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Avocados Are in the Winning Mood

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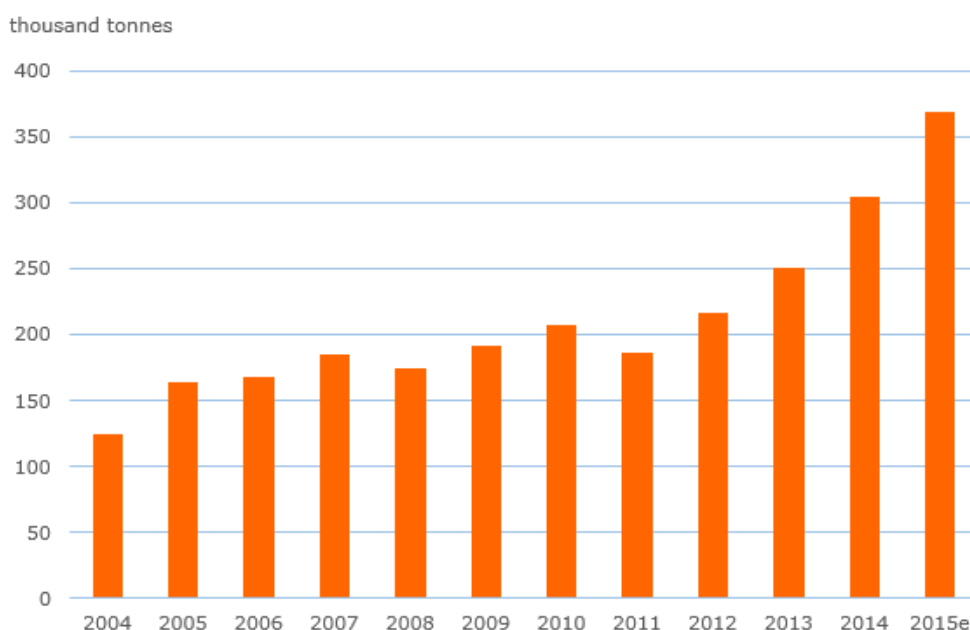
Many Americans are looking forward to Super Bowl Sunday. For the avocado industry this is also a major event. The Hass Avocado Board expects that Americans will eat 278 million avocados during Super Bowl week, a large share being imported from Mexico.

In Europe there is no tradition of eating avocados, but this may change. The avocado is hot. Not because of the chili peppers used in guacamole, but because the consumption of avocados has been steaming ahead.

In the last six years, the consumption of avocados has doubled in the EU and is estimated at about 0.75 kg/capita at this moment. Just for comparison: US consumers eat about four times this volume per person per year. Although Spain produces close to 70,000 tonnes of avocados, most of the avocados consumed in the EU are imported, mainly from Peru, Chile and South Africa according to data from the United Nations. The Dutch football team will not play in the next European Championship in 2016, but the Dutch do play a major role in Europe's avocado trade: The Netherlands acts as an avocado hub for the European market, being both the largest avocado import and export country in the EU.

The remarkable rise of the avocado in Europe is caused by various factors. First of all the increased availability of tasty and convenient ready-to-eat avocados has spurred market growth. Furthermore, consumers have become increasingly aware of the avocado's nutritional value and versatility. Increased promotion and consumer education about the usage of avocados may eventually result in the avocado becoming the number one UEFA European Championship snack.

Figure 1: EU fresh avocado imports



Source: UN-Comtrade, 2016; 2015 Rabobank estimate

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