

## AVOCADO INDUSTRIALIZATION: CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE PROSPECTIVES

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There has been an increase in avocado consumption worldwide, with a great expansion of the planted surface in all producing countries. The latter has brought an increase in the volumes of the small caliber fruits, which are usually consumed at domestic markets with lower prices. This tendency will increase in the future and, consequently, avocado industrialization is becoming an important alternative to commercialize these volumes. Thus, avocado industrialization will be an activity dependent of the remainings of fresh fruits production.

On the other hand, a good industrialized product must start with a high quality raw material; hence, these remainings of low calibers, which can be industrialized, must necessarily be of good quality and will be influenced by the cultivar and ripening state of the fruit. Moreover, from now on, they should have been produced in a clean manner.

Avocados present a wide variety of uses as an industrialized product, among others: fresh, refrigerated or frozen or half frozen, pulps used as base of unctuous products and oil obtention, traditionally for cosmetic goals, although lately, there has been an increase in extra virgin oil production for culinary goals, having a great potential in the future due to its properties.

Within the mentioned alternatives, the frozen avocado purée has been the one with a larger production volume, being used as base of unctuous products and constituting the base of Guacamole, very popular in Mexico, the country of the larger world consumption and now also in the United States and Mexico as base of the foods known as "Tex-Mex". The oil constitutes the second industrialized avocado product, however, its consumption is varying from a massive use as a cosmetic product towards a culinary use, since due to its qualities is replacing the olive oil.

It is also possible to obtain industrialized avocado products, such as IV Gamma Products, as half avocados alone or combined with several vegetable products such as lettuces, also using CO<sub>2</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>. Osmotic dehydration as well the dehydration in atomization, and lyophilization, are alternatives of interest to be developed in avocado. In all the previously mentioned cases, the future tendency will be to elaborate products, if possible without preservatives or if their use is necessary, they must be natural or they should be within an organic regulation.