

## **Production and Demand for Chilean Avocados: Domestic and Export Markets**

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***Abstract.*** Chile is a traditional avocado producer, the fruit being grown in microclimate areas of the Central Valley. The commercial avocado production started around 1950 with the introduction of the so called "California cultivars" of higher fruit quality and higher yields.

The per capita consumption of avocados has increased to reach today one of the highest in the world. This is attributed to: (i) different cultivars of both Mexican and Guatemalan races that account for the availability of avocado fruit all year round; (ii) the good growing conditions and postharvest handling that present good quality fruit at the market; (iii) the price of avocado fruit relative to the other substitute products; and (iv) the many different uses that the avocado fruit has in the Chilean food diet.

The objective of this work was to quantify and evaluate the avocado domestic demand in relation to export possibilities to the U.S.A., French, and Argentine markets.

The methodology that uses analytical aspects of time series was utilized for the following variables: acreage, yield (by cultivar, month, and year), wholesale and retail prices, Chilean exports, per capita consumption, and prices at the New York, Paris, and Buenos Aires markets. Return prices to growers for domestic and export sales was analyzed.

The results showed marked differences among cultivars, sales time, and market objective. It was determined that the main volume goes to the domestic market due to the high prices and constant demand for avocado fruit by Chilean consumers.