



# AvoVantage: managing avocado quality

Over the last 3 seasons quality issues have had a significant cost on avocados sales, in-market costs and grower returns. Issues have occurred in market which have required high levels of re-pack prior to delivery. This has impacted both the sales price and the reputation of avocados from New Zealand.

Managing quality on avocados more effectively is the goal of AvoVantage, one of the latest projects approved for funding from the Ministry for Primary Industries Sustainable Farming Fund (SFF). This three-year project is led by NZ Avocado and has financial support of \$488,845 from the SFF. It will produce practical, sustainable and effective best practice guidelines to better enable growers to mitigate on-orchard issues impacting quality.

Without a real change in on-orchard practice, the reputation and therefore value available in our export markets could be severely limited.

NZ Avocado's goal is continuing to grow new and existing markets supported by a consistent and sustainable supply of high quality avocados, achieved through improving consistency in avocado yield, maximising on-orchard production and planting new land. Increased production requires growers to have sustainable and effective tools to manage pests and diseases effectively.

Analysis undertaken by NZ Avocado has highlighted specific issues on orchard which cause fruit quality issues in export markets, with some orchards consistently having higher fruit quality than the industry average.

In 2018, NZ Avocado reviewed best practice on-orchard as part

of its Primary Growth Partnership programme, New Zealand Avocados Go Global. This review highlighted the need for additional best practice guidelines for growers to provide a long-term sustainable strategy for producing high quality avocados. AvoVantage will tackle this challenge.

---

**It will produce best practice guidelines for growers to provide a long-term sustainable strategy for producing high quality avocados.**

---

The key outcomes expected from AvoVantage include:

- Reducing inoculum levels that creates fungi on-orchard, by developing and applying best practice guidelines and a targeted spray programme.
- Reducing unsound fruit as determined by library tray assessments.
- Developing a tool to raise grower awareness of the risk factors associated with fruit rot and enable growers to manage fruit rots on orchard in a more sustainable way.
- Demonstrating of the difference a “well managed” orchard can make to fruit quality.
- Driving uptake of the guidelines by growers.

The project will build on the avocado industry's proven track record in effectively adopting and transferring knowledge and research. It will drive environmental improvements on-orchard, and deliver a boost for regional economies primarily in the Bay of Plenty and Northland, directly supporting pack houses, pruners, contract harvesters, pest monitoring companies and transport companies.