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## South Africa, Republic of

### Avocado

### Annual

### 2001

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**Report Highlights:** In CY 2001, South Africa produced a high quality avocado crop, though at an off-year volume of about 80,000 metric tons. Exports are expected to total about 36,000 metric tons in CY 2001, a decrease of 6% from last year while domestic consumption will remain constant. The South African Avocado Growers Association (SAAGA) plans to increase their exports to the UK and the US because of increasing demand in those markets. SAAGA has produced a handbook for avocado growers with guidelines for implementing EUREP-GAP. Planted area has been revised downward based on the industry data.

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Includes PSD changes: Yes  
Includes Trade Matrix: Yes  
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## **Executive Summary**

South African Avocado production for CY 2001 was of a high quality crop, though at an off-year lower total volume of about 80,000 metric tons. Exports are expected to reach about 36,000 MT in CY 2001, a decrease of around 6% from last year. Domestic consumption remained constant. CY 2002 and CY 2003 planted areas are expected to increase to accommodate increasing demand in varieties like Hass in the export market. We have adjusted planted area downward based on revised data from the SA's Avocado Industry.

Export prices for CY 2001 were very good, though producer prices were lower during the middle of the season. There is an increased demand for Hass in the export market, which is likely to impact negatively on the South African greenskin varieties. Average farm-gate prices for green skins (fuerte, Edranol, etc) are expected at R18-R20 per carton, while Hass prices are expected at R22-R25 per carton. Hass constitutes around 44% of the total SA crop, though this share is forecast to grow as new plantings come into production and old trees of green skin varieties are not replaced.

The South African Avocado Growers Association (SAAGA), representing over 85% of the avocado industry, is facing problems of world-wide over production of fresh fruit, and concentration of buying power. There is also pressure from retail markets which are demanding continuous supply of good quality avocados. Food safety legislation and regulations also demand diligence and traceability.

SAAGA, with a technical research budget of about R600,000, has produced a handbook which provides guidelines for avocado growers on how to implement EUREP-GAP.

SAAGA plans to increase their exports to the UK because of an increasing demand in the market. South Africa's avocado industry also plans to expand its sales in the US market in 2003/4. Currently they are improving their production practices to be in line with the US phytosanitary regulations.

There is also a concerted effort through promotional activities by SAAGA to increase consumption of processed avocados in the domestic markets.

## Production

South Africa's Avocado industry is grown on an area of about 12,000 Ha's, with the main varieties Fuerte (42%), Hass (33%). Other commercial cultivars include Ryan, Pinkerton, and Edranol, and less of Zutano, Gwen, Reed and Bacon varieties. Of the new plantings, Hass accounted for 33%, Fuerte 13%, Ryan 12%, and Pinkerton 41%.

South Africa's Avocado season extends from mid-March to September. However, most of the major cultivars are available over an extended period during the season as a result of climatic variability between growing regions. High summer rainfall (> 1000 mm p.a in most areas), and warm temperatures contribute to the high incidence of root rot caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. Since 1980s, *phytophthora*-tolerant root-stocks have been used to reduce this problem.

The table below indicates the availability period of the main avocado varieties produced in SA.

| Varieties | Season  |
|-----------|---|
| Fuerte    | Mid to late February<br>(Northern Province) until August(Kwazulu Natal) |
| Hass      | Mid/late May<br>(Northern Province) until<br>October<br>(Kwazulu natal) |
| Pinkerton | June<br>(Northern province)<br>July<br>(Kwazulu Natal)                  |
| Edranol   | June - Sept<br>(Natal)  |
| Ryan      | Aug/Sept<br>(Northen province)<br>October<br>(Kwazulu Natal)            |

Planted area has been revised downward based on industry data.

The table below indicate the total avocado plantings and percentage increase since 1973.

| Census data | Hectares | % increase | Timespan(years) | Ave %increase/yr |
|-------------|----------|------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1973        | 3,265    | 0          | 0               | 0                |
| 1981        | 6,645    | 104        | 8               | 13               |
| 1987        | 7,470    | 12         | 6               | 2                |
| 1991        | 8,946    | 20         | 4               | 5                |
| 1995        | 10,706   | 20         | 4               | 5                |
| 1998        | 12,705   | 19         | 3               | 6                |
| 1999        | 12,500   | -2         |                 |                  |
| 2000*       | 12600    | 0.8        |                 |                  |
| 2001*       | 12750    | 1          |                 |                  |
| 2002*       | 12900    | 1          |                 |                  |
| 2003*       | 12950    | 0.3        |                 |                  |

Sources: SAAGA

\* = Attache estimates

|                        |                           |         |             |         |          |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|----------|---------------------------------|
| PSD Table              |                           |         |             |         |          |                                 |
| Country                | South Africa, Republic of |         |             |         |          |                                 |
| Commodity              | Fresh Avocados            |         |             |         |          | (HECTARES)(1000 TREES)(1000 MT) |
|                        | Revised                   | 2000    | Preliminary | 2001    | Forecast | 2002                            |
|                        | Old                       | New     | Old         | New     | Old      | New                             |
| Market Year Begin      |                           | 01/2001 |             | 01/2002 |          | 01/2003                         |
| Area Planted           | 13465                     | 12750   | 14275       | 12900   | 14845    | 12950                           |
| Area Harvested         | 11450                     | 11450   | 12380       | 12380   | 12900    | 12500                           |
| Bearing Trees          | 2000                      | 2260    | 2125        | 2260    | 2260     | 2280                            |
| Non-Bearing Trees      | 350                       | 345     | 325         | 340     | 345      | 350                             |
| TOTAL No. Of Trees     | 2350                      | 2605    | 2450        | 2600    | 2605     | 2630                            |
| Production             | 65000                     | 80000   | 104000      | 100000  | 81000    | 81000                           |
| Imports                | 0                         | 0       | 0           | 0       | 0        | 0                               |
| TOTAL SUPPLY           | 65000                     | 80000   | 104000      | 100000  | 81000    | 81000                           |
| Exports                | 33000                     | 36000   | 54000       | 45000   | 46000    | 38000                           |
| Fresh Dom. Consumption | 24000                     | 35200   | 38000       | 46000   | 30000    | 35000                           |
| Processing Consumption | 8000                      | 8800    | 12000       | 9000    | 5000     | 8000                            |
| TOTAL DISTRIBUTION     | 65000                     | 80000   | 104000      | 100000  | 81000    | 81000                           |

South African Avocado production reached about 80,000 metric tons in CY 2001. Total avocado exports decreased by around 6% as a result of an avocado 'off' year, when the volume produced decreased while the quality improves. Consumption remained constant.

CY2002 production is expected to increase by about 20,000 metric tons from last year because of the expected normal production season.

## Trade

## Exports

South Africa's Avocado industry exports most of its production to Europe markets. Currently, it started extending its markets to the Middle and Far East. Airfreight is the main source transport for SA's exported avocados.

| Export Trade Matrix |                           |        |      |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Country             | South Africa, Republic of |        |      |
| Commodity           | Fresh Avocados            |        |      |
| Time period         | Jan-Dec                   | Units: | Tons |
| Exports for:        | 2000                      |        | 2001 |
| U.S.                | 250                       | U.S.   |      |
| Others              |                           | Others |      |
| Belgium             | 18603                     |        |      |
| France              | 9908                      |        |      |
| United Kingdom      | 8879                      |        |      |
| Netherlands         | 7367                      |        |      |
| Spain               | 244                       |        |      |
| Germany             | 228                       |        |      |
| Hongkong            | 63                        |        |      |
| Greece              | 43                        |        |      |
|                     |                           |        |      |
|                     |                           |        |      |
| Total for Others    | 45335                     |        | 0    |
| Others not Listed   | 116                       |        |      |
| Grand Total         | 45701                     |        | 0    |

South Africa is expected to export a total of about 36,000 tons mainly to Europe in CY 2001, a decrease of 45,000 tons from last year.

SAAGA plans to increase their exports to the UK because of the increasing demand in that markets. SAAGA and the rest of SA avocado industry also plans to expand sales in the US market in 2003/4. Currently they are improving their production practices to ensure compliance with the US phytosanitary regulations.

## Imports

| Import Trade Matrix |                           |        |      |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Country             | South Africa, Republic of |        |      |
| Commodity           | Fresh Avocados            |        |      |
| Time period         | Jan-Dec                   | Units: | Tons |
| Imports for:        | 2000                      |        | 2001 |
| U.S.                | 0                         | U.S.   |      |
| Others              |                           | Others |      |
| Zimbabwe            | 124                       |        |      |
| Israel              | 99                        |        |      |
| Kenya               | 91                        |        |      |
|                     |                           |        |      |
|                     |                           |        |      |
|                     |                           |        |      |
|                     |                           |        |      |
|                     |                           |        |      |
|                     |                           |        |      |
| Total for Others    | 314                       |        | 0    |
| Others not Listed   | 0                         |        |      |
| Grand Total         | 314                       |        | 0    |

## Marketing

SAAGA has introduced a marketing campaign under the banner 'MINANAWWE', meaning 'mine and yours' in Zulu, geared towards domestic lower income groups to encourage them to consume more processed avocados (oil and guacamole). Preliminary market research indicates the campaign is progressing well.

Sales to the informal sector directly from pack-houses are increasing. Another recent trend in domestic marketing is direct supply from pack-houses to supermarkets.