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## NZ avocados have 'unique qualities'

Researchers find that New Zealand-grown avos have higher levels of vitamin B6 and folate



**N**ew Zealand researchers have discovered that avocados grown in the country boast unique nutritional qualities, with double the amount of vitamin B6 and 20 per cent more folate than those grown in other nations.

The research was conducted by the Phytochemical and Health team at Plant & Food Research throughout the 2015/16 season, with New Zealand avocados analysed in accredited laboratories following the protocols required by the New Zealand Food Composition Database, NZFCD – an independent validated source for the nutritional composition information for the foods consumed by New Zealanders.

New Zealand avocados have a folate measurement of 81.6 ug\* per 75g serving, providing 41 per cent of the recommended daily intake, and a vitamin B6 measurement of 0.47mg per 75g serving, providing 30 per cent of the recommended daily intake.

Folate contributes to normal growth and development in children, and to good tissue growth in pregnancy, while

vitamin B6 contributes to normal immune system function and helps reduce fatigue.

In addition, avocados are full of healthy mono-unsaturated fats that help keep appetites under control, are low in sugar and sodium, a good source of dietary fibre, and are packed with a range of essential vitamins and minerals particularly beneficial for athletes, mums, busy families and young professionals.

New Zealand Avocado chief executive Jen Scoular said that the new research represented "huge news" for the nation.

"We always knew avocados were good for us," she noted. "It's wonderful that we have now confirmed our locally grown fruit is especially healthy."

The findings were announced at the New Zealand Avocado 2017/18 season launch held at Eden Park's Centenary lounge, an event that drew celebrities and included presentations from head international rugby strength and conditioning coach, ironman and avocado grower Nic Gill, and chef, author and avocado enthusiast Nadia Lim.

Gill, who is also an associate professor of Sport and Recreation at AUT, addressed the guests on achieving optimal performance.

"Many athletes and high performing individuals eat avocados throughout the day, due to the nutrient dense and quality fuel they provide," Gill outlined.

New Zealand currently produces just 2 per cent of the global supply but is the ninth largest international avocado exporter. There are over 4,000ha of avocado trees planted in New Zealand, primarily in the Bay of Plenty and Northland.

\*ug is the correct symbol for the metric measurement microgram which is one millionth of a gram or one thousandth of a milligram

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<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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