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A SURVEY OF URBAN BLACK CONSUMER PREFERENCES WITH REGARD TO AVOCADOS IN THE PRETORIA / JOHANNESBURG AREA

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BACKGROUND

The avocado export industry in South Africa faces increasing competition from several countries, especially Israel and California.

South Africa's market share has been declining steadily from 18,1 per cent in 1981 to 8,3 per cent during 1984 and is expected to drop to even lower levels in the future.

In view of these circumstances, SAAGA decided to investigate the potential local demand for avocados amongst urban black consumers in South Africa and specifically the Pretoria/Johannesburg area.

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

After an initial investigation conducted in Mamelodi, SAAGA decided to increase the extent of the survey. A subsequent investigation was done in the townships surrounding Pretoria and Johannesburg.

The groups involved

Two main groups were involved in the survey, namely consumers and sellers. A total of 1 019 consumers responded with the majority (660) residing in the Johannesburg area. This constitutes 65 per cent of the total. The remainder of the respondents resided in the townships surrounding Pretoria, namely Mamelodi, Atteridgeville and Ga-Rankua in Bophuthatswana. A total of 359 respondents were questioned in these latter areas (35 per cent of the total).

The second group, namely the sellers, was categorised as follows: vendors, cafés, supermarkets, bakkies (vans) and greengrocers (see Table 1 for more detailed information). Once again Johannesburg accounted for the majority of respondents (444 or 78 percent). Pretoria in turn, contributed 22 per cent or 123 of the total number of respondents.

TABEL 1 A numerical breakdown of the survey conducted amongst the sellers

SELLERS	JOHANNESBURG		PRETORIA		TOTAL	
	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Vendors	34,24	152	41,46	51	35,8	203
Cafès	17,12	76	24,39	30	18,7	106
Supermarkets	29,73	132	17,07	21	27,0	153
Bakkies (Vans)	13,5	60	12,20	15	13,3	75
Greengrocers	5,4	24	4,80	6	5,2	30

Analysis of the results

From the outset an attempt was made to detemine the exact breakdown of the various answers given and not mere tendencies. All results were obtained by employing a Persetel mainframe computer and using the SAS program.

FIELD WORKERS

Final year students of the Vista University conducted the field work. These students are well versed in the basic techniques of field work and only volunteers were employed.

PERIOD DURING WHICH SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

This survey was done during the second and third weeks of February 1988.

RESULTS OF SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONGST CONSUMERS

Fruit purchases

From this survey it emerged that most consumers bought fruit on a weekly basis, with a surprisingly large number doing so (25 per cent) on a daily basis. This high frequency of purchases could be ascribed to the small number of fruit bought at a time.

Fruit was generally purchased from either supermarkets or street vendors. Respondents living in the Pretoria area were more inclined to purchase from a vendor than their counterparts in Johannesburg. This implies that consumers living in Pretoria were also less inclined to buy from supermarkets.

A definite preference was shown for bananas and apples most probably due to the high level of availability throughout the year. Nineteen per cent of respondents bought avocados. On average 34 per cent of respondents never bought avocados, with almost 40 per cent of Pretoria residents refraining from purchases.

Both weekly and monthly purchases were most prominent, the reason being that an avocado is a luxury product and most people simply can not afford regular purchases.

Reasons for not buying avocados

The vast majority of respondents considered availability as the overriding problem inhibiting purchases. This is to be expected, as most purchases are done impulsively and are seldom planned hence the high frequency / low number of fruit purchased at a time. Quality did not seem to be an important factor in limiting sales but rather price and taste. This problem can be stated somewhat differently quality could be the problem given the price; in other words, a matter of perceptions. Availability of ripe fruit curtailed sales, due to the phenomenon that consumers made a purchase with the intention of immediate consumption.

In view of the above, it is only to be expected that demand will increase should the price / quality relationship improve, availability increase and ripe fruit for immediate consumption be available for purchase.

Nutritional value of avocados

Seventy three per cent of the respondents considered avocados to be healthy, whereas 16 per cent did not know.

Avocados' taste

Close to 20 per cent of consumers indicated a dislike for the fruit. These consumers will in all probability never consume avocados.

Manner in which avocados are consumed

It appears that avocados are enjoyed either on bread as a spread, or on its own with salt and pepper. On occasion sugar is also added. In one instance, avocado was mixed with milk and prepared as a milkshake. This drink was considered very healthy by the person concerned,

Sixteen per cent of respondents consumed avocados as a salad with other food.

The 39 per cent of consumers who enjoyed avocados between meals corresponded with the 43 per cent of respondents who consumed the fruit on its own.

Avocados are enjoyed at breakfast, probably with bread, and with the addition of salt and pepper. A smaller percentage of the respondents consumed avocados at lunch time.

The phenomenon that avocados are consumed during breakfast explains the high percentage of respondents who consume the fruit at home. The remainder eat avocados in a work environment and at take-aways. Those eating avocados at work and at take-aways add up to 26 per cent; this in turn corresponds with the 27 per cent who eat avocados at lunch time.

Factors determining the purchase of avocados

The large percentage of consumers who buy ripe avocados is an indication that consumption is immediate and most probably impulsive. The average consumer probably sees the fruit and this is sufficient to stimulate his/her demand for the product.

Softness is considered the most important method to test for ripeness.

One respondent had the following to say: 'I shake it to feel if the heart is loose'.

Eleven per cent of respondents considered colour as a means to test for ripeness,

A very negative perception was apparent with regards to spots on the avocado skin and most people will either not buy avocados with spots, or do so only occasionally.

Shopping habits of consumers

The most popular shopping venue was the street vendors with 50 per cent of people buying from them. This is not a surprising result, considering the buying habits of the average respondent as mentioned earlier (impulsive buying with immediate consumption uppermost in his/her mind). This is borne out by the fact that in most cases one fruit is purchased at a time. Respondents very seldom buy more than three avocados at a time.

Consumers were of the opinion that vendors were even cheaper than supermarkets and this is obviously a contributory factor to the higher purchases from vendors.

Purchases could have been higher, had availability not been a problem. Throughout this study, non-availability has stood out as an impediment to higher sales/purchases,

In view of the above, it is not surprising that consumers prefer their avocados individually, wrapped in paper and displayed in cardboard boxes.

Characteristics of the fruit

Respondents showed a preference for green (colour), medium to large fruit. As far as both colour and size were concerned, a large percentage (16 and 30 per cent respectively) did not seem to mind what they bought.

THE MEDIA (RADIO, NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES AND TV)

In order to determine the best potential medium for advertising, a survey covering the radio, newspapers, magazines and television, was conducted amongst the black consumers.

Radio

A very high 93 per cent of respondents listened to the radio, proving its universal popularity.

Morning radio, however, was not expected to be as popular as it turned out to be. At first this appeared to be puzzling, as most people should have been busy at that time. Upon subsequent investigation, it turned out that many people listened to the radio before eight in the morning.

As the day progresses, listenership tails off. This applies to both weekdays and weekends.

Urban consumers rated Radio Bophuthatswana as their most popular station followed by Radio Metro. Both Radio 702 and Radio 5 were relatively popular in the Pretoria vicinity.

Newspapers

Almost 70 per cent of respondents read newspapers daily, with the Sowetan being the most popular. The Star was more popular in Johannesburg, with the Pretoria News being preferred in its home territory.

Magazines

Magazines were obviously read less frequently. Pace was the most popular, with 25 per cent of respondents reading it. The Cosmopolitan was the second most popular magazine, which is rather surprising. True Love, on the other hand, was a definite winner, but can hardly be called a magazine and was not analysed in terms of its exact popularity,

Television

Television viewership increased as the day progressed, achieving a peak during the evening. Weekend viewing was lower than during weekdays, probably due to more distractions compared to weekdays.

An increase in television viewership was accompanied by a drop in radio listenership, which was to be expected. Early morning television was surprisingly popular even more so than weekday afternoons (17 per cent).

Over weekends, afternoon-television viewing increased dramatically in popularity most probably due to free time in conjunction with the many hours of sport.

A noticeable difference existed between the number of Pretoria residents and those in Johannesburg who regularly watch television (71 per cent of Pretoria residents compared to 60 per cent for Johannesburg).

FINDINGS OF SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONGST SELLERS

Due to certain legal aspects, most sellers were obliged to sell their products in certain designated areas. As a rule, they were generally grouped together and where possible the tendency was for them to congregate in areas of high density main roads, stations and taxi ranks.

From the questionnaires, it was evident that most vendors had had a low level of schooling. This is an obvious reason for their being employed in the informal sector, as work elsewhere must be hard to obtain, given the level of their skills.

Variety of products sold

A wide variety of products were sold, with apples and bananas the most popular. Oranges, mangoes and tomatoes were all high in demand and a superior level of availability was implied for those products.

Permanence of vendors and traders

Compared to their Johannesburg counterparts, fewer Pretoria traders had sold similar products elsewhere.

Their reason for selling in a particular area was due to improved business (73 per cent of the cases), while a surprisingly small number considered harassment from officials as a reason for their moving to a particular area.

Eighty per cent of traders in Johannesburg had been selling in the same location for more than a year, compared to a figure of 63 per cent in Pretoria. The situation is reversed when one looks at those who had been selling for a period of six months to a year. A possible explanation is that more businesses have opened in Pretoria.

Most popular products

According to the sellers, apples were a definite favourite together with oranges, bananas, tomatoes and mangoes, as found earlier. Large differences between Pretoria and Johannesburg were evident in terms of the various percentages, although the order of apparent preference remained fairly constant.

When asked why they thought these fruits were so popular, availability, nutritional value and price, were cited as the main reasons.

Avocado sales

Forty three per cent of the respondents sell avocados frequently, with the same percentage doing so only occasionally. In other words, just over 80 per cent sell avocados this corresponds reasonably closely with the 70 per cent obtained in the variety of products sold. Johannesburg and Pretoria, viewed separately, yielded very similar results. Ninety per cent of Johannesburg respondents sold avocados, either regularly or on occasion, compared to 70 per cent according to question one. For Pretoria the figures were 75 and 61 per cent, respectively.

Once again availability and price were the main reasons for fewer sales of avocados, with price a more important factor in Pretoria.

All traders were unanimous in that more could be sold, should the price/quality ratio and availability improve,

Consumer preferences

Traders were of the opinion that consumer demand was adversely affected by the price/quality ratio and ripeness. Bearing in mind that most fruit, including avocados, are bought with immediate consumption in mind, the latter results are to be expected (ripeness).

Taste was another reason (20 per cent) for fewer sales of avocados corresponding with the consumer survey of 25 per cent.

Conflicting results were obtained with regard to the type of avocado demanded by consumers. This could be attributed to the phenomenon that traders did not keep records. Apparently green-coloured, large to medium avocados seemed to be the preference.

Number and type of avocados sold

The majority of traders sold between ten and 50 avocados per day. Just over 30 per cent sold less than ten avocados per day.

These avocados were a combination of ripe and green fruit. Only a small handful could claim that their fruit were ripe (ready to eat). This has been confirmed by both the sellers and consumers. Ripe fruit, according to both these groups, appear difficult to obtain. This phenomenon hampers sales.

Profile of average customer

The same number of men and women buy avocados, with most of them purchasing less than three at a time. Once again, this corresponds with previous findings.

Traders either believed that younger people were the most frequent shoppers, or they were undecided. It is evident that very few older people bought avocados.

As with the previous findings, softness was the most likely method of testing the ripeness of an avocado.

Sources of supply

Both Johannesburg and Pretoria traders mostly bought their avocados from the market. A smaller proportion used other sources, such as the bakkies (vans) and supermarkets / greengrocers.

Johannesburg traders considered these sources adequate. This contrasts with the Pretoria traders who disagreed.

The general feeling was that most sources were too far removed from the sellers, with others wishing to deal directly with the producers. The reason for this was that they thought prices would be lower (eliminating the middlemen) in such cases.

The fact that the fresh produce market was considered the cheapest, contributed to its popularity as a source of supply. Those who obtained their fruit elsewhere, cited transport as the main reason for not buying on the market.

The number of avocados purchased at a time probably explains the preference for cardboard boxes. In the case of vendors, it facilitates packing-up at the end of the day and minimises handling of individual fruit.

Traders were unanimous in their support for direct purchases from producers in the event of lower priced, high quality fruit, with a greater level of availability.

Most traders earned profits of ten to 50 cents per fruit. According to the survey, Pretoria traders made greater profits, with very few selling at less than ten cents profit per avocado.

Suggestions to facilitate a more efficient and better distribution of avocados

A very large number of suggestions were forthcoming resulting in the following :

- ‘Consumers should be taught about when avocados are available should be made aware of the nutritional value of avocados’

- 'I propose the four Ps :
    * Producers should be the first-hand distributors
    * Prices should be reasonable
    * Promotion
    * Product should be of high quality'
- 'Elimination of the middleman'
- ‘Supply sources should be closer'
- 'Markets closer to the sellers'
- 'Quality / price ratio should be better'

QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSE: CONSUMERS
(n=1 019)

Black areas: Johannesburg (n=660) 64,77 per cent
Black areas: Pretoria (n=359) 35,23 per cent

	Total	Jhb	Pretoria
1 Do you buy fruit?			
a Never	1,2	1,2	1,1
b Once a month	7,1	7,2	6,6
c Once a week	31,1	32,7	28,1
d Less than 3 times a week	35,3	36,4	33,4
e Daily	24,9	21,8	30,6
2 Where do you generally buy your fruit and vegetables? (more than one)			
a At a greengrocer	26,1	23,9	30,1
b Supermarket	36,0	42,1	24,8
c Cafè	5,2	5,8	4,2
d Bakkie	4,8	6,4	1,9
e Street vendor	52,2	48,8	58,5
f Elsewhere (specify)	2,0	2,4	1,1

3 Which fruit do you buy? (more than one)		
a Apples	50,3	53,6
b Pears	19,8	22,4
c Oranges	29,8	37,6
d Mangoes	24,7	25,8
e Avocados	18,9	18,5
f Bananas	59,0	58,5
g Other (specify)	6,3	7,8
4 Do you buy avocados?		
a Never	34,0	30,9
b Once a month	38,2	37,9
c Once a week	16,0	18,8
d Less than 3 times a week	9,7	10,6
e Daily	0,8	0,3
5 Why don't you buy avocados more often? (more than one)		
a Too expensive	20,8	22,2
b Do not like the taste	25,7	23,3

c	Messy and difficult to eat		5,2	5,5	4,7
d	Inferior quality		5,6	5,8	5,3
e	Difficult to obtain		39,0	40,9	35,4
f	Not ready to eat (not ripe)		10,5	8,8	13,7
g	Other (specify)		3,8	4,2	3,1
6	Would you buy more avocados if it were: (answer a,b,c or d)				
a	Cheaper?	(i) Yes	52,7	52,3	53,5
		(ii) No	18,2	17,9	18,7
		(iii) Don't know	10,3	7,9	14,8
b	Of better quality	(i) Yes	50,0	45,5	58,5
		(ii) No	12,1	11,2	13,7
		(iii) Don't know	9,7	9,7	9,8
c	Easier to obtain	(i) Yes	53,1	53,0	53,2
		(ii) No	16,2	16,1	16,4
		(iii) Don't know	9,2	7,9	11,7
d	Ready to eat/ripe?	(i) Yes	46,3	43,3	51,8
		(ii) No	15,9	13,0	21,2
		(iii) Don't know	9,3	9,4	9,2
7	Do you consider avocados to: (answer a & b)				
a	Be healthy?	(i) Yes	72,8	72,3	73,5
		(ii) No	3,8	3,0	5,3
		(iii) Don't know	16,3	15,8	17,3
b	Be tasty?	(i) Yes	51,5	50,6	53,2
		(ii) No	17,6	15,8	20,9
		(iii) Don't know	5,6	5,5	5,9
8	How do you eat avocados? (more than one)				
a	As a salad		15,8	16,8	13,4
b	On its own		42,6	42,7	42,7
c	Both (a) and (b)		11,5	13,9	7,0
d	On a slice of bread		52,9	53,9	51,0
e	Any other way (specify)		3,4	3,3	3,6
9	When do you eat avocados? (more than one)				
a	Breakfast		40,2	41,3	38,2
b	Lunch		26,8	28,5	23,7
c	Dinner		6,9	7,3	6,1
d	In-between		38,8	37,9	40,4
10	Where would you eat avocados? (more than one)				
a	At home		77,1	77,2	76,9
b	At work		11,9	13,0	9,8
c	Take-aways		13,9	14,2	13,4
d	Other (specify)		5,9	6,4	5,1
11	Would you buy ready to eat (ripe) avocados instead of greener ones?				
a	Never		18,7	18,5	19,2
b	Sometimes		46,5	46,1	47,4
c	Always		32,8	33,6	31,2
12	How would you test if an avocado is ready to eat (ripe)?				
a	Softness		78,9	79,7	77,4
b	Shake it		4,6	5,2	3,6
c	Colour		10,9	10,0	12,5
d	Other (specify)		1,6	1,8	1,1
13	Would you buy an avocado with marks or spots on its skin?				
a	Never		48,7	52,6	41,5
b	Sometimes		26,7	24,9	30,1
c	Always		3,3	2,7	4,5
d	Depends		14,8	13,7	17,0
14	Where do you normally buy avocados? (more than one)				
a	Greengrocer		25,8	22,3	32,3
b	Supermarket		33,5	38,2	24,8
c	Cafè		4,8	6,4	1,9
d	Bakkie		5,1	6,1	3,3
e	Street vendor		49,5	50,5	47,6
f	Other (specify)		3,5	4,0	2,5
15	How many avocados would you normally buy at a time?				
a	One		44,6	40,9	51,3
b	1 – 3		37,5	40,3	32,3
c	4 – 6		4,3	5,5	2,2
d	6 – 10		3,9	3,9	3,9
e	More than 10		0,6	0,6	0,6
16	How would you prefer avocados to be packed? (more than one)				
a	Individually		36,3	38,2	32,9
b	Wrapped in paper		24,3	25,8	21,7
c	In a plastic bag		9,3	2,1	4,2
d	In a plastic netting		13,1	12,1	14,8
d	In cardboard boxes		25,5	24,9	26,7
f	Other (specifiy)		1,4	0,6	2,8
17	Do you prefer avocados to be:				
a	Small?		3,5	3,6	3,3
b	Medium sized?		39,2	39,7	38,2
c	Large?		21,3	21,5	20,9
d	Does not matter		29,2	30,0	27,9
18	Which colour avocado do you prefer?				
a	Green		62,7	66,1	56,7
b	Brown		12,1	9,4	17,0
c	Does not matter		15,6	16,7	13,7
d	Other (specify)		1,9	1,5	2,5
19	Are avocados freely available in your area?				
a	Always		10,2	10,9	8,9
b	Sometimes		61,7	60,3	64,4
c	Never		23,7	25,2	21,2
20	Where are avocados the cheapest?				
a	Supermarkets		23,4	23,3	23,4
b	Greengrocer		18,2	13,9	25,9
c	Cafè		1,4	1,5	1,1
d	Bakkie		6,8	6,7	7,0
e	Street vendor		43,5	47,9	35,4
21	Do you listen to the radio?				
a	Yes		93,1	94,6	90,5
b	No		3,1	2,1	5,0
22	When do you listen to the radio? (answer a & b) (more than one)				
a	On weekdays	(i) Morning	64,5	65,5	62,7
		(ii) Afternoon	29,8	30,9	27,9
		(iii) Evening	36,7	38,8	32,9
b	On weekends	(i) Morning	49,6	50,9	47,0
		(ii) Afternoon	44,0	40,6	50,1
		(iii) Evening	31,9	34,6	27,0
23	Name the radio station that you listen to most frequently (eg Radio 5, etc)				
	Bop		46,6	51,5	37,6
	Metro		19,7	20,3	18,7
	Radio 5		6,0	5,6	8,6
	Radio 702		7,3	5,8	10,0
24	Do you read newspapers daily?				
a	Yes		67,4	67,6	67,1
b	No		29,3	29,1	29,8
25	Name the newspaper that you read most frequently? (eg Star, etc)				
	Sowetan		41,1	43,9	35,9
	Star		37,1	40,9	30,1
	Citizen		4,2	2,7	7,0
	Pretoria News		3,5	0,0	7,0
26	Do you read magazines daily?				
a	Yes		28,3	27,0	30,6
b	No		68,9	70,0	66,9
27	Name the magazine that you read most frequently? (eg Bona, etc)				
	Pace		24,7	25,8	22,8
	Cosmo		9,0	10,3	6,7
	Bona		7,8	7,6	8,1
	True love		12,9	—	—
28	Do you watch TV frequently?				
a	Yes		64,1	60,3	71,0
b	No		32,9	36,1	27,0
29	When do you watch TV? (answer a & b) (more than one)				
a	On weekdays	(i) Morning	16,6	17,0	15,9
		(ii) Afternoon	8,6	8,5	8,9
		(iii) Evening	77,0	78,8	73,9
b	On weekends	(i) Morning	8,1	9,1	6,4
		(ii) Afternoon	27,9	27,9	28,0
		(iii) Evening	71,9	71,5	72,6

QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSE: SELLERS

Black Areas: Johannesburg (n=444) 78,31 per cent
Black Areas: Pretoria (n=123) 21,69 per cent

		JHB	PRETORIA	TOTAL
TYPE OF SELLER:	Vendor	34,23(152)	41,46(51)	35,8(203)
	Cafè	17,12(76)	24,39(30)	18,7(106)
	Supermarket	29,73(132)	17,07(21)	27,0(153)
	Bakkie	13,5 (60)	12,2 (15)	13,3(75)
	Greengrocer	5,4 (24)	4,8 (6)	5,2(30)

		Total	Jhb	Pretoria
1	Which products do you sell? (select more than one if required)			
a	Apples	91,7	90,1	97,6
b	Pears	70,7	68,0	80,5
c	Oranges	87,1	85,6	92,7
d	Mangoes	82,0	79,7	90,2
e	Avocados	67,6	69,4	60,9
f	Mealies	28,0	28,4	26,8
g	Tomatoes	69,7	69,4	70,7
h	Bananas	90,3	88,3	97,6
i	Other (specify)	29,3	34,7	9,8
2	Have you sold similar products elsewhere?			
a	Yes	38,1	43,2	19,5
b	No	61,6	56,3	80,5
3	For how long have you been selling here?			
a	More than a year	79,0	83,3	63,4
b	Between 6 months to a year	14,6	11,3	26,8
c	Between 1 to 6 months	5,6	4,5	9,8
d	Less than a month	0,4	0,45	0,0
4	Why did you move to this area?			
a	Business is better (selling more)	73,5	75,7	65,9
b	Security reasons (less trouble)	12,5	8,6	26,8
c	Harassment from officials	7,2	7,2	7,3
d	Other (specify)	4,6	5,9	0,0
5	Which product(s) do people buy the most? (select more than one if required)			
a	Apples	75,3	68,5	10,0
b	Pears	35,8	26,1	70,7
c	Oranges	64,6	56,8	92,7
d	Mangoes	53,9	47,3	78,1
e	Avocados	25,6	26,6	22,0
f	Mealies	19,1	20,3	14,6
g	Tomatoes	65,3	63,1	73,2
h	Other (specify)	21,2	27,0	0,0
6	Why would you say, do people prefer these products? (Select more than one if required)			
a	More available	54,9	47,8	80,5
b	Price	46,4	39,6	70,7
c	Taste	27,9	28,8	24,4
d	Nutritional value	65,8	59,0	90,2
e	Other (specify)	3,9	4,9	0,0
7	Do you sell avocados?			
a	Yes	43,2	45,1	36,6
b	Never	13,1	9,9	24,4
c	Sometimes	43,7	45,1	39,0
8	If never or sometimes, give reasons why (more than one)			
a	Difficult to obtain	33,3	32,4	36,6
b	People do not buy avocados	16,8	15,3	22,0
c	Inferior quality	5,1	5,9	2,4
d	Limited shelf-life	6,7	8,6	0,0
e	Expensive to buy from suppliers	36,2	30,6	56,1
f	Other (specify)	4,2	5,4	0,0

				Total	Jhb	Pretoria
9	Would you sell (more) avocados if it were: (answer a,b & c)					
a	Available?	(i)	Yes	81,3	78,8	90,2
		(ii)	No	4,9	6,3	0,0
		(iii)	Don't know	8,8	8,6	9,8
b	Of better quality?	(i)	Yes	82,7	80,6	90,2
		(ii)	No	3,5	4,5	0,0
		(iii)	Don't know	7,4	6,8	9,8
c	Cheaper?	(i)	Yes	81,1	77,9	92,7
		(ii)	No	3,4	4,5	0,0
		(iii)	Don't know	11,8	13,1	7,3

		Total	Jhb	Pretoria
10	Why don't people buy (more) avocados? (Select more than one)			
a	Too expensive	63,7	54,9	95,1
b	Poor quality (eg damaged skin)	27,9	27,5	29,3
c	Ripeness	31,2	33,8	21,9
d	Difficult or messy to eat	15,7	15,3	17,1
e	Taste	20,5	20,7	19,5
f	Other (specify)	5,8	6,7	2,4
11	What type of avocado do people generally prefer? (Select more than one)			
a	Large	51,2	49,1	58,5
b	Dark	31,0	20,7	68,3
c	Green	48,2	55,4	21,9
d	Medium	46,2	44,1	53,7
e	Small	18,8	5,9	4,9
f	Marks on the skin	6,3	8,1	0,0
g	Other (specify)	3,9	5,0	0,0
12	How many avocados do you sell per day?			
a	Less than 10	32,3	32,4	31,7
b	Between 10 and 50	52,4	54,1	46,3
c	More than 50	8,1	10,4	0,0
13	Are your avocados ripe, green or a mixture of both?			
a	Green	16,2	19,4	4,9
b	Ripe	10,2	11,7	4,9
d	Both ripe and green	65,4	65,3	65,9
14	Who buys the most avocados, men or women?			
a	Men	21,3	19,8	26,8
b	Women	22,2	25,7	9,8
c	About the same (hard to tell whether a difference exists)	51,0	52,3	46,3
15	How many avocados do customers usually buy at a time?			
a	1	39,9	34,7	58,5
b	2	33,9	37,8	19,5
c	3 – 5	14,6	18,0	2,4
d	More than 5	6,0	6,3	4,9
16	Do younger or older people generally buy from you?			
a	Younger	38,8	41,4	29,3
b	Older	9,0	9,5	7,3
c	Difficult to say (Don't know)	50,1	47,8	58,5
17	How do buyers test for ripeness?			
a	Softness	66,7	78,4	24,4
b	By shaking	5,1	3,2	12,2
c	The colour	8,1	7,7	9,8
d	Asking your opinion	13,6	8,6	31,7
e	Other (specify)	6,5	2,3	22,0
18	Where do you get your supply of avocados? (Select more than one)			
a	From the bakkies	8,5	10,8	0,0
b	From the market	80,3	81,5	75,6
c	From the greengrocer	11,6	13,5	4,9
d	From the supermarkets	10,4	12,6	2,4
e	Other (specify)	0,7	0,9	0,0
19	Do you think the above sources are adequate?			
a	Yes	70,4	75,7	51,2
b	No	26,5	21,6	43,9
20	If no, where would you like to get it? (Specify)			
21	Where do you get your avocados the cheapest?			
a	From the bakkies	9,2	6,3	19,5
b	From the market	70,4	75,1	53,7
c	From the greengrocer	6,9	8,1	2,4
d	From the supermarkets	1,8	2,3	0,0
e	Other	3,9	5,0	0,0
22	If the answers given in 18 and 21 differ, state reason:			
a	Transport problems	11,3	13,1	4,9
b	Better service	7,6	9,0	2,4
c	Quality	4,2	5,4	0,0
d	Credit	3,0	3,2	2,4
e	Other (specify)	1,4	1,8	0,0

23 What profit do you earn per avocado?

a	Less than 10 cents	24,5	30,6	2,4
b	Between 10 and 20 cents	44,1	46,9	34,2
c	Between 20 and 50 cents	19,6	16,2	31,7
d	More than 50 cents	4,1	3,2	7,3

24 Do you prefer avocados packed in:

a	A cardboard box?	77,6	77,5	78,1
b	Plastic netting?	13,1	15,3	4,9
c	Plastic bag?	2,5	3,2	0,0
d	Other (specify)	1,1	1,4	0,0

25 How many avocados do you buy at a time?

a	Less than 20	21,7	27,0	2,4
b	Between 20 and 50	35,5	32,4	46,3
c	More than 50	34,7	36,9	26,8

26 Would you buy avocados directly from producers if: (answer a,b & c)

a	It were cheaper?	(i)	Yes	90,7	91,4	87,8
		(ii)	No	1,8	2,3	0,0
		(iii)	Don't know	4,6	4,5	4,9
b	It were of better quality?	(i)	Yes	91,4	92,3	87,8
		(ii)	No	1,1	1,4	0,0
		(iii)	Don't know	3,9	3,6	4,9
c	It were easily available?	(i)	Yes	91,1	93,2	87,8
		(ii)	No	1,0	1,4	0,0
		(iii)	Don't know	3,7	3,2	4,9

27 What would you propose to facilitate a more effecient and better distribution of avocados to consumers?

BREAKDOWN BY TYPE OF SELLER (expressed as a percentage %)

1 Avocados are sold by:

	%
Vendors	52
Cafès	78
Supermarkets	82
Vans	59
Greengrocers	87

2 Avocados sold:

	Regularly %	Never %	Sometimes %
Vendors	30	21	49
Cafès	47	12	41
Supermarkets	56	5	39
Vans	48	16	36
Greengrocers	43	0	57

3 Reason for selling occasionally or never:

a	Difficult to get hold of	
	Vendors	37%
	Cafès	25%
	Supermarkets	33%
	Vans	36%
	Greengrocers	27%
b	Low demand	
	Vendors	22%
	Cafès	14%
	Supermarkets	12%
	Vans	21%
	Greengrocers	7%
c	Inferior quality	
	Vendors	3%
	Cafès	6%
	Supermarkets	10%
	Vans	3%
	Greengrocers	0%
d	Limited shelf-life	
	Vendors	8%
	Cafès	13%
	Supermarkets	5%
	Vans	0%
	Greengrocers	0%
e	Expensive to buy from suppliers	
	Vendors	44%
	Cafès	29%
	Supermarkets	28%
	Vans	36%
	Greengrocers	50%

4 More would be sold if it were:

	Available %	Of better quality %	Cheaper %
Vendors	80	80	81
Cafès	85	87	87
Supermarkets	80	84	75
Vans	80	0	87
Greengrocers	87	87	80

5 Number of avocados sold per day:

	Ripe %	Green %	Both ripe and green %
Vendors	36	49	6
Cafès	44	50	0
Supermarkets	19	57	20
Vans	29	57	3
Greengrocers	43	50	7

6 Who buys avocados?

	Men %	Women %	Hard to tell difference %
Vendors	17	12	60
Cafès	6	10	78
Supermarkets	20	7	69
Vans	20	12	57
Greengrocers	20	13	67

7 Number of avocados bought at a time:

	1 %	2 %	3 – 5 %	More than 5 %
Vendors	45	32	12	5
Cafès	39	39	14	5
Supermarkets	29	40	17	8
Vans	47	21	19	7
Greengrocers	47	33	13	7

8 Age of the average customer:

	Younger %	Older %	Difficult to say %
Vendors	43	6	49
Cafès	36	4	57
Supermarkets	39	13	46
Vans	31	16	53
Greengrocers	43	7	50

9 Test for ripeness:

	Softness %	Shaking %	Colour %	Ask the seller %
Vendors	61	2	4	21
Cafès	66	6	11	13
Supermarkets	79	6	6	7
Vans	61	9	13	8
Greengrocers	60	10	20	10

10 Source of supply:

a	From Vans	
	Vendors	12%
	Cafès	4%
	Supermarkets	5%
	Vans	0%
	Greengrocers	13%
b	From markets	
	Vendors	67%
	Cafès	88%
	Supermarkets	90%
	Vans	76%
	Greengrocers	100%
c	From greengrocers	
	Vendors	16%
	Cafès	10%
	Supermarkets	9%
	Vans	11%
	Greengrocers	0%
d	From supermarkets	
	Vendors	18%
	Cafès	16%
	Supermarkets	0%
	Vans	13%
	Greengrocers	7%

11 Adequacy of above sources:

	Yes %	No %
Vendors	57	40
Cafès	84	12
Supermarkets	71	23
Vans	76	24
Greengrocers	93	7

12 Profit earned per avocado in cents:

	Less than 10 %	10-20 %	20-50 %	More than 50 %
Vendors	26	45	14	3
Cafès	28	39	24	5
Supermarkets	22	44	22	6
Vans	27	44	15	4
Greengrocers	7	57	37	0

13 Preferred method of packaging:

	Cardboard box %	Plastic netting %	Plastic bag %
Vendors	77	13	1
Cafès	81	11	2
Supermarkets	79	10	4
Vans	61	25	5
Greengrocers	100	0	0

14 Avocados bought at a time:

	Less than 20 %	20 – 50 %	More than 50 %
Vendors	28	39	21
Cafès	23	33	39
Supermarkets	13	33	49
Vans	27	29	33
Greengrocers	7	47	47

CONCLUSION

The surprising popularity of avocados amongst urban blacks should be encouraging for those associated with the industry. The relatively faster rising income per capita of blacks, compared to that of other population groups and the importance of income in the demand for avocados, will probably result in an increased demand from this sector. However, availability is a persisting problem that needs to be addressed. Furthermore, fruit of suitable price and quality seem to be a problem. The mere fact that an avocado is a luxury product, implies that the average consumer is price conscious with regard to avocados.

For a more detailed breakdown of the results, it is suggested that the questionnaires be employed.