

## Maturity

Avocado fruit need to be mature when they are harvested in order to ripen uniformly and ensure good eating quality. The maturity of avocados is related to the moisture content of the fruit and can be tested through the dry matter content of fruit samples.

### Export Maturity Standard:

- Average dry matter content >24%
- 18 out of 20 fruit >20.8%

### Local Market Maturity Standard:

- Average dry matter content >23%
- 18 out of 20 fruit >20.8%

### MATURITY STANDARDS AND TESTING

Each season, fruit within a maturity area can be independently tested to determine the dry matter status of the fruit and whether it meets the requirements to be harvested for the local and/or export markets. Maturity and testing must meet the requirements of the Export Maturity Standards in the New Zealand Avocado Quality Manual.

During the season, once industry monitoring indicates that fruit within a region is meeting dry matter requirements, New Zealand Avocado will issue a blanket maturity clearance for the region. Once this is issued, there is no longer a requirement to test the dry matter of each maturity area within the region.

### FACTORS INFLUENCING MATURITY

Avocados reach harvest maturity at different times during the season. Factors which influence maturity include:

- Variety - Hass in New Zealand tends to reach minimum maturity from July to November.
- Tree age - Fruit on younger trees tends to mature earlier than fruit from older trees.
- Region - Fruit in the Far North tends to mature earlier than fruit from the Bay of Plenty and Mid North.
- Season - Due to differences in the climatic conditions, maturity can be earlier or later seasonally. Seasonal differences can differ between growing regions.
- Elevation - Orchards at lower elevations tend to mature earlier than orchards in higher elevations.
- Water status - Tree water status can influence maturity, with drier conditions tending to increase maturity.