

SUBTROP BULLETIN

VOLUME 3
September 2020



INDUSTRY NEWS



- SAAGA's video on Sustainable Avocado Production in SA: [Watch here](#)
- U.S. set to open for South African mangoes - [FreshFruitPortal](#)
- Making agriculture more bee-friendly – [Farmer's Weekly](#)

- The Coca-Cola Company to exclusively source SA avocados for their new **avocado flavoured Coca-Cola**. **Litchi and mango** flavoured health-drinks to follow in 2024. Follow [this link](#) for further information and guidelines on how to register as a supplier.



PROMOTIONS

SABC 3 Expresso

- August 13th – [Avo Cheesecake](#)
- September 1st – Braai salad & Lasizwe video

Publicity

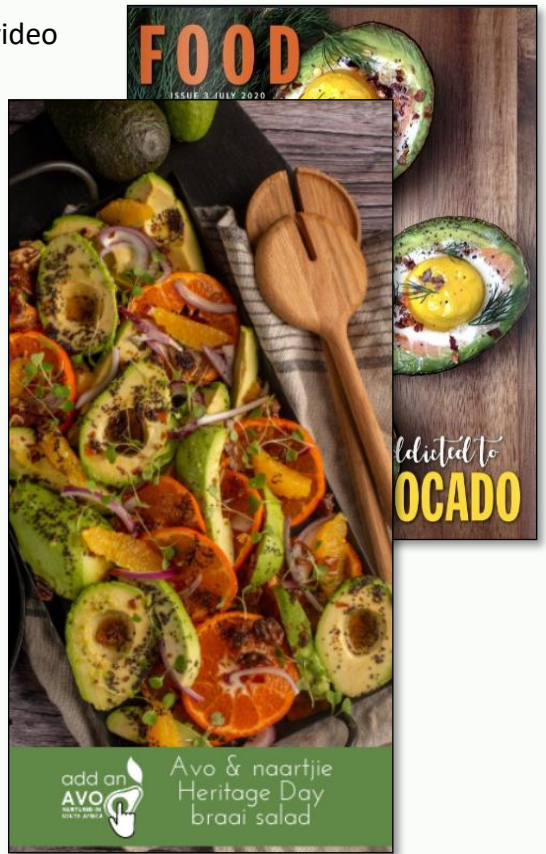
- Pronunciation of Hass / Lasizwe
 - [East Coast Radio](#)
 - [SA Chef](#)
 - [Fresh Plaza](#)
 - [IOL](#)
- [Drum](#) live 3/8-3/9
- [Taste](#) - add an AVO banner
- IOL Food Magazine – [Avocado Edition \(20 pages\)](#)



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TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES

Mentorship Programme



Subtrop understands that commercial farming of avocados, mangoes and litchis is a complex business requiring experience and expertise. Therefore, as part of transformation, Subtrop has introduced a programme of linking emerging farmers with suitable mentors. Guidelines and an agreement have been drawn up for mentors and mentees to ensure that respective parties are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The agreement shall be valid for a period of three years from the date of signing by both parties and can be renewed by mutual agreement. Currently, five (5) emerging growers have been identified for participation in the mentorship program.



TECHNICAL

Thrips on Avocado



- Thrips remain a problem for avocado growers and have become increasingly prominent in recent years. These tiny insects ($\leq 2\text{mm}$) feed on plant sap, producing silver spots that harden and cosmetic damage on avocado fruit. The proximity of other commercial crops (e.g. citrus and macadamias) and associated chemical sprays that could suppress natural predators and parasitoids of thrips is likely responsible for most thrips infestations on avocados.
 - Subtrop recommends that growers scout on the fruit, especially under the calyx, before considering any chemical control agents. The threshold is four thrips per fruit.
 - Several chemicals are registered for control of thrips on avocado fruit. These include Abamectin (trade name Agrimec Gold), Mercaptothion (trade names Avi Gard, Datathion 500 EC, Mercaptothion 500 EC, and Avi Merkaptotoks), Spinetoram (trade name Delegate 250 WG), and Sulphur (consult the SAAGA MRL list for trade names).
- To address the problem of thrips, SAAGA commissioned, and is co-funding, two research projects with SAMAC. The first project (under the leadership of Prof. Chris Weldon at the University of Pretoria) aims to identify which thrips species infest avocados and macadamias, cultivars and plant phenological stages that are most susceptible, and factors that influence species diversity and crop damage. The second project (under the leadership of Dr. Elsje Joubert at the Levubu Centre of Excellence and Prof. Johnnie van den Berg at North West University) aims to test the efficacy of different IPM control treatments on avocados and macadamias. These trials will also provide data to support the registration of additional commercially available control agents against thrips.
- For more information, please visit the Technical Info page on the SAAGA website – <https://www.avocado.co.za/technical-info/> under *Pests And Their Control, Thrips*.

Orchard management in September

Avocado



- Apart from being the start of spring, the month of September also signifies the commencement of the rainy season for most of South Africa – an ideal time to establish new plantings.
 - Small trees can get a 25 g mixture of LAN: MAP: KNO₃ every two weeks (3: 2: 1 mixture of LAN: MAP: KNO₃ for sandy soil and 2: 1: 1 for clay soil).
- Fruitlets only become susceptible to Cercospora infection when reaching pigeon-egg size ($\geq 20\text{ mm}$).
 - The first treatment for the season can be done with a registered copper-based fungicide or systemic agent e.g. Carbendazim.
 - Producers should follow the guidelines set out on product labels diligently to avoid exceedance of maximum residue levels in the fruit.
- Continue the irrigation scheduling as proposed for August. Shallow tensiometer readings can be maintained between -10 and -20 kPa, while deeper tensiometer readings should be managed between 20 and -30 kPa in September.

More management information is available on the SAAGA website under “[Technical info](#)” or the **Avocado Production Guide** app on your mobile device: avoproductionguide.co.za

Mango



- Mango trees are now in full flower and if all goes well, we are set for a very good mango season.
- Your spray program is very important at this time, especially when the fruit starts to set.
 - Spray copper oxychloride products for anthracnose and soft brown rot @ 250 – 300 g / 100 L water, with a wetting agent, two weeks after fruit set.
 - Apply copper sulphate / mancozeb sprays for Bacterial blackspot, a minimum of two sprays at 60 days intervals.
- On the insect side it is time to closely monitor fruit fly numbers and spray accordingly. Also, monitor for citrus thrips from set to golf-ball size and control with fipronil @ 7,5 - 10 ml / 100 L water where necessary.

Litchi



- Apply foliar spray of Zn, B, Cu, Mn on 1st male flower
- Soil applications: apply 20% of annual N and K requirement at early fruit set
- Leaf samples may be taken through late-September and October.
- Flower growth and fruit set uses a lot of energy so steadily increase your irrigation to limit stress and enhance good fruit set and development

