

Research may deliver bruise-free avocados

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Researchers may soon understand more about why avocados are often bruised when they come home from the grocery store.

A joint project between The University of Queensland's School of Agriculture and Food Sciences and the Queensland Government's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry hopes to reduce consumer disappointment with bruised fruit, and benefit the industry with higher sales.

Consumers have reported that one in three avocados is a disappointment and that they would purchase more if they had confidence in the product.

UQ PhD student Muhammad Sohail Mazhar has followed avocados through the supply chain from ripener, distribution centre, to retailer. He discovered that most flesh bruising occurs at the retail [store](#).

"A bruise in an avocado fruit can continue to grow and intensify for up to 96 hours," Mr Mazhar said.

"This was established by using a [magnetic resonance imaging](#) machine at UQ's Centre for Advanced Imaging to examine the bruised flesh of whole avocados over time.

"The next stage of my doctorate will look carefully at shoppers' and consumers' contributions to bruising the avocado fruit in the retail store and at home and also into methods to reduce this occurring."

UQ's Professor Daryl Joyce believes that "decision-aid tools" and education initiatives to help shoppers choose fruit in the store may be the solution.

"Precise firmness-testing machines for avocados already exist in laboratories," Professor Joyce said.

"If we could adapt such devices for use in supermarkets, shoppers could learn how many days away the piece of [fruit](#) is from being ready to eat, without them having to squeeze it.

"A cost-effective firmness-testing device – combined with educating store staff, shoppers and consumers – could well be the answer to giving us many more bruise-free avocados," he said.

Provided by University of Queensland

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