

COMMERCIAL RIPENING TRIALS WITH SOUTH AFRICAN AVOCADOS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

F.Kruger¹ and D. Lemmer¹

¹ARC-Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Crops, Private Bag X11208, Nelspruit 1200
South Africa, Tel: +27 (0)13 753 7000, Fax: +27 (0)13 752 3854 Email: fransk@arc.agric.za

During July 2006, one container each of controlled atmosphere (CA) and SmartFreshSM Hass and Fuerte avocados were exported from Westfalia Estates to the United Kingdom. Each consignment contained 7 Hass and 3 Fuerte samples. The ripening patterns of the fruit were recorded by two prepackers. The controlled atmosphere fruit took an average of 4.98 days to ripen while the SmartFreshSM fruit required 5.44 days. Although considerable variation occurred between samples, certain of the cultivar/count combinations displayed very similar ripening patterns whether treated with SmartFreshSM or stored under CA. In both cultivars, the largest SmartFreshSM fruit ripened faster than the CA fruit while the reverse was true for the smallest counts. The results further confirmed our previous recommendation regarding the 70% moisture content (30% dry mass) cut off point for SmartFreshSM fruit destined for the 'Ripe and Ready' market sector. It may, however, be possible to send larger counts (>300g) before this point is reached while it may be advisable not to send very small counts (<150g) to ripeners. Although the incidence of greypulp (diffuse mesocarp discolouration) was low in the present trial, a commercial trial conducted during the previous season has clearly demonstrated the greypulp reducing capacity of SmartFreshSM (1-methylcyclopropene).