

STANDARDISING QUALITY - THE INTERNATIONAL AVOCADO ASSESSMENT MANUAL AND POCKETBOOK

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A large range of postharvest disorders has been reported in avocado fruit, but the terminology associated with these disorders has not been standardised. If accurate communication of quality problems is to be achieved, then there must be a consistent means of describing these disorders. Scientists in conjunction with New Zealand, Australian and American avocado industries have developed two means of addressing these issues; a manual – ‘The International Avocado Quality Manual’, and its smaller companion – ‘The International Avocado Quality Pocketbook’. These publications have been developed over more than 5 years and provide a standard method for assessment, identification and description of external and internal disorders of ‘Hass’ avocados, for use by both commercial and scientific personnel. However, as many of the disorders described in these books are also found in other avocado cultivars, it may be utilised for cultivars other than ‘Hass’. The Manual is designed for more detailed examination of quality, while the Pocketbook is intended for use by retailers for example. Areas covered include; steps to assess quality, how to assess ripening (softening and colour), and high quality photographs and descriptions of a very wide range of external and internal quality defects which are due to pre- and postharvest factors. Possible causes of disorders are also included. We are currently developing both English and Spanish versions of the Manual and Pocketbook.