

## DEVELOPMENT OF FRUIT MATURITY AND MINERAL CONTENT NORMS FOR EXPORT AVOCADO CULTIVARS FROM DIFFERENT SOUTH AFRICAN AVOCADO GROWING REGIONS A-63

B Snijder, JM Mathumbu and FJ Kruger

ARC-Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Crops. Private Bag X11208. Nelspruit 1200. South Africa. Tel: (013) 753 7000 Fax: (013) 752 3854 E-mail: [bram@itsc.agric.za](mailto:bram@itsc.agric.za)

The aim of this study is to establish appropriate harvest maturity and fruit mineral content norms for Fuerte, Hass, Edranol, Pinkerton and Ryan grown in the Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu Natal production regions of South Africa. During the 2001/2002 season, fruit were sampled on a regular basis from farms in the Barberton, Eshowe, Hazyview, Levubu, Melmoth, Nelspruit, Richmond and Tzaneen districts. Measurements taken included fruit growth, moisture content and mineral composition. The intention is to use this information to formulate a quality assurance plan for all cultivars similar to that developed for Pinkerton during the last number of seasons. Thus far, provisional reference points for fruit moisture and nitrogen content have been formulated for Fuerte and Hass in the Nelspruit, Kiepersol and Tzaneen growing areas. However, intensive storage trials are required before refined recommendations can be made for high and low risk orchards during both 'on' and 'off' years. The study is continuing.