

Mexico's most lucrative fruit has a dark side

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Avocados have made world headlines for many reasons over the last decade. From millennials spending more because of their penchant need for avocado and poached egg on toast to the vast amount of rainforest being destroyed due to farming the crop.

Michaocan is probably the biggest avocado growing region across the whole of Mexico, it brings a vast amount of employment opportunities and money to the region but it comes with a high price, mainly the increasing environmental destruction.

Since 2016 the agricultural land used to farm avocados has almost doubled from 381,000 hectares to 564,000. According to the United Nations, it's also stretching from traditional cultivation areas into mountain ranges and forests with roughly 1,000 hectares of rainforest is being destroyed in the region a year.

The growing need for cultivation of avocados is creating a diversity problem in the rainforest and contributing to large scale environmental pollution which in turn is also damaging the water cycle in the area with endemic species on the decline.

Avocados are grown by farmers instead of other more less destructive crops due to the increased demand and money they can generate on the international fruit market but this has caused a spark in illegal felling of trees by small time farmers looking to make a living wage.

The Avocado craze is not over yet with estimates by the Mexican authorities pointing towards a 50% increase by 2030, that's around double the current 4.24 million tons per year.

Environmental issues are not the only worries for Mexico. Where there's money the cartel are not far behind. This has already been the case with producers being kidnapped.

Despite all the negative impacts the solution to Mexico's Avocado problem is unfortunately not simple, millions live on low income wages which means out right banning the production would only increase poverty and abuse, whilst policing this would also be a colossal task.

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[Jenny Bond](#)

E. jenny.bond@pressat.co.uk

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