 16's, 18's and 20's.

We encourage growers to be actively interested in accessing their crop as the estimate is so crucial to your returns. AVOCO rely on the pack-houses to get as close to estimate as possible. They use our estimate to flow fruit to overseas customers and Avoco ends up having some difficult conversations with them if they run out of fruit at that crucial period when demand is so strong.

Throughout this season we intend to assess and re-assess to get our estimate as accurate as possible and we rely on your help to achieve this. The recent winds have already had an impact on some grower's crop so please get in touch with us if you have been affected.



GROWER COMMITTEE

Trevor Seal

This tends to be the time of the year when we all take stock of the season that was in terms of results, what we learnt, and what we could have done better and look forward to the challenges of the coming season. While a lot of growers suffered from a lack of volume last season, our marketers, Avoco for export and Primor and Southern Produce for local, did their best to make up for this with quite spectacular results and I'm sure you'll join me in thanking and congratulating them for their efforts.

Things that we could have done better? Quality of information in terms of crop volumes and harvest timing is essential for our marketers to meet their/our commitments to our major customers. A report card for last season would probably read "could have done better" and a greater level of commitment from growers in terms of crop estimation on their orchards and cooperation in terms of harvesting to the flow plan would certainly be in our own best interest.

The Committee via the Avoco Grower Relationship Committee keeps working to have input to the various incentive/compensation systems within the pool to assist this process and will continue to promote refinement and enhancements to ensure that our goals are achieved and all growers in the pool are treated equally.

Looking forward to the coming season, as well as improving on past performance, we have a couple of fresh challenges:

Entry to China will be challenging in terms of meeting the China/MPI protocols and we have several growers doing the hard yards in committing to the trial shipment (last season) and submitting their orchards to be "China compliant" for the coming season. There has, and will be, a lot of effort required here and a big thank you to those growers involved who are taking a leadership role and paving the way for the

rest of us.

As we all know there is a growing trend towards a sharper focus on food safety. Our major customers are no different and are demanding more rigorous compliance standards. This has resulted in Avoco launching Global GAP this coming season. From a grower's perspective, I think that we have nothing to fear here and we can take a couple of approaches. 1) We can treat this as a pure "tick the boxes" compliance process or 2) we can treat this as a tool to enhance value within our business with the potential to have systems in place that enhance production and quality and eliminate harm to people and damage to assets and equipment all beneficial to the bottom line.

As a committee, in association with Apata, we have been reviewing our Terms of Reference to update and modernise what was a rather ancient document and make it more relevant to the way we currently operate and be totally inclusive of Apata Team growers. A copy of this document is available to any grower on request.

Finally, a word about our grower coffee mornings: With the help of Apata providing a more "up market" approach to promotion we are gaining a greater attendance and more support for this concept. The committee sees the coffee mornings as a vehicle to connect with the growers who elect us, which then allows us to bring a wider view to the official meetings we have. There is an added benefit as there is an extremely diverse range of general business and commercial experience and expertise amongst Apata avo growers and there are many and varied conversations at these meetings all of which add value. We very much appreciate the support of growers who come along and would encourage others to give it a try.

Trevor Seal

On behalf of the Apata Avocado Growers' Committee

TECHNICAL TIPS

Jerome Hardy - Primor (027 233 4280)

The autumn temperature change happened overnight and with that growth has slowed and the strong summer flush, fired by warmth, humidity and mineral nutrition, is hardening off.

Sizing is excellent as crops are generally not excessive, and canopy condition is outstanding.

This month you should be injecting, pruning, taking soil and leaf samples AND remaining watchful of pest populations. Six-spotted mite populations have surged in the last 3 weeks on many orchards so beware.

I have listed below a little more detail on these key autumn priorities:

Root health: One common factor between highly productive orchards is that they inject their trees every year, on a maintenance or preventative basis.

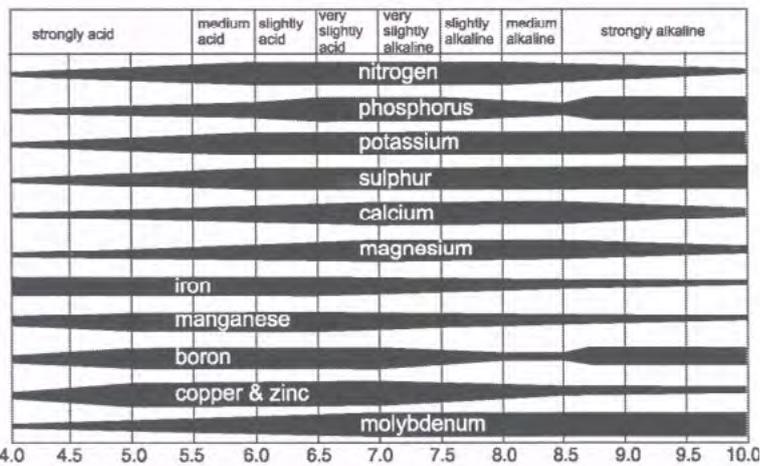
If you pull the mulch away under your trees you will notice the autumn root flush now well underway; roots are now a strong 'sink' for resources and it's a good time to inject right now. Sicker trees that have not responded to 1-2 years of phosphonate treatment should be pruned back heavily in the autumn.

Inject all healthy trees 'preventatively' in autumn, every year at 15% active ingredient and refer to your advisor or the recent AVOCO Technical Note by Colin Partridge for more detail.

Some comments on Leaf and Soil

Testing: One of several things we measure when we take a soil test is soil pH. At pH extremes mineral nutrients become unavailable to the avocado roots (see image right.) This is why we use lime to keep soil pH within an ideal range of 6.0 to 6.6.

When you get your results (assuming a traditional, productive Hass on Zutano seedling rootstock orchard) you should assess them against the norms below and in the case of the key nutrients, re-consider your strategy for the year ahead.



Source: avosource.com

SOIL	UNITS	TARGET
pH		6.0-6.6
Olsen P	mg/L	>40
Potassium	me/100g	1.0-1.2
Calcium	me/100g	12-20
Magnesium	me/100g	2-5
CEC	me/100g	15-25
Base Saturation	%	75-90
K Base Saturation	%	3-10
Ca Base Saturation	%	55-65
Magnesium Base Saturation	%	12-15
Boron (M3 test)	mg/L	2.5-5.0

LEAF	UNITS	TARGET
Nitrogen	%	2.7-3.0
Phosphorous	%	0.15-0.19
Potassium	%	1.0-1.2
Calcium	%	1.5+
Magnesium	%	0.4-0.8
Manganese	Ppm	80-300
Zinc	Ppm	50-150
Boron	Ppm	40-60

Pest Control / Six-spotted Mite: Mite infestations can readily occur in autumn and winter AND IN THE LAST 3 WEEKS MANY ORCHARDS HAVE SHOWN A STRONG INCREASE IN MITE NUMBERS. Mites are an arch-enemy of leaf/canopy health; pest-monitor regularly and contact your advisor for guidance if you need to control a rising population.

Pruning: All trees or branches with a light / nil crop should be considered for pruning at this time of year. Get good advice or engage a good contractor to do this job: they will be worth their weight in gold!

DON'T FORGET TO FILL OUT YOUR AVOCO SURVEY AND SEND IT TO YOUR GROWER REP.

MARKET UPDATE - EXPORT

John Carroll: AVOCO

AVOCO “smashes out” another record OGR

This past week growers have been receiving their Pool Statements and final payments for the 2017/18 export season. It won't take too much analysis to recognise the OGR's delivered have reached record values, by some way.

It's time to celebrate this achievement, on the 5th Anniversary of AVOCO's formation.

The result is a function of various key attributes of our collective businesses being combined to drive positive outcomes.

It starts at the New Zealand end of the supply chain with loyal, committed, quality-minded growers, and ends in the market place with the “best pick” of customers in Australia and across all the markets we serve in Asia. In between, the strengths of an experienced team of staff across all facets of the business have applied their skills in market planning, packing, shipping, logistics, sales and marketing, to extract the best possible result.

All markets performed...

Without exception, values in all markets were ahead of expectation and budget, with AVOCO managing a responsibly balanced market mix of 80% Australia / 20% Rest of World, ensuring existing long-term key customers were supported at the same time continuing to build emerging markets for the future.

In Australia we enjoyed very strong performances in both our major retail chain programmes where the vast majority of fruit available was directed.

The Asian market arena combined to deliver higher values. Volumes supplied however were necessarily shortened from what has been sent in previous seasons and so inevitably “Supply vs Demand 101” kicked in. That said, with every season the marketing team are developing a better sense of how best to massage and prioritise market allocations within the prevailing environment of alternate bearing.

Not all “beer and skittles”...

The season was not without some negatives. An inability to accurately forecast and update expected final tray volumes challenged our market performance and credibility. This is an industry wide issue and an area that must be addressed. Crop estimation and optimum fruit flow are key drivers to market placement and outcomes.

We experienced issues with rots as well as incidences of cosmetic quality not meeting customer



expectation, particularly given the prices being demanded. There is further work to be done in the quality arena and AVOCO together with our packer partners will provide leadership to industry, in an effort to mitigate this problem.

CHINA – a new market beckons...

With market access for New Zealand avocados now formalised, plans are in place to export “AVANZA” branded fruit to China for the first time in 2018/19 season.

AVOCO's Steve Trickett and Tony Ponder have been visiting Shanghai in the past week to evaluate best “fit for purpose” importer-distributor options there, as well as identifying target sales channels that will accept both our larger sized fruit and our premium pricing objectives.

Aware that market dominators Mexico and Chile mostly produce and supply smaller sized fruit with differing cost / value equations, New Zealand cannot live in the same space. Accordingly, we are looking to differentiate our fruit by supplying 16/18/20 sizes to niche “offline” and “online” retail outlets, supported by a strong “AVANZA premium” brand story.

While we currently have other proven markets “putting their hands up” for such fruit, it is critical that we follow through in exploring this potentially significant long-term market now that direct access to China has been negotiated. Putting aside AVOCO's own market development strategy, electing not to participate would be viewed very negatively by both Government and “industry” and could impact on our ability to gain support for any future “new market” access investment by MPI, MFAT and associated bodies.

We will be doing the minimum volume possible to be both relevant and credible in this vast market. For 2018/19 that means serving just one importer with one 40' container per week only, for a relatively short supply timing of around 12 weeks September to November, then “getting out”. That equates to 50,000 trays or just over 2% of our anticipated crop volume.

The volume sounds small and on paper should be easy to muster. However, grower compliance around AvoGreen systems, record keeping, pest monitoring and management will be critical if we are to reach our goals for 2018/19.

AVOCO are currently canvassing for suitable growers from 3 Bay of Plenty packers including Apata, to “step up” for the task of helping us launch into China.

AVOCO and the industry needs you!

MARKET UPDATE - EXPORT

Regan Booth: Primor

The NZ market is now our second biggest market and whilst it continues to provide stronger returns year on year, we are keeping our foot firmly to the floor. Next season's retail planning is already underway, even though we still have some current season fruit trickling in.



OGR's for the season are very pleasing and to have returns lapping at the heels of export is nothing short of sensational; a real pat on the back for all involved.

Some might argue that this is purely due to a short market. Yes, that will have had some impact, but where in the past only a percentage of Apata domestic fruit went to retail, I can now comfortably say that over 99% of this fruit is now sold to NZ supermarkets. In addition to this, not only are our retail partners paying more for our fruit, but they are applauding us for a job well done and pushing for more and more promotional activity. Part of this value increase is due to the fact that less fruit is visible on the market floor. With retail soaking up everything we have planned for them, the floors are left with smaller amounts of fruit to sell which in turn helps keep values strong.

NZ Retail now takes everything from 16s through to 42s which enables us to walk away from the volatility of the market floor and concentrate on where the real growth and value is.

The next step is to solidify a brand we can use for pushing our fruit further into NZ retail whilst capitalising on brand focussed promotional activity. This is something that Foodstuffs have asked us to pursue – branding produce has always been niche and it's tough to gain consumer loyalty, but with our ripening program and Foodstuffs support we can see a massive opportunity. (Think 'Yummy' apples, 'Dole' bananas etc.) The ultimate goal is to have our avocado brand as a NZ household name.

In saying all of this, we do need class 1 fruit to go offshore and support the AVOCO export model which the Primor NZ market model mimics. It's a delicate balance which we need to maintain to ensure we maximise returns from all markets and for all growers.

Meet Harper..



Harper is desperately cute and is also Therese's grand-daughter. Therese says she's, "good enough to eat and great to cuddle."

As you can see, the promotion of Avocados is in the blood and we've already got Harper lined up as our ambassador from the moment she starts solids or says, "Avo," as her first word.

This is Therese and Kerry's first grandchild and, suffice to say... Therese has got it real bad.

Which is totally enjoyable to witness.

(My mum says, "You think you love your children... but grandkids are something else." I used to think how lovely that was, but then it dawned on me... maybe she feels that way because either my kids are great or I was a little turd as a kid. - Ed)

We're all delighted for the family and look forward to hearing more of Harper's adventures.