FLOWERING OF AVOCADO (*PERSEA AMERICANA* MILL.) AS INFLUENCED BY GIBBERELLIC ACID TREATMENTS

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The effect of gibberellic acid (GA_3) treatments on the reproductive development of 'Hass' avocado trees was investigated at macroscopic and microscopic level. GA_3 (50 or 250 ppm) was applied to three-year-old trees as single or multiple foliar sprays. On untreated trees, bud swelling was observed in early autumn (April) and flowering occurred four to five months later in late winter/spring (August/September). However, at microscopic level, secondary inflorescence axis meristems were already present in buds of untreated trees in late summer (early March). Single GA_3 treatments applied in late summer (March) had no significant effect on flower development, but multiple GA_3 treatments applied from late summer through early winter (March-May) inhibited flower development for one season.