

# California Avocado Growers Participate in Media and Retailer Outreach



*West Pak Avocado Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing Doug Meyer showed CDFA a beautiful California avocado grove.*



*China Global Television Network (CGTN) America interviewed California avocado grower Tom Pecht on his grove in Oxnard.*

**A**vocados, especially California avocados, have become a media darling. Print, television, radio and online media are publishing more content about avocados than ever before. The California Avocado Commission (CAC) works closely with the media to ensure good relations, provide accurate information and promote the competitive advantages of California avocados. Growers are contributing to these efforts by host-

ing the media in their groves and in some cases taking part in interviews and events.

Last autumn, a new show on the INSP channel, *State Plate*, showcased California avocados. The show explores the quintessential foods of each state, such as Georgia peaches and Maine lobster. Each episode is dedicated to a state in the U.S. and is hosted by American Idol Season 5 winner and restaurateur, Taylor Hicks. Hicks journeys through each state and fills



Nicole Sturzenberger toured West Pak Avocado to capture photos for CDFA's "Farm to Fork" program.

In April, West Pak Avocado hosted Nicole Sturzenberger of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to assist with the organization's "Farm to Fork" program. West Pak Avocado's Randy Shoup, Doug Meyer and George Henderson gave the CDFA representative a tour of the handling, packing and shipping operations in Temecula. The West Pak team also provided her with an overview of California avocado growing and harvesting during a grove tour. Sturzenberger captured images of California avocado harvesting and packing to be used as part of a campaign to communicate the journey food takes from field to table for California school children.

Media inquiries come from all over the world to the Commission. In May, China Global Television Network (CGTN) America, the English-language TV news network of CCTV China, which boasts two billion viewers worldwide, arranged with CAC to interview California avocado grower Tom Pecht and Tommy Padilla from Mission Produce. The interviews focused on the increasing demand for avocados worldwide – including China – supply challenges and the resulting increase in prices. The broadcast noted that California avocados do not currently have access to China and included beneficial information about the attributes that differentiate California avocados.

California avocado growers' and handlers' participation in media and customer opportunities brings an authentic voice to the stories and contributes to California avocado premium brand positioning. 🥑

his "plate" with a dish made of the featured ingredients.

The producers of *State Plate* reached out to the Commission to explore opportunities to feature California avocados. On the "California" episode, Hicks toured the Golden State to explore its wide variety of foods. The episode featured California avocados, with Hicks swinging by Bailard Citrus Co. in Carpinteria to learn more about the state fruit from Commission Chairman Rick Shade and Rogelio Viveros of Brokaw Nursery. Topics included California being the perfect place to grow avocados, variety information, California as the birthplace of the Hass avocado, the life cycle of an avocado and its culinary versatility. Hicks also learned how to pick an avocado and how to graft an avocado tree. The avocado segment of the episode ended with Hicks filling his "state plate" with California avocado guacamole.

In early 2017, Simpatica growers were the topic of Northern California retailer Mollie Stone's blog and social media outreach. The retailer shared the history of Simpatica, highlighted the founders' values and belief in the future of California avocados and – most importantly – advised its fans that California avocados are in season and available in their stores.



Mollie Stone's online and social media coverage featured Simpatica growers.