

## Media Release

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### **NEW REPORT: Avocados no longer an indulgence with serving size increase recommended**

Avocados not only help reduce heart disease risk factors, they also provide a wide range of additional health benefits and can be consumed every day as part of a healthy balanced diet, without contributing to weight gain.

A new report, delivered through not-for-profit research and development corporation Hort Innovation, has summarised the global body of evidence on avocado nutrition. The report includes a new CSIRO systematic literature review on cardiometabolic health and the consensus from an expert roundtable on recommended serving size and frequency of consumption. (The report is available for [download here](#)).

Studies have shown that eating one avocado a day is not associated with increased weight, and people who regularly eat avocado have a lower BMI, a smaller waist and less weight gain over time. The expert roundtable recommends a serving size of 75g, or half a medium avocado, which is an increase on previous recommendation of 50g.

Nicole Senior, Accredited Practising Dietitian and one of the report's authors, said avocados have a lot more to offer than most people realise, and they are now more affordable due to an increased supply.

"Research shows avocados contribute so much more than just healthy fats and a positive impact on heart disease risk, which is already a well-known health benefit," Ms Senior said.

"People may already know avocados contain healthy monounsaturated fats with low levels of carbohydrates and sodium, but they are also an important source of the B-group vitamin folate which is an essential nutrient for cell division, blood formation and healthy pregnancy.

"Avocados are a source of nearly 20 nutrients and phytonutrients such as fibre, niacin, pantothenic acid, vitamins E and K, potassium, antioxidant polyphenols and carotenoids, making them one of the healthiest nutrient dense foods available. The body of research shows they may also play a helpful role in gut, eye, brain and skin health, and have benefits for diabetes," she said.

#### **Key research findings**

Whether smashed on toast, slipped into a smoothie, sliced into a salad or spread on bread, the new report highlights the many reasons why avocados are a nutritious food Australians could eat more of to help improve their health and wellbeing.

The report found regular avocado consumption, as part of a healthy diet, may:

- Improve lipid profiles and contribute to cardiovascular health
- Assist in weight management
- Increase the diversity and abundance of gut microbiota for better gut health
- Maintain cognitive function in aging
- Improve skin appearance
- Help convert carotenoids to vitamin A for good vision

### **Serving size and frequency**

The report includes a summary of the results from an expert health professional roundtable, involving seven key opinion leaders in nutrition. The roundtable assessed the available evidence and suggested a serving size of 75g a day, or half a medium avocado.

This conclusion aligns with the 75g serving size for vegetables in The Australian Dietary Guidelines (2013) and reflects research outcomes showing more avocado is better for obtaining health benefits.

The roundtable also concluded avocados should be ‘consumed regularly’ to realise their health benefits. The taste and versatility of avocados makes it easier for them to help consumers meet the recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables.

### **Weight, dieting and diabetes**

Research shows avocados are a weight-friendly food. Despite containing healthy fats and having a higher kilojoule content than most other fruits, eating one avocado a day was not associated with weight gain in a range of studies.

“This means avocados can be included in kilojoule-controlled diets for weight loss, contributing a range of important nutrients and phytochemicals, while also adding enjoyment and satisfaction to meals and snacks,” Ms Senior said.

“Avocados fit into lower-carb, higher (healthy) fat eating patterns such as the Mediterranean diet for heart health, diabetes management and overall metabolic health. They also work well with other diets such as vegan or vegetarian, low salt, gluten-free, low carb, keto and paleo diets. And like all fruit and vegetables, avocados score the maximum five Health Star Rating,” she said.

A CSIRO scoping review, conducted in conjunction with their systematic review on cardiometabolic health, also found evidence that avocado consumption has a positive impact on the gut microbiome, changing microbial diversity and abundance in overweight individuals who were on both normal and energy-restricted weight loss diets.

Right now, avocado supply is plentiful, meaning lower prices and increased access to this nutritious food for consumers.

To download a free copy of The Avocado Nutrition and Health Report, go to the [Australian Avocados Health Portal](http://australianavocados.com.au/health-professional) (<http://australianavocados.com.au/health-professional>).

ENDS

- **Hight resolution photographs and infographics** to accompany media stories on the new Avocado Nutrition and Health Report are available for download from [this Dropbox link](#).
- **For more information, or to arrange an interview, please contact:**  
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