



WE'RE ALL ABOUT AVO'S!

NEWSLETTER: MAY-JUNE 2018

www.justavocados.co.nz | 54 Woodland Road, Katikati | 07 549 3027



TOP PHOTO: Huge turn out at field day at Iain and Liz McGillivray's orchard hosted with AIC. **BOTTOM PHOTO:** Erica Faber talks pruning and managing regrowth.

Welcome to the May-June Newsletter,

We have had a busy month with four field days and three end of season grower evenings. Thank you to the two companies who supported our South Auckland and Whangarei Field days - GROlogic and Biostart. We have included notes from the field days on pages 4-5.

It was great to catch up with so many of you over the last month and to share the details of our record results. A 46% increase over last season's results is a fantastic outcome and feedback from growers has been extremely positive. It's great to see the hard working paying off for all of us.

If you have questions regarding your returns, please contact Greg, John or I to make a time to go through these with you.

It's hard to think of a more positive fresh produce category that I have been involved with over the last 15 or so years, with the record returns achieved in the 2017-18 season and a group of growers who are striving to get the best out of their production and orchards.

Orchard health and future production is something we have put a huge focus on over the last year, combined with achieving the best possible financial outcomes. The team is proud to represent a model which is delivering this.

The 2018-19 grower proposals and contracts for packing/marketing are close to being in the mail. Part of the details we require back from you when signing the contract is letting us know your crop estimate.

Accuracy in crop estimation is critical and will be a focus for us this season. Your grower services team are using three different estimation methods catering for the range of orchards that we encounter. If crop estimation is an area you struggle with, then please let us know and we can discuss the various methods with you and help you work towards gaining a more accurate estimate. This is an important aspect of the planning required to extract the best possible outcomes.

Regards,

Jarrod Redwood



Jarrod Redwood

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2017-18 SEASON REVIEW AND RESULTS

Final payments have been made and season summaries sent to all growers who exported with Just Avocados in the 2017-18 season. Meetings took place in Katikati, Whangarei and Houhora to share the highlights and results of the year - which by all accounts was a record year with fantastic outcomes. We are proud to say - WE HAVE DELIVERED!

Record returns were presented to Just Avocados suppliers, showing a 46% increase over results for the previous season.

Our fresh strategy, flexible model, and time related incentive were all drivers for the positive results.

"Returns were strong across the board; however, our time premium payment, which kicked in from week 50, delivered particularly strong returns upwards of \$40 per tray, for those who took advantage of the incentive," says Jarrod Redwood, GM Operations and Grower Services .

Jarrold says suppliers have benefitted from the unique Just Avocados model which caters for a range of growers with a range of needs.

"Our model delivers a range of returns based on what decisions growers make about when they want to pick and this is influenced by a variety of drivers including orchard health and revenue. We are enjoying working with them to deliver the outcome that will maximise their returns and suit their personal and business goals."

A change in marketing strategy for 2017-18 meant a focus on specific markets and sales channels that targeted premium customers. Jacob Darling GM Sales and Marketing for Darling Group, who represents Just Avocados' fruit in export markets, says that this strategy was a significant change

CONGRATULATIONS RECORD VALUE SEASON!

from historic pre-programmed sales.

"We targeted Asia early in the New Zealand season and held back the majority of crop for a high paying post-Christmas Australian market. Jacob says Just Avocados set

next season and take a more direct approach," says Jacob.

Jacob says that Australian retail is the core driver of value out of the Australian market and allows the company to consistently move a high volume of fruit at good prices.

GROWING BUSINESS IN ASIA

- New strategy
- 25.8% of volume to Asia
- Targeted placement
- Increased customer base, volume and value in Korea
- Record volume and value in Thailand across all channels



"In times when the market is fully supplied, we see a gap between retail and wholesale prices, with retail holding greater value. This highlights the importance of Australian retail in the long term."

GROWING RETAIL PRESENCE IN AUSTRALIA

We have increased the retail share of our programme by 55% over two seasons



18%

2015-16





73%

2017-18





The Just Avocados team also shared how the programme of field days, technical articles and advice has helped to upskill growers and

aims to increase productivity in coming seasons. Erica Faber, Orchard Productivity Manager, has focused on avocado nutrition over the past season and is seeing positive results in orchards.

goals for increasing business, volumes, and values into Asia and increasing their market share in Australian retail.

"The retail share of our Australian programme has significantly increased from 18% to 75% over two seasons. It's something we have focused on and we are going to continue to drive this into

aims to increase productivity in coming seasons. Erica Faber, Orchard Productivity Manager, has focused on avocado nutrition over the past season and is seeing positive results in orchards.

"We are working with growers to increase health in orchards with marginal trees as it is essential to get the balance in the tree correct before we can work on pushing >>

greater production - we are already seeing good results in subsequent nutrition analyses."

Given the growth cycle of the avocado, Erica says it takes two seasons to see changes in production once nutrient balance has been corrected.

Looking ahead to what's on the agenda for 2018-19, Just Avocados, currently the only packhouse and

exporter in New Zealand officially registered to export avocados to China, is preparing growers for this significant opportunity.

Jacob says the rigorous auditing of Just Avocados' operations by Chinese officials in January was challenging but the hard work has just begun in this market.

"The opening of the market is just the beginning; the real test will be

educating the consumer to pay a premium for New Zealand avocados."

Increasing the direct to retail opportunity in Australia and continuing to capture high value segments in Asia remain focuses for the coming season also. ●

ON THE ORCHARD

GREG'S CORNER - ORCHARD NEWS FROM THE BAY OF PLENTY

Well done to our growers and those who work in the markets who have delivered a great result for the 2017-18 season.

SEASON RESULTS

As Jarrod has said in his intro to the newsletter, we are available to speak with you about your results and if you were unable to make it to the season review meetings we would be happy to take you through the information that was shared. Please contact me to make a time.

WINTER CHORES

This time of the year is generally quiet on the orchards. Soil and leaf samples have been taken and fertiliser programmes are in the process of been put together for the nutrient requirements for the year ahead.

My observations in the Bay Of Plenty orchards is that the fruit continues to size up and growers are obviously keeping up with their AvoGreen programmes as most orchards have very clean fruit.

Over the next few months growers will be looking to prune their orchards, a job that is a lot easier on trees holding no fruit, but a job that certainly must be done. Please check out Erica's pruning tip on our website Over the last couple of years every field day you go to covers off on pruning so growers

should have a very good idea on what's required to be done on their own orchard, but if you are unsure just give me a call and we'll pop over and give you some advice.

As we go into the wetter months now is a good time to check that all drainage systems are working effectively so as to prevent excessive surface water accumulating around the trees. Avocado roots are extremely sensitive to water logging even for short periods.

If you have planted new trees over summer, make sure they are well protected for the coming winter. Ensure the trees are well staked and frost cloth in place on frost prone blocks.

STORM DAMAGE

The belief is that Friday the 13th is an unlucky day and for some growers in Katikati this proved to be the case in April. In the early hours of the morning of the 13th we were hit by some of the strongest winds I have ever experienced in Katikati.

Reports rolled in over the following days of some growers losing vast quantities of fruit and some damage to the trees themselves. One of our growers reported that of an initial estimate of 300 bins on the trees there could be as many as 150 bins on the orchard floor, heart-breaking to say the least.

Erica's tips for supporting trees to recover from storm damage can



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be found on our website:
justavocados.co.nz/articles.

CROP ESTIMATION

Before you register with Avocado Industry Council for export and fill in our grower details form in your season proposal, take a good walk around your orchard and get your tray estimate as accurate as you can, this is extremely important to all stakeholders in our industry.

There are three methods that we are using to estimate crop this season. If you have found that you are accurate then stick to your method - if you have not been accurate in the past, now is an important time to get it sorted for the coming season - contact me to chat about a new strategy for your orchard. ●

JOHN'S JOTTINGS - ORCHARD NEWS FROM SOUTH AUCKLAND TO THE FAR NORTH

BIG DEVELOPMENT IN FAR NORTH

I was fortunate enough to have a little look at the largest new orchard development in the Far North. It is an impressive undertaking that will see over 200 hectares planted in a 12-month period.

Credit must be given to the developer and the project managers for achieving this goal. It is quite a sight looking in both directions at avocados planted in perfectly straight rows with all the necessary infrastructure in place as well.

These new large developments (of which there is currently 1000ha under development) will change the statistics of our industry in a short time span with regards to proportion of fruit grown outside of BOP and average size of orchards.



Logan Whenuaroa talking on AIC clonal rootstock research at AIC field day in Whangarei.

2018-19 CROP

The crops of our existing clients in the Far North are sizing well and are looking clean from pests and should pack out well.

INDUSTRY FIELD DAYS

I attended AIC field days in Houhora and Whangarei. They were all well attended, and it was interesting to note the different questions from growers in the different regions. The Whangarei group were particularly vocal about industry levies and the continued use of copper. There was also good discussion around clonal rootstocks and the work the AIC are putting into evaluate which is best suited in the three main growing regions we have - Globally Dusa is the dominant rootstock, and is performing well in the New Zealand trials, along with Bounty. More detail on the trial can be found on the AIC website if you enter "rootstock" in the search area.



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White healthy roots of excellent diameter.

HEALTHY ROOTS

I am not sure if it is the growing season we have just had or other factors, but I am noticing a lot of orchards with excellent root health that appear to be actively growing despite it being mid May.

The colour of the roots will go from white to a more creamy shade as they harden off and become less efficient at nutrient uptake. It is a good idea to regularly inspect the roots to see what phase they are in and check on their health. ●

JUST AVOCADOS FIELD DAYS

Key take home points from the recent field days on pruning in the Bay of Plenty and on soil and leaf testing in South Auckland, Whangarei and Far North.

Information on pruning and soil and leaf testing can be found in the articles section of our website: justavocados.co.nz/articles.

PRUNING FOR MAXIMUM PRODUCTION - Erica Faber

The recent field day at Iain and Liz McGillivray's orchard in Katikati looked at managing the regrowth from pruning.

Pruning is an essential orchard management practice and should take place for the entire life of the tree.

In the early "training" years, it is aimed at manipulating growth in order to improve the framework

and structure of the tree for achieving optimum yield potential. In declining years, the emphasis shifts to promoting rejuvenation and ensuring maximum sunlight to penetrate the tree canopy.

Management of the pruning regrowth is essential at an early stage.

Thinning of regrowth needs to be done in order to minimize competition for light and resources thereby enabling >>

stronger and more productive regrowth.

Once thinned, tipping of regrowth breaks apical dominance and encourages lateral branching for optimal production.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO YOUR SOIL AND LEAF TEST RESULTS - Erica Faber

The field days in South Auckland, Whangarei and Houhora discussed using soil and leaf test results to drive the performance of fertiliser input programmes.

In order for analytical results to be meaningful, sampling guidelines should be followed. The information is meaningless if the sample has not been taken correctly.

One of the basic principles of sampling is to return to the same sampling trees or sites from year to year. These trees or sites must be representative of the entire orchard or major portion of the block. This must be based on tree observation, past experience, crop yield, soil type etc.

Using sampling trees or sites eliminates year on year variability and results in more accurate analysis. This then gives you more clarity on the effectiveness of your fertiliser programmes and the nutritional status of the soil and crop and what adjustments need to be made.

UNLOCKING THE POWER IN YOUR SOIL - Sharon Fitzgerald, GROlogic*

GROlogic was a guest speaker at our South Auckland field day in early May, the following is a recap of the information they shared.

GROlogic is excited to be working with Just Avocados and complimenting their foliar programmes with soil programmes to ensure that soil is healthy and strong and working to its optimum level.

Soil is made up of three areas; biological, physical and chemical.

The biological area takes into account organic matter and microbes, worms, and small insects burrowing and pushing their way through the soil. This creates air pockets for water to flow through which supports micro biology to breathe and survive.

For these microbes to survive they need oxygen, water, food, and comfort. But we don't want them to just survive, we want them to thrive!

There are four main reasons for wanting microbes to thrive:

1. Nutrient cycling – optimising solid fertiliser applications.

Microbes consume minerals from the soil and release them in a plant available form. A low microbe population can mean that your fertiliser and organic matter will sit there for much longer, will weather, leach and get locked up rather than being actively consumed and cycled and made available for plant uptake.

2. Build pest and disease resistance

Increasing the population and diversity of biological organisms in the soil allows beneficial fungi and bacteria to offer more support to combat and outnumber pathogens.

3. Nutrient and Water Retention

Humus holds onto water and nutrients forming a sponge-like structure in your soil. It has the capability of holding onto and releasing nutrients when needed.

4. Decomposition (Active Organic Matter)

Avocado trees need more fungi in their soil than bacteria. We want active fungi to quickly decompose plant material to prevent over wintering of pest and diseases. Fungi provide nutrients to the tree in the right form e.g. fungi feed nitrogen to the tree in ammonium form better suited to avocado trees than the nitrate nitrogen filled bacteria. As avocado trees have no root hairs to extend their root network, an active fungal population is vital to increase their ability to feed on nutrients.

GROlogic provides biostimulants AgZyme and Pervaide that activate soil biology with enzymes to feed and reproduce faster, increasing the population of the soil biology.

We also have liquid and solid humics that can feed the increased biology with a readily available source of carbon.



Product options for soil conditioning.

To contact a GROlogic representative to discuss your soil, call 0800 11 44 22.

An article from our Whangarei field day guest speaker will be shared in the next newsletter.

**Just Avocados Limited takes no responsibility for the outcomes of using third party products, services and information described in this article. ●*

IF YOUR DETAILS HAVE CHANGED, PLEASE LET US KNOW

If any information you have given us on your grower details form has changed, can you please let us know so we can ensure we are posting, calling, emailing and paying to the right place. Email any contact and payment detail updates to info@justavocados.co.nz.

PEST PATROL AND COMPLIANCE UPDATE

GREENHOUSE THRIPS

I am still finding GreenHouse Thrip (GHT) on some orchards. It appears that we have not had the 'cold' weather to knock the little devils off their perch yet!

Comment has been made regarding the possibility that GHT may be becoming immune to the sprays allowed and why are new sprays not being allocated for this pest. I have been advised the short answer is cost – for a spray to have a label claim it has to be trialled and proven. The companies who manufacture the products may feel the return does not warrant the expense.

SIX SPOTTED MITE

I am also seeing Six Spotted Mite (SSM). Fortunately at this stage they are not in high numbers but we should continue to be vigilant as the damage to trees can be rapid if they take hold.

NZGAP

Time is fast approaching for the new round of your NZGAP inspections.

At this stage we will still be following the previous checklist as NZGAP have not completed their review of the compliance requirements.

Please ensure you have the correct Accident and Emergency Procedure signage in place on your orchards – if you need a new laminated sign(s), please let me know so I can have



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them available for you when I come to visit next. ●

EVENTS

Join us ...

New Zealand Avocado International Industry Conference - save the date!

29-31 August 2018, Lion Foundation Centre, ASB Baypark, Tauranga, New Zealand

The conference theme **growing avocados for the world** represents the exciting opportunity our industry has to continue to expand across an international marketplace. The conference will inspire, connect and enable delegates to enhance their knowledge and be better prepared to grow quality fruit for the world.

The exciting program of international and domestic speakers will cover the latest research and information from avocado industries worldwide.

Last held in 2013, this is an industry event not to be missed.

Save the date now and join us in the Bay of Plenty in August 2018. Registration details out May 2018.

If you are interested in sponsorship or exhibition opportunities please call: **0800 AVOCADO** or send an email to: melissa.conrad@nzavocado.co.nz

Featuring speakers:



Loren Zhao
Co-founder, Chinese online fruit retailer, Fruitday.com



Dr Nick Gill
Strength & conditioning coach, All Blacks



New Zealand Avocado

NZ Avocado Growers' Assn Inc.
Avocado Industry Council Ltd

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN ATTENDING THE NEXT WORLD AVOCADO CONGRESS IN COLOMBIA?

Just Avocados has started planning for a group trip to the IX World Avocado Congress which is being held in Medellin, Colombia 23-27 September 2019.



WAC
IX WORLD AVOCADO CONGRESS
- C O L O M B I A -

If you are interested in attending this event as part of a Just Avocados tour group, please register your interest by emailing info@justavocados.co.nz.

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