

South Africans will pay a premium for good avos

When it comes to buying avocados, South Africans are not loyal to their regular retailers, but will instead seek out and support stores selling good quality avos, even if that means paying more for them.



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This is according to new independent research into South African consumers' perception of avocados, conducted recently on behalf of the South African Avocado Growers' Association (SAAGA).

The research states that buying avocados is an "emotional purchase for consumers", and as such quality and price are critical considerations influencing purchase decisions. As a result, consumers expect retailers to be cognisant of their responsibility to ensuring quality avos on shelves.

Display and labelling

Consumers want to see stores taking better care when displaying avos; placing ripe avos into fridges and hard avos into open displays; and displaying avos in attractive ways, with all bad fruits being removed from the displays.

This, the research company says, can have a significant impact on retailers' bottom lines, as the findings also reveal that consumers visit stores once a week or every second week specifically to buy avos.

Consumers also want to know more about the products they're eating. They want retailers to clearly identify the avo varieties they are selling; provide information about, and recipes related to, these avo varieties; and better train store staff in the different avo varieties, as well as the correct handling of avocados to ensure that all-important quality.

Competitive advantage

The research indicates that selling good quality avos at the correct price point presents a significant competitive advantage for retailers, as consumers purchase other products when visiting a store to buy avos. Retailers can distinguish themselves from competitors by using less and/or recyclable avo packaging, championing South African avo growers by only stocking imported avos when local avos are not available, and actively promoting the product.

"Taste, quality, health, nutrition and value for money are the main reasons why South Africans buy and eat avocados," says Derek Donkin, Subtrop CEO. "It's important that retailers understand that correct handling, display and pricing impacts turnover and profitability. Positive experiences can equate to higher profits, while negative avo sales experiences can cost stores their customers altogether. The fact that consumers choose product quality over store loyalty points to the opportunity to grow market share through positive avo purchasing experiences."

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