**Country report for South Africa.**

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The South African avocado industry consists of ±16,000 ha of commercial orchards with an annual growth rate of ±800 ha. Total production is ±135,000 t p.a. but is set to increase sharply over the next 5 years as new plantings come into production. Growth in demand both locally and internationally has driven expansion over the last 5-7 years, together with the expectation of gaining access to new markets such as China and India which hold great potential for growth in avocado consumption.

Presently, 40%-45% is of the crop consumed fresh, 45%-50% of the crop is exported as fresh avocado fruit, while 10-12% of the crop is processed (oil and purée).

Over the past 5 years, avocado nurseries have expanded production and new nurseries have enterd the avocado business to supply the strong demand for trees. There is a strong focus in the industry on integrated crop production, soil health and efficient water usage.

The South African Avocado Growers’ Association (SAAGA) is and industry body with a voluntary membership accounting for 95% of export production funded by levies paid by members. SAAGA’s activities include funding of production and post harvest research, technology transfer, funding of generic promotion of avoado in the domestic market, collection and collation of industry information useul to growers, marketiers an service providers, and close liaison with government regariding quality standards, food safety, biodsecurity, phytosanitary and other matters relating to gaining and retaining export markets.