



By Matthew Jones

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# Asia looms large for NZ avocados

### Industry enjoys successful 2019/20 campaign, with domestic sales reaching record levels



NZ Avocado chief executive Jen Scoular

**A**sian markets were a key growth driver for New Zealand avocado exports over the 2019/20 season.

According to figures released by peak body NZ Avocado, the industry exported 3.8m trays (5.5kg) over the 12 months to May 2020, an increase of 26 per cent year-on-year.

Asian markets – including Thailand, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan – received 35 per cent more volume than 2018/19, meeting the industry’s objective to grow sales in this region.

Total industry returns for the 2019/20 season reached NZ\$154m (US\$102m), an increase of NZ\$10m (US\$6.6m) on the previous year.

A record 2.7m trays were sold in the New Zealand domestic market, generating over NZ\$50m (US\$33m).

“For the first time in a number of years there was no break in avocado supply, as growers held on to one crop while the new crop matured on the trees,” NZ Avocado said in a release. “This also

avoided the spike in pricing that often accompanies the lower supply but increasing demand.”

#### Industry growth

Investment in new plantings continued in 2019, with over 120 new avocado properties registered in New Zealand between May 2019 and May 2020.

New Zealand Avocado Growers’ Association chair, Tony Ponder, said New Zealand’s avocado industry is in a phase of growth and development.

“The continued investment demonstrates real confidence in the New Zealand avocado industry,” Ponder explained.

“Many new growers are attracted to the industry because of the strong growth plans within the industry, and the confidence from the collaborative structured approach but also seek to produce a healthy product, while looking after the land.”

In a bid to reduce the impact avocado production has on the land, NZ Avocado

is developing a sustainability strategy and has hosted a series of stakeholder workshops around the country’s avocado growing regions.

“Many avocado growers are passionate about taking care of New Zealand and want to see their orchards contributing positively to environmental, economic and social sustainability in their communities and regions” said NZ Avocado chief executive Jen Scoular.

#### Cautious optimism

The new-season crop appears to be shaping up well, with NZ Avocado tipping a 10-15 per cent increase in volume from 2019/2020.

As the world manages Covid-19, Scoular said there are elements of uncertainty around the export season ahead.

The industry’s core market, Australia, presents a good opportunity, with lower domestic production expected out of Western Australia over the 2020/21 summer.

Demand in New Zealand’s eight avocado

export markets across Asia looks good, but Scoular said freight and import challenges will need to be overcome.

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<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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