

# FARMER IN THE FIELD

## Hass Avocados, A True California Native

by Bonnie Swank  
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**E**ach year avocados gain in popularity with their creamy fruit and multitude of uses. An avocado can easily fit into a sandwich, be tossed into a salad, and blend nicely into a dip, soup or even ice cream. What is the most commonly known variety of avocado? It's so common I would be surprised if right now you are not all shouting **HASS**. This true California native can be traced back to a pioneer in avocados, A.R.

Rideout, who collected seeds and planted them throughout his neighborhood. In the 1920's Mr.

Rudolph Hass, a postman, purchased the

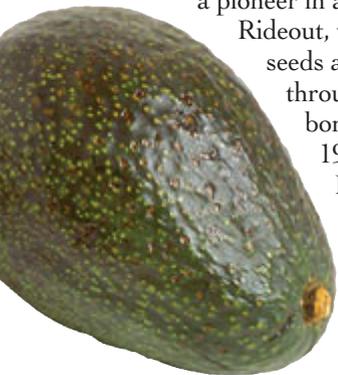
seedling tree from Mr. Rideout and planted it in his new orchard. When his plans for grafting the tree with another variety didn't work out he almost chopped the tree down. His children begged him not to, pleading his avocados were the best. Good call kids!

Mr. Hass decided to name the variety after himself and in 1935 he took out a patent and partnered with nurseryman Harold Brokaw to grow and promote the California Hass Avocado. Little did Mr. Hass know his decisions would be responsible for creating an industry that now accounts for about 80% of all avocados eaten worldwide and generates more than \$1 billion a year in revenues in the United States alone. Who would have thought that one little tree could impact

our economy so much. Mr. Hass passed away in 1952 but the Hass Mother Tree lived on, succumbed to root rot at the age of 76 in 2002.

When choosing an avocado pick one that is firm yet gives a little when gently squeezed in the palm of your hand. Avoid soft fruit or fruit with blemishes. The Hass avocado will turn dark green or black as it ripens unlike other avocados that stay green. If you need to ripen hard fruit put it in a brown paper bag and store it at room temperature 65-75° until ready to eat (usually two to five days). To learn more about Hass avocados go to [www.avocado.org](http://www.avocado.org) it's a great and informative site.

*~ Bonnie and her husband Dick Swank are owners of Swank Farms in Hollister. To learn more visit [SwankFarms.com](http://SwankFarms.com) or contact them at: 851-637-4704.*



## AVOCADO SOUP

A Southern Living recipe taken from myrecipes.com

Prep Time: 25 minutes • Chill: 1 hour • Yield: Makes 4 cups

### Ingredients

- 2 ripe avocados, quartered
- ¼ cup chopped green onion
- 2 tablespoons fresh orange or pineapple juice
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- ½ to 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground red pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cumin
- 3 cups chicken broth, chilled
- 1 (8-ounce) container fat-free plain yogurt

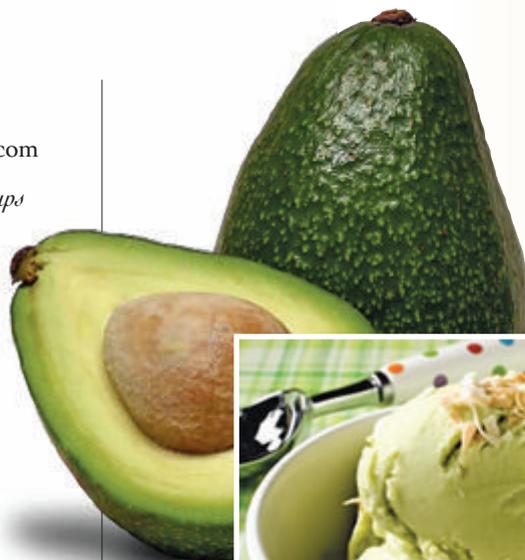


Garnishes: cooked shrimp, avocado slices

### Directions

Process avocado quarters in a blender or food processor until smooth, stopping to scrape down sides. Set aside.

Process green onion and next 7 ingredients until smooth, stopping to scrape down sides. Pour into a large bowl; gradually whisk in avocado and yogurt. Cover and chill 1 hour. Garnish, if desired.



## COCONUT-AVOCADO ICE CREAM

Recipe taken from allrecipes.com

### Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups milk
- 1 cup coconut cream
- ½ cup white sugar
- 2 (½ pound) avocados, peeled and pitted
- ¾ teaspoon lemon juice

### Directions

Puree milk, coconut cream, sugar, avocados, and lemon juice in a blender until smooth. Pour into a bowl, cover, and refrigerate for several hours until cold. Freeze in an ice cream machine according to manufacturer's directions, then freeze overnight.

Allow ice cream to soften in refrigerator for 10 minutes before serving.

