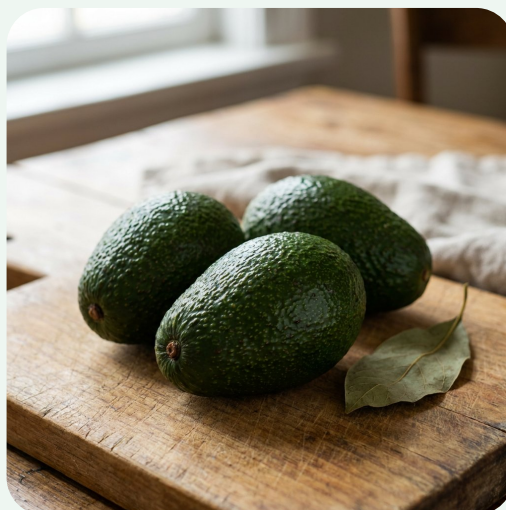




The Story of the Avocado

From the highlands of Mexico to a farm in Pak Chong: the real, sourced history behind Booth 7, Peterson, Pinkerton, Hass, and NePa's own home-grown Bruni.



"Grown with love"

by Neil & Patcha

Pak Chong, Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand

Where Avocados Come From

Long before anyone was arguing about whether it belongs on toast, the avocado (*Persea americana*) was already growing wild in south-central Mexico. Genetic and archaeological evidence points to the area around Puebla as its likely birthplace, where wild trees were being tended by local people as far back as 11,000 years ago.

True domestication, meaning people deliberately selecting and replanting seeds from the biggest, thickest-skinned fruit, is thought to have begun around 7,500 years ago. From there, cultivation spread south through Central America and into the northern reaches of South America, long before any European ever saw one.

~11,000 yrs ago

Wild avocado trees already being tended in central Mexico

~7,500 yrs ago

Deliberate domestication begins — selecting bigger, thicker-skinned fruit

750 BC

Domesticated avocado seeds buried with Incan mummies in Peru

500 BC

Evidence of avocado cultivation established in Mexico

Interestingly, molecular research suggests avocados were domesticated more than once, independently, across this range — not from a single ancestral tree, but through repeated cycles of selection, hybridisation and cloning by different peoples across Mexico and Central America.

From Wild Fruit to Named Varieties

Botanists group avocados into three horticultural races, and almost every named variety grown today, including all of NePa's, is either a pure race or a cross between them.

Mexican race

Native to Mexico's highlands. Small, thin-skinned, cold-hardy fruit with a faint aniseed scent to the leaves. Fastest to ripen.

Guatemalan race

Native to the highlands of Guatemala down to Mexico. Larger fruit, thick woody skin, slow to mature (9-14 months). Most modern commercial hybrids lean Guatemalan.

West Indian race

Native to Central/South American lowlands. Thin, smooth skin, lower oil content, quick to ripen (6-9 months), most tolerant of heat and salty soil.

The world's most famous accident: Hass

In 1926, a Californian mail carrier named Rudolph Hass planted a handful of seedlings sold to him as "Guatemalan Lyon" stock, in La Habra Heights, near Los Angeles. Most failed to graft onto other rootstock, so he let the one surviving seedling grow untouched. It produced rough, purple-black fruit that looked nothing like the bright green Fuerte avocados buyers expected at the time — but it tasted excellent. Hass patented it in 1935. Essentially every Hass avocado grown worldwide today, an estimated 10 million trees, descends from that single accidental tree in Rudolph Hass's garden.

Two Names Worth Knowing: Booth 7 & Peterson

Booth 7

Booth 7 is a Florida story. It's a Guatemalan x West Indian hybrid, selected from seedlings grown on the Krome family property near Homestead, Florida, in cooperation with the Booth family, in the mid-1930s. It became one of Florida's major commercial cultivars: round, fairly large fruit (300-400g) with green, nearly-smooth skin that stays green even at full maturity, which is why you judge Booth 7 ripeness by feel, never by colour, exactly the detail NePa's own ripeness guide teaches.

Peterson

Peterson is one of the best-known cultivars of the West Indian race: smaller, round fruit (200-350g), smooth light-green skin that turns a slightly greenish-yellow as it ripens, lighter oil content (around 12%), and a fast trip from flower to harvest (about 6 months, versus 8-9 for Booth 7). Its exact breeder and date aren't well documented in the horticultural record I could find, which is common for older West Indian-race selections, but its characteristics and use are extremely well documented, especially in Thailand, where it became a founding variety (see the next page).

Side by side

Booth 7: round, 300-400g, green skin stays green, ~12% oil, matures 8-9 months

Peterson: round, 200-350g, green to greenish-yellow, ~12% oil, matures ~6 months

A Different Name, Often Confused: Pinkerton

Pinkerton is a different, unrelated cultivar that's easy to mix up with Peterson by name alone. It's worth knowing the difference, since both circulate in Thailand.

Around 1959, a seedling appeared spontaneously among established Hass, Rincon and other avocado trees on John Pinkerton's ranch in Saticoy, Ventura County, California. Pinkerton grafted wood from it and watched it for over a decade before he was convinced it had real commercial potential. He patented it in 1975. It's a Guatemalan-type, A-flower cultivar known for a distinctive long neck, green, slightly pebbled skin, and reliable heavy cropping.

Don't mix them up

Peterson: West Indian race, Florida-linked, round fruit, introduced to Thailand in 1975 as a founding Pak Chong Research Station variety. Pinkerton: Guatemalan-type, Californian, patented 1972-75, long-necked fruit, a completely separate lineage that happens to sound similar.

Avocados Arrive in Thailand

According to Kasetsart University's Department of Horticulture, avocados were first brought into Thailand by missionaries and planted in Nan province, in the country's north, in roughly the early 1900s. Some seedlings from those original plantings were still found growing around Nan decades later.

Early 1900s

Missionaries bring the first avocado plants to Nan province, northern Thailand.

1965

Kasetsart University's Department of Horticulture introduces early cultivars (Kanoë, Ruehle, Kampong, Monk) and plants them at the new Pak Chong Research Station, Nakhon Ratchasima.

1975

With World Bank support, Kasetsart brings 11 named cultivars from Florida to Pak Chong: Buccaneer, Booth 7, Booth 8, Catalina, Choquette, Hall, Lula, Peterson, Queen, Taylor and Waldin.

1993

Hass, Bacon and Reed are introduced from California, broadening the genetic base further.

Booth 7 and Buccaneer went on to become the two varieties Kasetsart most strongly recommended to Thai growers, for yield and eating quality, with Booth 7 and Peterson becoming two of the most widely planted cultivars in the country over the following decades.

Bruni: Born in Pak Chong

Unlike the other varieties in this guide, Bruni's origin story isn't from California or Florida. It happened on a real farm, in Pak Chong, the same district NePa grows in today.

The grower, Samroeng Klanklin, was born in Pak Chong and holds an agriculture degree. He farms roughly 30 rai (about 12 acres) in Moo 6, Tambon Nong I Loe, Pak Chong district, Nakhon Ratchasima. His orchard originally grew Peterson and Booth 7, both sourced directly from the Pak Chong Research Institute, the very station Kasetsart established in the 1965-75 introductions on the previous page.

When it came time to expand the orchard, the fastest way to get more trees was to plant seed directly rather than grafting, so around 500 seedlings, grown from Peterson and Booth 7 seed, were planted out un-grafted. About six years later, once those seedling trees began fruiting, one tree stood out: heavier fruit set and noticeably better flavour than its 499 neighbours. It was named Bruni.

Presumed parentage

The grower and Thai agricultural press describe Bruni as presumed (not DNA-confirmed) to be a natural cross between Peterson and Booth 7 — the two varieties surrounding it in that seedling block.

What Bruni actually looks and tastes like

Tree habit is similar to Booth 7 but larger than Peterson. Fruit is large and round, similarly shaped to Booth 7 but lighter in colour and more translucent-looking skin. The flesh is creamier and stickier than either parent, with a faint sweetness, more oil, and a yellow colour. The skin is fairly thick, which makes it resist bruising in transport and reasonably resistant to fruit fly. Average yield is around 150kg per tree, harvested June to October, peaking in July-August.

Is Bruni Officially Registered?

Short answer: Bruni is a real, named, commercially propagated cultivar sold throughout Thailand, but I could not find evidence it has gone through the country's formal plant variety registration process.

First, a clarification: it isn't an FDA matter

Thailand's FDA (the Food and Drug Administration) regulates food safety and health claims on packaged products, not plant cultivars. New plant varieties in Thailand are instead registered under the Plant Variety Protection Act B.E. 2518 (1975), administered by the Department of Agriculture, a separate agency from the FDA.

What formal registration actually looks like

The Department of Agriculture publishes official notices when a new cultivar completes this process, including full botanical descriptions, breeding timelines and the applicant's name. Two avocado cultivars that have gone through it: Phop Phra 08, from Tak province, and Chompoo Siam, a seedling selection from Ruehle stock, discovered by a grower in Pak Chong in 2014, a nice parallel to Bruni's own story, but a separate, formally registered variety.

Bottom line

No Bruni entry turned up in the Department of Agriculture's published Plant Variety Protection notices I could search. That doesn't prove it was never registered, agencies don't keep everything easily searchable online, but as far as public records show, Bruni currently circulates as a named nursery and market variety rather than a formally PVP-registered cultivar.

What This Means for NePa

Put the last few pages together and there's a genuinely nice thread running through NePa's own trees.

Booth 7 and Peterson were not picked at random. They were two of the 11 cultivars Kasetsart University brought over from Florida in 1975 and trialled at the Pak Chong Research Station, the founding introduction that established avocado growing in this exact district 50 years ago.

Bruni, meanwhile, isn't an import at all. It's a home-grown Pak Chong variety, a presumed natural cross of those same two founding varieties, discovered on a local farm barely a generation later. Whether or not it's ever formally registered, its story is already rooted in the same soil NePa farms today.

Mexico – Florida & California – Pak Chong

From wild trees in Puebla, to a 1975 research trial 50 years ago in the district NePa now calls home, to a single standout seedling on a local farm that became Bruni: it's the same journey almost every cultivated food plant makes, just condensed into one small corner of Nakhon Ratchasima.

Sources & References

Every historical claim in this guide is drawn from the sources below. Where a detail (such as Bruni's presumed parentage) is explicitly described as unconfirmed in the original source, this guide reflects that same uncertainty rather than stating it as fact.

- Babpraserth, C. & Subhadrabandhu, S. — “Avocado Production in Thailand,” Dept. of Horticulture, Kasetsart University. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. fao.org/4/x6902e/x6902e0b.htm
- International Tropical Fruits Network (TFNet) — “Avocado: Common Varieties.” itfnet.org/v1/2016/05/avocado-common-varities
- “Bruni, a Standout Avocado Variety from Pak Chong” (original Thai title) — Technology Chaoban, republished by Kasetsart University's Thai Farmers' Library. thaifarmer.lib.ku.ac.th/news/5db1036c3df0a668191de2ba
- Department of Agricultural Extension, Thailand (DOAE) — “Recommended Avocado Varieties.” doae.go.th/knowledge-base
- Department of Agriculture, Thailand (DOA) — Public Notice of Plant Variety Registration Applications (incl. Phop Phra 08 and Chompoo Siam avocados), Plant Variety Protection Act B.E. 2518. doa.go.th/pvp
- Wikipedia — “Hass avocado” and “Rudolph Hass.” en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hass_avocado
- Smithsonian Magazine — “Holy Guacamole: How the Hass Avocado Conquered the World.” smithsonianmag.com
- UC Riverside Avocado Variety Collection — “A Short History of the Hass Avocado.” avocado.ucr.edu/short-history-hass-avocado
- Greg Alder's Yard Posts — “Pinkerton avocado tree: a profile.” gregalder.com/yardposts/pinkerton-avocado-tree-a-profile
- Specialty Produce — “Peterson Avocado Information and Facts” and “Pinkerton Avocados Information and Facts.” specialtyproduce.com
- PNAS — “Early evidence of avocado domestication from El Gigante Rockshelter, Honduras.” pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2417072122
- Avocados From Mexico — “Avocado History.” avocadosfrommexico.com/education/about-avo/history