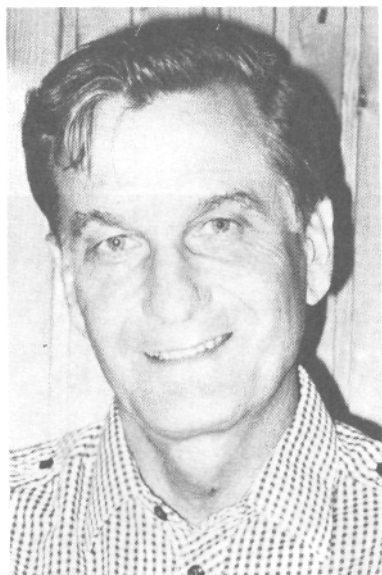


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Prof JM Kotzé

The avocado industry is still growing at a steady pace. Growth brings changes and challenges, but as long as the industry is united we can face the future with confidence. However, it becomes more important than ever before to present to the markets an attractive fruit, free of blemishes and diseases. Diseased fruit on an oversupplied market is a nightmare and is a guarantee for disaster. This must never happen and fruit quality is receiving more attention than ever before. It becomes clear that there is no single gimmick or treatment to secure healthy attractive fruit on the export markets. There is a long list of do's and don'ts, which begins before the fruit is picked and ends in the Paris restaurant. Research on post-harvest problems therefore covers almost the full scope of production and marketing.

Fruit quality varies from season to season, area to area, orchard to orchard and even tree to tree. There is a computer slogan which says "garbage in, garbage out". This means that poor quality fruit in the packhouse will result in poor quality fruit on the market no matter what happens in between. The heart breaking part is often that the grower starts with perfectly good fruit, but through bad handling, bad packing, insufficient cooling etc., garbage comes out at the other end.

Through the investigation of Eileen Kusche and the analysis of Dr. Bezuidenhout it came out clearly that the grower carries the greatest responsibility for fruit problems on the overseas markets.

In the past there were complaints, which were fully justified that research results do not reach the grower quick enough and in a ready-to-apply form.

This has changed dramatically since the introduction of our news bulletin Avokad and the appointment of Nino Burelli, as an extension officer. The grower now gets an excellent service from SAAGA office and technical information reaches the grower

through Avokad or Farmer's days.

In besonder wil ek my dank betuig teenoor ons navorsers en almal wat met die navorsingspoging behulpsaam was. Die navorsing wat nou gedoen word is 'n blywende fondament vir 'n vooruit-strewende Bedryf vir die toekoms.

Laastens moet die Bestuurskomitee onder die leiding van Dr DL Milne geluk gewens word met hulle diepe insig in die probleme van die Bedryf en vir hulle geloof en ondersteuning van navorsing.

The assistance of Astrid Jennings in preparing this SAAGA yearbook is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated.

JM KOTZÉ