

Avocados. There was probably a time in the US when you couldn't pay people to eat avocados and actually they were known as "alligator pears". And then something changed. In the 1990s, there was a Super Bowl marketing campaign where NFL players shared their favorite guacamole recipes. With the help of this, over time, avocados went from a relative obscurity in the US to one of the most consumed fruits. Now what's interesting about this is who was behind the campaign: Californian avocado farmers. They bode product thou funded a highly vicible and So today I want to talk to you about how marketing can be a catalyst to improve the livelihoods of farmers, but not in the US, in Africa. And how the development community, and by that, I mean NGOs, philanthropists and international development agencies can use marketing to positively impact society, the economy and the environment. So I am South African and American, I have lived and worked throughout Africa with a professional focus on food and agriculture. And I've had the opportunity to study lots of development programs and even work on some myself. And through that I have met farmers, spoken to them, and some of them have said, "I have a product, but I don't have a market in which to sell it." There's probably a hipster in Brooklyn right now ordering a 15-dollar avocado toast as we speak. Why would people pay seemingly absurd prices for something so simple? For what other food would you pay 15 dollars to have someone bring it to your table and mash it up in front of you? Marketing. Americans love them. And that's on the cheap side. Give me, like, 25 dollars. I mean, that's insanity, honestly. So I have a question.