

## **AGRONOMIC EVALUATION AND PROPAGATION OF NEW ROOTSTOCKS AND AVOCADO VARIETIES IN DIFFERENT AGRO-CLIMATIC ZONES OF CHILE**

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In Chile, the avocado crop is in third place regarding seeded area and in sixth place as to volume of exported fruit according to official statistics. However, in terms of technology, it shows several difficulties that cause its productivity to be under the optimal level in relation to its potential. The main limiting factors affecting this crop nowadays are as it follows: saline soils; presence of carbonates; incidence of avocado root rot caused by the *Phytophthora cinnamomi* fungus; replanting and use of seedling rootstocks. Therefore, enhancing the levels and quality of fruits produced is urgent. To do this, the selection of good rootstock is essential to make a plantation successful.

Through the implementation of the first program of introduction, selection and propagation of avocado rootstocks in Chile carried out by the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, together with Chilean companies between 2002 and 2005, the first avocado Germplasm bank with promising plant material of rootstocks and varieties was created. In addition, the use of etiolation and layering technique began to be implemented. Subsequently, the University was awarded with this continuity project in December 2005, for a period of seven years, in order to continue, validate and define the use and propagation of clonal avocado rootstocks in our country. In this stage, a total of 20 companies both national and international participate. The use of this tool will allow increasing the profitability of the crop, generating benefits for the industry of this species.