

NZ Avocado Growers' Survey 2010

Survey Results (first cut) 26 August 2010

Response rate: 30% (471 of 1547)

Participation incentive: Accommodation and F&B voucher sponsored by United Travel (won by Ross Mutton from Kaitaia).

Further Analysis: The results presented here are the first cut looking at each question in isolation from the other questions in the survey. Further analysis will be carried out to see how demographics etc affect the answers given in the rest of the survey or how people with certain attitudes about one question answer another. This stage of the analysis can be focused on those issues that are most important in terms of the industry strategy.

Highlights from this analysis:

- Over 60% of growers are over the age of 56
- Avocado production accounts for only 10-20% of the household income for almost 60% of growers.
- Growers face a myriad of issues as illustrated by the breadth of responses, however unsurprisingly Biennial bearing is the issues that arose the most, followed by Canopy Management, Economic viability and Climate issues.
- An interesting group of responses to note (in response to What is your main success?) is *reviving derelict orchards to production* - these stories would be interesting case studies.
- 30% of respondents are considering some form of disinvestment in the industry. The main reason being that it is uneconomic and is not complementing their lifestyle anymore.
- The source of information that was rated the highest in terms of always giving being reliable was that of a consultant. The source of information that was rated the highest in terms of being mostly reliable was the AIC.
- The topic most growers want information on is Canopy Management closely followed by Fruit Set & Pollination.
- The most popular method of communication was Field days/Discussion groups
- In rating the performance of the AIC across all activities, the AICs performance was rated good.

Analysis: Personal Information Section

Q1. What age range do you fit into?

- Over 60% of Avocado growers are over the age of 56

Age Range	<35	35 - 45	46 - 55	56-65	66+
Percentage	0.4%	8.9%	27.2%	40.9%	22.6%

Q2a. Time in Avocado Production

Years Range	<2	2 - 5 years	5 - 10 years	10 - 20 years	20+ years
Percentage	4.5%	20.6%	34.9%	23.8%	16.2%

Q2b. Years previous Ag./Hort. experience

- Over 40% of Avocado Growers had no prior Agricultural or Horticultural background
- 30% had 20+ years before coming into the industry

Years range	None	<2	2 – 5	5-10	10-20	20+
Percentage	42.1%	3.9%	6.2%	7.3%	10.9%	29.6%

Q3a. Ag./Hort. Qualifications

- 20% of the industry have had formal Agricultural or Horticultural training

Type	None	Ag Cert	Ag Diploma	Hort Cert	Hort diploma
Percentage	79.2%	9.1%	2.9%	7.1%	1.8%

Q3b. Highest Qualification if no Ag. Or Hort. Qualifications undertaken

- 33% of avocado growers hold other tertiary qualifications

Qualification	School Leaver	SC	UE	Cert/Dip	Degree	Post Grad
Percentage	19.8%	32.4%	14.4%	15.5%	11.5%	6.4%

Q4. Percentage of household income derived from avocados

- For nearly 60% of Growers, income derived from Avocado production made up only 10-20% of their household income.
- 6% of the industry derive 100% of their income from Avocado production

Percentage of income	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percentage	40.7%	18.4%	12.0%	5.6%	6.4%	3.1%	3.6%	1.3%	3.3%	5.6%

Analysis: Orchard Information

Q5. What region(s) is/are your Orchard(s) located in?

Region	Far North	Mid North	Aklid/Coro	WBOP	EBOP	Poverty Bay	Other
Percentage	5.8%	17.3%	4.5%	65.8%	4.5%	1.3%	1.1%

Q6. How many Avocado trees do you have planted (total across orchards)?

Note: there are breakdowns of both these groups not presented here

Number	<1500	>1500
Percentage	93.5%	6.5%

Q7. What is the Management Status of your orchard?

- Most Avocado Growers are Owner - Operators

Status	Owner/Operator	Managed	Manager	Lessor	Managed in part by me but help from advisors
Percentage	90.9%	5.1%	1.7%	1.7%	0.6%

Q8a. Other crops you grow commercially?

- 60% of Growers have Avocados as their primary Horticultural crop
- The most common other crop to grow alongside Avocados is Kiwifruit followed by Citrus and Tamarillo

Crop	None other	Kiwifruit	Citrus	Tamarillos	Flowers	Pipfruit	Forestry	Vegetables	Feijoas	Summerrfruit	Other
Percentage	60.0%	21.9%	4.7%	2.7%	1.8%	1.4%	1.2%	1.2%	1.0%	0.8%	3.1%

Q9. Hours a week spent working on Avocado business

- Nearly 30% of Avocado Growers spend less than 5 hours a week working on their Avocado business
- Nearly 24% of Avocado Growers spend between 20 and 30+ hours a week working in their Avocado business

Hours	0	<5	5-10	10-20	20-30	30+
Percentage	2.8%	28.6%	26.2%	18.7%	11.8%	11.8%

Q10a. What is the main challenge you face in orchard operation?

- Growers face many challenges as shown by the number of common themes recorded below; the challenge mentioned the most was *Biennial bearing*, followed by *canopy management*, *economic viability* and *climate issues*.

Issue	Biennial Bearing	Tree Height - Pruning + thinning	Economic Viability*	Climate	Tree health (Pests + Disease)	Setting fruit**
Percentage	27.0%	13.2%	13.2%	11.8%	9.3%	7.3%
Issue	Increasing production	Getting good Export Packout % - Quality	Time constraints	weeds, spraying, mowing, fertilising	Establishing young trees†	Stalls/Farmers markets, Access to local market
Percentage	4.8%	2.5%	1.8%	1.8%	1.4%	0.9%
Issue	Lack of knowledge + practical info available	Conversions to Organic/Biodynamic	Aging grower	Site issues - Slope	Other‡	No Issues
Percentage	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%	2.3%	0.7%

* Costs of Production + Price fluctuations/returns + Late payments

** Pollination + Hanging till maturity

† Soil + income + shelter

‡ Local Govt Regulations, Compliances, Picking times, Exporter price difference, Sustainability, Isolated location, Industry support, Succession planning, Unrealistic grade standards

Q10a. What is the main success of your orchard operation?

- Again there was a wide range of measures of success. The factors that came up the most were *having a good yield* followed by *good tree health*, *regular cropping* and *good export packout*.
- An interesting group of responses to note is *reviving derelict orchards to production* - these stories would be interesting case studies

Issue	Good Yield	Tree health - good fert + spray Prog	Regular cropping	Quality - Good Export %	Doing the work myself - own equipment	Lifestyle - Hobby + learning
Percentage	12.2%	11.9%	11.1%	10.1%	4.5%	4.5%
Issue	Tree Height - Pruning + thinning	drainage, frost protection, shelter, irrigation, mulch	Making Money	Reviving derelict orchard to production	Establishing young trees	Setting fruit - Pollination
Percentage	4.0%	4.2%	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%	2.9%
Issue	Site - Climate	In a good Management regime	Organic practices	Developing orchard + producing fruit	Low cost system	Advice - packhouse, consultant
Percentage	2.4%	2.1%	2.1%	1.6%	1.6%	1.3%
Issue	Early picking	Managing to stay in business	Other *	* Easy to grow, Selling fruit, Exporting, Gaining Hort/Avocado knowledge, Varieties, Flower pruning, Beat the weather, Belonging to NZAML		
Percentage	1.3%	1.1%	4.8%			

Analysis: Market Focus

Q11a What Market do you primarily produce Avocados for?

- Reasons for mainly going export: Most people say they are getting better money that way and realise that the future is in exporting.
- Reasons for Mainly going local market: Do not spray (organic), Guided by packhouse, Get to pick when suits and take advantage of prices, Do not have a commercial quantity crop, damage, young trees not on crop yet, no time to manage export orchard, Loss of confidence in exporters, higher returns, cost of compliance too high, growing mainly reed, no packer infrastructure in their location.

Market	Export	Domestic
Percentage	81.7%	18.3%

Analysis: Investment Intentions

Q 12. What was the main reason you became involved in Avocado production?

- Most Avocado Growers surveyed became involved in Avocado production either for the lifestyle it might give them or for the income it might provide
- Just over 5% are accidental orchardists through land purchase that happened to come with trees

Reason	Lifestyle	Income	Capital gain	On land purchased	Loss acquiring Venture	Hobby/retirement activity	Had suitable land	Diversify	Change from other AG/Hort	Other
Percentage	52.6%	41.0%	7.5%	5.3%	2.8%	2.6%	1.3%	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%

Q13a. What investment have you made in your orchard in the last five years?

- 30% of valid respondents have made no investment in their orchard in the last five years
- The most common investments made by Avocado Growers in the last five years is new or replacement equipment and New or replacement trees.

Item	None	New/replacement equipment	New/replacement trees*	New/upgraded irrigation	New rootstock/varieties*	New land for avo production	Pollinisers	Other**
Percentage	29.5%	52.1%	41.7%	26.7%	11.3%	7.9%	1.9%	3.2%

* Dusa Rootstock, Bacon, Zutano, Reed, Lamb hass, Duke 7, Clonal Rootstock, Ettinger, Athryen, Dusa (Merensky)

** Thinning, Staghorning, Mulching, Injecting, Shelter, Frost protection, Buy additional orchard

Q13b. What investment do you plan to make in the next five years

- Over 40% of respondents plan to make no investment in their orchard in the next five years
- The most common planned investments for the next five years are new or replacement equipment and New or replacement trees.

Item	None	New/replacement equipment	New/replacement trees	New/upgraded irrigation	New rootstock/varieties	New land for avo production	Other
Percentage	42.9%	31.2%	25.4%	14.8%	10.0%	6.7%	1.3%

Q14 Are you considering any disinvestment in the Avocado industry?

- Just over 30% of valid respondents are considering some form of disinvestment in the Avocado industry

Disinvestment?	No	Yes
Percentage	68.2%	31.8%

Q14 Reasons for disinvestment

- The most two most common reasons given by those who are considering disinvestment in the industry is that Avocado production is uneconomic and that Avocado production is not complementing their lifestyle anymore

Reason	Uneconomic (Selling orchard/pulling out trees)	Lifestyle factors	Selling orchard/subdivi de sell sections	Convert to another crop	Thinning	No reason provided
Percentage	25.5%	25.5%	20.0%	14.5%	9.7%	4.8%

* Retire/ill health/change of lifestyle/time constraints

Analysis: Information and Communication

Q15. Rank the reliability of information obtained from the AIC

- 60% of growers who responded rank information they obtain from the AIC as mostly reliable a further 25% rank the information as always reliable

Rank	Always reliable	Mostly reliable	Sometimes reliable/unreliable	Mostly unreliable	Always unreliable
Percentage	24.8%	59.5%	12.5%	2.9%	0.3%

Q15. Rank the reliability of information obtained from your Packhouse

- Of those growers involved with a Pack house, 52% view information obtained from them as mostly reliable, a further 32% view the information as always reliable

Rank	Always reliable	Mostly reliable	Sometimes reliable/unreliable	Mostly unreliable	Always unreliable
Percentage	32.4%	51.8%	12.8%	2.2%	0.7%

Q15. Rank reliability of info from Exporter/Local Marketer

- Of those growers involved with Marketers, 56% view the information received from them as mostly reliable and a further 34% view the information as always reliable

Rank	Always reliable	Mostly reliable	Sometimes reliable/unreliable	Mostly unreliable	Always unreliable
Percentage	34.2%	55.6%	8.7%	1.0%	0.5%

Q15. Rank reliability of information obtained from your Consultant

- Of those growers involved with a consultant 45% view the information obtained from them as reliable, a further 45% view the information as always reliable

Rank	Always reliable	Mostly reliable	Sometimes reliable/unreliable	Mostly unreliable	Always unreliable
Percentage	45.3%	44.9%	7.1%	2.7%	0.0%

Q15. Rank reliability of information obtained from other Avocado Growers' group

- Of those growers involved with other Avocado growing groups, 57% percent of respondents found the information obtained from them to be mostly reliable and a further 12% found the information always reliable

Rank	Always reliable	Mostly reliable	Sometimes reliable/unreliable	Mostly unreliable	Always unreliable
Percentage	12.4%	56.7%	27.6%	3.3%	0.0%

Q15. Rank reliability of information obtained from Avocado websites

- 57% of respondents who use the internet view the information obtained from them as mostly reliable and a further 19.5% view the information as always reliable

Rank	Always reliable	Mostly reliable	Sometimes reliable/unreliable	Mostly unreliable	Always unreliable
Percentage	19.5%	56.9%	19.8%	3.5%	0.3%

Q16a. Preferred methods of communication

- The most popular methods of communication are Field Days/ Discussion groups and one-on-ones with someone of knowledge followed by hardcopy information.

Method	Field Day / Discussion group	One-on-one	Hardcopy	Email/Internet	Conference/seminar	Other
Percentage	61.5%	54.8%	43.9%	40.2%	9.1%	1.1%

Q16b. Would you pay for printed materials?*

Pay?	Yes	No
Percentage	51.3%	48.8%

*Answered by those respondents who chose Hardcopy as one of their preferred communication methods in Q16a

Q17. Would you be interested in being involved in a regional discussion group?

- 55% of respondents would be interested in being involved in a regional discussion group
- The 34% that responded with *Maybe* have the potential to be converted to a *Yes* if they see value in the groups, they are on at the right time etc

Interested?	Yes	No	Maybe
Percentage	54.7%	10.9%	34.4%

Q17. Would you be interested in using an online Avocado growing help tool?

- 57% of respondents would be interested in using an online tool

Interested?	Yes	No	Maybe
Percentage	56.8%	14.8%	28.4%

Q18. Topics most interested in receiving information about

- The most popular topic participants want information about is Canopy Management, closely followed by Pollination & Fruit Set
- Pests & Diseases, Grower Costs & Returns and Nutrition were also in the top five topics.

Topic	Spraying	Canopy Management	New varieties and rootstocks	Nutrition	Pollination and fruit set	Irrigation	Pests + Diseases	Maturity
Percentage	38.1%	67.1%	20.0%	45.5%	62.5%	8.9%	48.6%	6.8%
Topic	Site Selection	IPM	Post harvest performance	Industry Strategy	Grower costs and returns	Packer/exporter performance	Grower case studies	Other*
Percentage	1.3%	20.5%	12.2%	17.9%	46.8%	34.0%	36.4%	0.7%

*Value added opportunities, soil biology, improving tree performance

Q19. Rate how informative AIC Communications are: Tech Sheets

Rank	Very Informative	Informative	Somewhat informative	Very little info gained	Not informative
Percentage	29.1%	50.8%	15.5%	4.3%	0.3%

Q19. Rate how informative AIC Communications are: Grower Guides

Rank	Very Informative	Informative	Somewhat informative	Very little info gained	Not informative
Percentage	28.5%	53.0%	16.6%	1.7%	0.2%

Q19. Rate how informative AIC Communications are: Growers Manual

Rank	Very Informative	Informative	Somewhat informative	Very little info gained	Not informative
Percentage	27.8%	50.8%	17.5%	3.0%	1.0%

Q19. Rate how informative AIC Communications are: AvoScene

Rank	Very Informative	Informative	Somewhat informative	Very little info gained	Not informative
Percentage	27.3%	48.3%	19.7%	4.3%	0.4%

Q19. Rate how informative AIC Communications are: AvoConnect

Rank	Very Informative	Informative	Somewhat informative	Very little info gained	Not informative
Percentage	17.4%	50.8%	24.2%	5.7%	1.9%

Q20a. How often do you use the Industry Website?

Frequency	Daily	Few times a week	Few times a month	once a month	few times a year	Never
Percentage	0.0%	6.6%	28.0%	19.2%	24.2%	22.0%

Q20b. Reasons for visiting industry website

Reason	Industry News	Spray Diary	Publications	Calendar	Export Rego.
Percentage	49.0%	64.4%	29.7%	4.4%	48.7%

Q20c. Suggested additions to the website

Information about markets + money

- Exporters comments (market updates etc) x 2
- Cash flow reports after costs in orchard for past years as well
- Orchard modelling. Cost benefit of recommended procedures
- Comparison of packhouse/export performance
- More information on overseas markets including other producing countries.
- Up to date info on market returns, & crop inventory.
- A monthly summary of each packhouse, pack out results, broken down into ie BOP/Northland etc ie packhouse by packhouse.
- Price return year/seasonal trends
- How to improve growers OGR by reducing compliance costs
- Average price per tray being achieved in local market & export market

Information on growing

- Current chemical/trace elements compatibility list
- Organics - Fert + Spray + in general x4
- District by district pest monitoring results

Q20c. Suggested additions to the website Information on growing *Continued...*

- Scientific research - current projects x2
- Feature on Phytophthora
- More info on spray use and pest control + insect targets x6
- Annual calendars of orchard tasks
- Info on flower pruning.
- more information on avocado growing
- good photographs of all pests at their various stages for ID purposes, spray programmes for specific pests
- New species selection
- Real information about biannual bearing - present info is wishy washy

Information on issues + Governance

- Up to date info about mandatory monitoring
- More detailed debate and reason why eg avogreen.
- Frank and honest analysis of consequence of adjustment to export grade standards. Possible 2nd grade Australian exports.
- What the future will be, can we sell all NZs fruit.
- Minutes of meetings with detail or remits and who votes for them, and not after a two month period. Ratify minutes on conference call
- Information about discussion topics & outcome of various meetings, discussions and others
- Summary of meetings of AIC and AGA so issues such as Avogreen representation do not suddenly emerge
- A short precise of pros and cons eg. Export debat

Functions/Functionality

- Easier spray diary operation x 4
- Need an alternative simple diary just to record relevent details for domestic operation
- Improve readability. Light green very hard to read.
- Regional long term weather forecast x2
- Grower case studies. Different one each month.
- Easier access x 3
- Grower opinion page, letter to editor, chatroom blog, Opportunity to ask questions & share other growers knowledge x 7- maybe we can link to the rouge site and monitor it more closely
- Return to front page link.
- Links to current issues x 3
- Suggested topics worth reading from journals etc
- Easy to set up a fertiliser diary. Only put fertiliser in once a year and use sprayers version.
- Information on sprayer equipment in spray diary to comply with global gap requirements
- Put this question as an option on the website
- Dial up friendly
- A version to view on a mobile phone, like an iphone or nokia smartphone
- Link to avocado websites sorted by topic showing latest listings first
- Needs to be more relevant and up to date.

General Information

- List of grower fielddays
- Maps showing the location of most productive orchards kg/yr/ha historical average.
- Graphs - trends, as in farming newspapers
- Good supplier of avocado tree for stock replacement
- Links to other informative sites x2
- Sale of machinery owned by growers
- Case studies of other growers practices and their success x2
- Real news about board members rather than just the pleasanties currently published in avoscene

Q20d. Other Avocado information websites used

Others used?	Yes	No
Percentage	15.5%	84.5%

Q20d. Websites used

- General web browsing x11
- Reuban Hofshi
- Web S/A
- avocado.com
- organics websites x3
- facebook - NZ organic Avocado Growers
- avocadosource.com x18
- teamavocado.co.nz x6
- www.avocadogrowers.org.nz x5
- Talking avocados
- Avo association websites (US, AU) x7
- Packer - spray rep

Q 21. Do you know who your AGA Grower Rep is?

Know about rep?	Yes	No
Percentage	52.6%	47.4%

Q22. Rate the performance of the AIC: R&D

Rating	Excellent	Good	Poor
Percentage	12.4%	74.3%	13.4%

Q22. Rate the performance of the AIC: Biosecurity & Market Access

Rating	Excellent	Good	Poor
Percentage	30.4%	66.1%	3.5%

Q22. Rate the performance of the AIC: Quality Monitoring

Rating	Excellent	Good	Poor
Percentage	13.5%	77.5%	9.1%

Q22. Rate the performance of the AIC: Food Safety

Rating	Excellent	Good	Poor
Percentage	17.8%	77.7%	4.5%

Q22. Rate the performance of the AIC: Export Promotions

Rating	Excellent	Good	Poor
Percentage	14.9%	75.9%	9.2%

Q22. Rate the performance of the AIC: Market Information

Rating	Excellent	Good	Poor
Percentage	10.8%	75.7%	13.4%

Q22. Rate the performance of the AIC: Liaison w Central Govt.

Rating	Excellent	Good	Poor
Percentage	14.5%	79.3%	6.1%

Q22. Rate the performance of the AIC: Setting the EMS

Rating	Excellent	Good	Poor
Percentage	14.9%	74.0%	11.1%

Q22. Rate the performance of the AIC: Governance

Rating	Excellent	Good	Poor
Percentage	9.5%	76.1%	14.4%

Q23. Comments

Constructive feedback

- Info imparted should be simple, systematic and concise
- A regular crop set is essential for the survival of the industry. This is the number one problem to solve
- Reports and publication by Sci. Dept. need to be written in plain Eng. That growers can understand and relate to. That goes for the AGA/AIC as well - too much gobbledy gook!!
- Local rep should call in on orchards and have discussions with growers
- All decisions on business strategy must have maximum emphasis on increasing grower return. When you achieve this blow your trumpet to gain grower respect
- Need to involve growers with trial work. You have almost completely lost contact with growers as do not attend field days etc
- Wouldn't mind going to BOP polytech course but it is not held in the evenings or weekends so a bit difficult
- Tell us how to get a decent crop that's the growers concern firstly
- I used to go to conferences but found them so export orientated. Hardly anything for the domestic (local) grower. Mind you that was 10 years ago.
- I find the spray diary to be reasonably user friendly. I cope with it but expect some of the older (less computer savvy) growers may find it difficult.
- Avocconnect need to be complete newsletter so it can be printed off and read. Not sure whether AIC should have its own research dept.
- More discussions as per the latest grower meeting on avogreen. Grower debates on grade standards etc would be good with marketers etc present at meetings.
- Updates and comment on new Australian research and practices in Avoscene.
- More research on biennial bearing and new varieties/rootstock.
- Need more info that relates to a particular area ie very little far north info/content.
- Larger envelope for survey returns.
- I would like to see less research done on trying to grow avocados in marginal areas.
- Quality inputs from focussed/researched and impartial sources will bear fruit.
- I can remember many years ago we exported class II to California when there was a shortage and high price. We should have taken advantage of the high prices in Australia this year for the growers
- Information mostly seems to come from growers and then fed back - often changed from year to year. General info - not orchard specific.
- Prefer newsletter than computer stuff.
- Increase cost significantly for late export registration for better certainty around export volumes
- If I am at the computer it is for other work commitments, or doing my own research. To allow family to read AIC info it is better to receive hard copies, they get picked up and looked at. But I don't have time to print off all that comes in.
- Growers returns have not improved in 20 years costs have increased. Returns after all increased costs are down. Are you receiving the income of 20 years ago?
- Don't force practices on growers without first having a major agreement from all growers.
- Concentrate on immediate science needs to avoid dominating the issue.
- Keep red tape down to a minimum. Also not so much change as it all takes time and money to comply
- I feel like nothing has changed last 10 years. Marketing is biggest issue to me we need to stop reject fruit going to Hawkers and supermarkets. Avoscene mag - too many feel good stories, needs opinion page so growers can give their views wants and all
- We need a good strong industry representative group for what I term industry good or avocado good ie govt representation, education quality etc
- Industry has too many exporters. We need a strong co-op marketing structure. The new NZAML co-op is a good start
- I feel that the AGA should be a completely different body with no link to the AIC apart from representation for growers. It should have a watchdog role and cater for grower needs.
- More written technical data
- AIC should not be in field trails improving stock (market forces will do that). Money would be better spent advertising in market investing in oil extraction of our own or vacuum pac.
- The appears to be too bigger gap between what the grower gets per tray and what the tray is sold for. Grower costs are not getting any lower. Please consider
- More interaction with growers to enable tech transfer to work both ways
- Most of our information is gained from our growers group exporter and designated packhouse through regular field days, meetings & conferences
- include a letters from the grower page in the avoscene

Q23. Comments Constructive feedback *Continued...*

- AIC should operate its own small production orchard to show growers how to produce good crops
- A chatroom on the web - this would allow for some of the issues to be monitored & dealt with & also Q & A. On the whole I think you guys are doing an excellent job, keep it up
- All AIC & AGA reps should hold regular meeting in their areas to discuss where industry is heading & discuss relevant issues & not just dictate.
- Avoscene requires more grower practises and case studies, letters to editor
- Export cost are very high need to publish to grower what this percentage is compared to the return, eg if you get \$20000 from export sales the % of cost is deducted
- Improve communications with growers. Governance from the orchard not solely in the board room
- Compare grower payments from packhouses. More advertising. Compare how long it takes exporters to pay growers
- Consistency with so called experts in giving advice
- Would like to know if AIC encourages or supports movement towards reducing pesticide use and alternatives to synthetic nitrogen use
- Why cannot we in NZ develop our own avocado tree - rootstock - hass variety to suit NZ conditions
- As a small orchard we hear that export price returns to growers vary - why is this and why should it depend on which exporter group you choose to be with
- Membership should be a fee not a levy, a few are paying too much to this industry
- Always remember Gisborne has totally different soils & climate to BOP, N'land. Some recommendations * spray guidelines do not apply here

Negative feedback

- Just a leech on the system
- Good communicators are scarce. The electronics seems to be eroding this skill
- Feel AIC show arrogant position. Get annoyed when told it is up to you the grower, it is not. No control on what is sold in the local market. Very disjointed industry.
- Don't waste so much time and money on this stuff
- Almost totally disillusioned if I didn't have other income I would have had to get out and probably will soon anyway.
- I think the AIC is a waste of time and growers money.
- Don't know where AGA/AIC stands for, who is this.
- Avo Green - a system that requires inspection but requires no mandatory action as a result of that inspection, is meaningless. Please think of something else.
- Don't mother me so much I don't need a nanny
- Local market nearly had it. Flooded at times with packhouse rejects. Food markets sell very inferior fruit sometimes no rotten - does not help the public to eat more.
- We love growing avos but very discouraged with industry so called consultants have up and left a sinking ship.
- Being an owner of avocados I have had no personal contact with AIC other than with a computer screen. I have good liaison with my export pack house.
- You must become more grower focussed I do not like the moves to eliminate elected area reps, changes to set up of AIC/AGA are being formulated without discussion with growers.
- AGA/AIC board/executive committee members to engage with growers to obtain a greater understanding directly from the growers.
- Listen to what growers want, not what you want we are getting tired of it
- Stick to politics keep your nose out of management
- Is the AIC just a club for the boys - it doesn't appear to have much going for it
- Use to read all I could about avos but have lost a lot of motivation because no matter what you do or read they still only crop bi annually - so what's the point
- As a small grower I see costs yearly relating to unproductive resources. Too much money is spent on administration

Positive feedback

- Thanks for the opportunity with this survey. A computer looks like a handy tool for today.
- I am sad to say goodbye to the trees and the industry
- When we first started growing avocados we were amazed at the information available from all avenues and also how people are very willing to give you information and help you and still are
- generally we think the industry works well
- Avoscene Mag is very good
- I enjoy reading Avoscene - most helpful
- Keep up the good work
- Communication standards are good.
- Email news is effective
- Communication generally very good. Good work.
- I think that you are punching above your weight when compared to other agricultural export industries.
- Generally avo industry is well organised and legal
- Grower guides booklets great help - easy reference
- Thought avo conference in Cairns last year great. Unfortunately can't make it next year.
- Find you provide a great service due to a know-all husband don't take advantage of your services, totally our choice. Keep up the good work.

Q23. Comments Positive feedback *Continued*...

- Growers guide and AvoScene - good reading keep up the good work
- I believe that the AIC is doing a very good job given the restrictions of funding that occur with variable cropping. Must look after key executive staff
- Very interested to get orchard up and running again
- Haven't been growing avo's long enough to know much about AGA / AIC performance. Find info generally helpful.
- Have a nice day
- We are very new to industry so still learning, any support is welcomed

