

Avocado Management in Brief: May – June

- **Soil and leaf sampling:** If not yet completed, soil and leaf samples should be taken ASAP from the hardened-off summer flush. Use the results to adjust fertiliser applications for the coming season.
- **Irrigation:** The dry season is approaching in the northern production regions. Maintain shallow tensiometer readings between **-10 and -40 kPa**, and deep tensiometer readings between **-20 and -40 kPa in May** and **-20 and -30 kPa in June**. (Also use soil squeeze tests to confirm soil moisture before irrigating).
- **Harvesting:** Follow correct harvesting techniques and hygiene practices. Avoid picking when conditions are wet, as this can increase the incidence of lenticel damage.
- **Fruit maturity:** Before harvesting, liaise with your packhouse/exporter and conduct both ripening and dry matter tests to ensure fruit are mature. Immature fruit can result in quality problems, poor ripening and possible market rejections.
- **Tree pruning:** Prune directly after harvest once strong flower bud development is visible. Avoid pruning when flower buds are not visible, as this may stimulate vegetative flush and reduce crop potential. Pruning practices should be adapted according to cultivar, tree vigour, tree height, orchard spacing and climatic conditions. Consult a specialist or SAAGA extension officer where needed.
- **Bees:** Place **2 to 4 hives/ha** in the orchard (if wild bees are not sufficient) at approximately **20% flowering**. Ensure fresh water is available for bees and monitor hive health throughout flowering. Remove hives before insecticide applications commence.

Fertiliser Application

Adjust fertiliser applications according to recent soil and leaf analysis results. Applications should be made only where required and should form part of a balanced fertiliser programme.

- **Lime:** Maintain optimal soil pH(H₂O) of approximately 5.7–6.5 for good nutrient uptake. Apply calcitic or dolomitic lime once every 2–3 years, based on soil analysis results. Use dolomitic lime where magnesium is deficient. If soil pH is adequate but calcium is required, calcium nitrate or gypsum may be considered. Apply lime at a rate of 2 t/ha. If higher rates are required, split applications into no more than 2 t/ha at a time over a 6–12-month period.
- **Phosphate (P):** Optimal leaf phosphate levels are generally between 0.10% and 0.20%. Apply 50 g/m² tree drip area of Superphosphate, or MAP at 15 g/m², if leaf P is below the recommended norm. MAP should only be used where nitrogen levels are also below the recommended leaf norms.



- **Boron (B):** Apply 3 g/m² tree drip area of Solubor® 20% if leaf B is below 40 ppm, or 10 g/m² tree drip area of Boronate 10% if leaf B is below 55 ppm or for B maintenance. Boron applications in June support flower bud development and good flower formation before flowers start opening.
- **Foliar sprays:** Foliar sprays should only be applied where soil applications are insufficient or where deficiencies are identified. Apply Solubor®/Bortrac as a foliar spray only if leaf B is below 30 ppm at the cauliflower flower stage. If trees are healthy and soil fertiliser has been applied in good time, a foliar spray may not be necessary.
- **Young trees:** For nutrition and root health, apply a mixture of Nitrosol® at 30 ml/10 L water, Solubor® at 15 g/10 L water, and Aliette® every 4 to 8 weeks. Only include Aliette® in every second foliar application.

Pests and Diseases

- **False Codling Moth (FCM):** Scout regularly for eggs and damage on fruit, and monitor moth activity using Delta traps and lures. Apply registered control measures when population levels increase. The threshold is 9 moths per trap per week.
- **Avocado Sunblotch Viroid:** Continue monitoring orchards for infected trees. Infected trees should be removed to limit spread, as affected trees remain unproductive and can act as a source of infection.

Remember to look at the SAAGA [PODCASTS](#), where growers can access useful discussions and updates on relevant avocado industry topics.

N.B. Please refer to the SAAGA website for the latest registered chemicals and their [MRLs](#). Always liaise with your exporter or packhouse regarding products acceptable in your specific export market. Not all products registered for use in South Africa are accepted in export markets, and additional retailer restrictions may apply.



SAMGA Board Meeting

8 April 2026

Jaco Fivaz has come to the then of his current 2-year term as SAMGA chairman, a position which he has served in many times over the years. Jaco is thanked for his selfless contribution to the SAMGA. He will remain on the board as past chairman for a 2-year term.

Emile van der Westhuizen of Blydevallei was elected as the new SAMGA chairman and Rudolph Stebbing of Bavaria Fruit Estate was elected as vice chairman.

The large 2025/2026 crop came with challenges of oversupply on the local and export markets, despite SAMGA providing daily updates on volumes on the major SA markets and inspection and shipment information for exports. The situation on the local market as made worse by immature fruit being placed on the market in the early season. The board agreed to an integrated strategy to aid orderly marketing which includes a revised maturity regulations for the local market and gathering and provision information to all role players in the local and export markets prior to the season to aid better planning throughout the value chain.

Seven SAMGA members are participating in a yield and production cost benchmarking exercise with Source BI. SAMGA subsidised the cost for the first year. Going forward it is hoped that more growers will join as it will increase the benefit for those participating.

The board adopted a framework for SAMGA funded research to meet the following objectives:

- Find solutions to production issues on farms
- Optimise postharvest handling & storage to maintain fruit quality
- Overcome phytosanitary barriers to market access
- Build & retain research capacity

Develop new researchers & technical people for the industry

Current research projects include:

- Generation of data for an application to raise the EU MRL for phosphonic acid in mangoes.
- Chemical treatments for blossom malformation.
- Testing alternatives to Bion for bacterial black spot control.

Mango Management in Brief: May - June

Post-harvest flush to flower development

Na-oes groeistuwing tot blom ontwikkeling

Orchard sanitation / Boordsanitasie

Protect the new flush against anthracnose infection. Copper hydroxide @ 350 ml/100L water.

Beskerm nuwe groeistuwing teen antraknose infeksie. Koper hidroxied @ 350 ml/100L water.

Foliar sprays (B & Zn) / Blaarvoeding (B & Zn)

Foliar sprays on new flush.

Blaarbespuitings op jong groeistuwings.

Calcium (Ca) / Kalsium (Ca)

Apply 45% Ca according to analysis.

Dien 45% Ca toe volgens aanbeveling

Irrigation / Besproeiing

Full irrigation until the hardening of the flush. Thereafter slowly reduce irrigation until the trees show signs of flowering. Continue then again with full irrigation.

Volle besproeiing tot die afharding van groeistuwing. Daarna verminder besproeiing stelselmatig.

Volle Besproeiing met eerste tekens van bome wat wil begin blom.

Bacterial Blackspot / Bakteriese swartvlek

Pre-flower inoculum reducing spray programme (Medium coverage spray: 800 -1000 L

water / ha) Use copper oxychloride products @ 250 g - 300 g / 100 L water; Buffer mixture to pH 6.5 or higher.

Spuitprogram voor blom vir inokulum-vermindering (Medium dekbespuiting: 800 - 1000 L water /

ha) Gebruik koper-oksichloriedprodukte @ 250 g - 300 g / 100 L water; Buffer mengsel na pH 6.5 of hoër.

Anthrachnose / Antraknose and Soft brown rot / Sagte bruinvrot

Use copper oxychloride products @ 250 g - 300 g / 100 L water. Buffer spray mix to pH 6.5 or higher. Other products registered to use is azoxystrobin @ 40ml / 100 L water, apply at full flowering to petal drop. Mancozeb products are also available and can be applied @ 200 g / 100L water when panicles appear but before flowers open. Do not use on fruit larger than golfball size. Optimum pH 5, although PHI is 14 days, SAMGA recommends 60 days.

Gebruik koper oksichloried produkte teen 250 g - 300 g / 100 L water. Buffer die mengsel na pH 6.5 of hoër. Ander produkte wat gebruik kan word is azoxystrobin teen 40 ml / 100 L water, dien toe met vol blom net voor blomblaar val. Mancozeb produkte is ook beskikbaar en kan toegedien word teen 200 g / 100 L water net voor blomme oop maak. Moet nie toedien na golfbal grootte nie. Optimum pH 5, Onthoudings periode is 14 dae, maar SAMGA beveel aan 60 dae.

Fire prevention / Brandvoorkoming

Keep grass inside and near orchards short. Establish and maintain firebreaks around the orchard and farm perimeter to prevent destruction of trees and any fires from spreading. Landowners may be prosecuted if fires originating from their property cause damage to other properties due to negligence in this regard.

Hou gras in en rondom boorde kort. Vestig en onderhou brandpaaie rondom boorde en plaasgrens om brande uit boord te hou en verspreiding te beperk. Grondeienaars kan vervolgt word indien 'n brand op die plaas ontstaan en weens nalatigheid versprei en ander eiendom beskadig.

N.B. Please refer to the SAMGA website for the latest registered chemicals and their MRLs and liaison with exporter/ packhouse on products acceptable in your designated export market despite being registered and accepted in the South African market. Please check with your exporters whether you can use chemicals that are flagged as yellow or red under Export Market Retailer status.



SALGA Board Meeting, **4 March 2026**

- The 2025/2026 litchi season yielded a good crop of just over 7,000 tonnes, which was much needed after extremely poor crop the previous season (2,320 t). Exports amounted to 2 million 2 kg cartons, with 29% going to the USA and the rest to Europe.
- The SALGA Research symposium will take place in Nelspruit on 11 June 2026. A prominent Chinese litchi researcher has been invited to make the keynote presentation. Feedback on SALGA funded research projects will also be provided.
- The SALGA Tree Census is in the process of being updated.
- The process to gain market access to India is ongoing with the Indian government being requested to allow a 1 °C cold treatment as an alternative to irradiation.
- There has been no movement with the application to the USDA for a cold treatment 1 °C for 16 days as an alternative to irradiation. This can be attributed to strained diplomatic relations between SA and the Trump administration.

Litchi Management in Brief: May - June

During this period, litchi trees transition from post-harvest recovery into flower induction and panicle development. Management is critical to ensure uniform flowering, good fruit set, and strong early fruit development potential for the upcoming season.

Key focus areas:

- Water management to support floral initiation
- Pest monitoring and early intervention
- Nutrient balancing (especially P, N, and K)
- Canopy and weed control to reduce competition

Pests

Fruit Fly

- Monitor fruit fly throughout the year, even post-harvest
- Maintain male annihilation traps (MAT) and bait stations

Bark Borer

- Scout, spot-spray lesions with Carbaryl



Irrigation

- As soon as flower panicles start emerging, irrigation must be carefully adjusted to avoid stress shock
- Slight controlled water stress supports flowering, avoid severe stress

Tensiometer	May	June
0-30 cm	Micro: -20 to -50 kPa	Micro: -20 to -30 kPa
	Drip: - 20 to -30 kPa	Drip: - 10 to -20 kPa
30-60 cm	Micro: -40 to -60 kPa	Micro: -30 to -50 kPa
	Drip: -30 to -40 kPa	Drip: -20 to -30 kPa

Table 1. Irrigation

Canopy coverage

Water requirement guideline in Table 2: litre/tree/day at specific canopy coverage/ha planted 9 x 6 m (185 trees/ha). Adjusted for different areas with scheduling tools e.g., tensiometers, evaporation pan and crop factor.

	May & June
At Planting	4
25%	9
50%	19
75%	28
100%	38

Table 2. Water requirement guideline (litre/tree/day)

Weed control

- Essential to control weeds before flowering

Fertilisation

- Flowers appear: 50% of annual N & K, 100% of annual P

Pollination

- Bee management: Introduce ± 4 beehives per ha
- Place hives strategically within orchard blocks

