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## Calendar

For a listing of industry events and dates for the coming year, please visit:

<http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/commission/calendar>

## SWEEP Funding Workshops

The Ventura and Santa Barbara County Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) are hosting four free workshops to assist growers interested in applying for funds from the California Department of Food and Agriculture's State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP). Reservations required. [More information available here.](#)

### March 3

**Time:** 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Location:** CRCD Office, 920 E Stowell Rd., Santa Maria, CA

## CAC Production Research Committee Meeting

### March 7

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Location:** CAC Office, 12 Mauchly, Suite L, Irvine CA

## Pesticide Safety Instruction Training Workshop

The UC Statewide IPM Program and AgSafe are offering a series of Pesticide Safety Instruction Training Workshops designed for ag supervisors, growers, farm labor contractors, safety managers and safety trainers. Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

### March 9 & 21

#### March 9

**Time:** 7:45 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** UCCE Ventura Office, 669 County Squire Drive #100, Ventura, CA

#### March 21

**Time:** 7:45 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** Betteravia Farms/Bonipak, 1850 W. Stowell Road, Santa Maria, CA

## Israel-AgTech Innovation Showcase

A delegation from 12 companies specializing in crop protection, crop nutrition, plant genetics and breeding, irrigation and decision support tech will visit Encinitas for the Israel-AgTech Innovation Showcase. [More information available here.](#)

**March 9**

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**Location:** Leichtag's Commons, 441 Saxony Rd, Encinitas, CA

## CAC Pine Tree Ranch Field Day - Grove Rehab, Soil Moisture Sensors, High-density Plantings

The California Avocado Commission's Pine Tree Ranch Demonstration Grove Field Day will consist of three sessions. [More information available here.](#)

**March 15**

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Location:** Pine Tree Ranch, 19455 E. Telegraph Road, Santa Paula, CA

## 2017 CAC Annual Meetings

The California Avocado Commission will hold its 2017 Annual Meetings in three locations: Temecula, Ventura and San Luis Obispo. [More information available here.](#)

**March 28-30**

### March 28

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

**Location:** South Coast Winery, 34843 Rancho California Road, Temecula, CA

### March 29

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

**Location:** Ventura Museum, 100 E. Main Street, Ventura, CA

### March 30

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**Location:** SLO Farm Bureau, 4875 Morabito Place, San Luis Obispo, CA

## Ventura County Ag Summit

This year the Ventura County Ag Summit will focus on the role that STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) disciplines play in the agricultural industry. The free seminar will showcase how innovative technologies support the sustainability of Ventura County agriculture and can help the industry maintain a competitive edge in the future. [More information available here.](#)

**March 31**

**Time:** 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

**Location:** Ventura County Office of Education Conference and Educational Services Center, 5100 Adolfo Road , Camarillo, CA

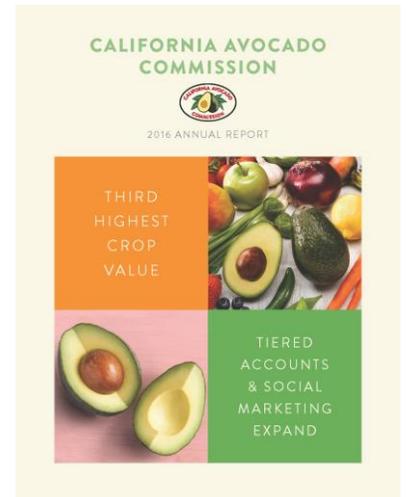
## California Avocado Commission 2016 Annual Report Now Available

The California Avocado Commission (CAC) is proud to announce that the *CAC 2016 Annual Report* is now available on the California avocado growers' website. The document may be viewed as a [digital flipbook](#) or downloaded in [pdf format](#).

If you would like to receive a printed version of the report, CAC will print a copy in-house and mail it to you. A hard copy can be requested by completing the [online form](#). You may also request a hard copy of the document by contacting CAC at [cac.iaf@avocado.org](mailto:cac.iaf@avocado.org), 949.341.1955 (phone) or 949.341.1970 (fax).

The *2016 Annual Report* highlights a diverse range of activities funded by the California Avocado Commission (CAC), as well as industry statistics and financials. Highlights include:

- A review of the California avocado season
- Messages from outgoing CAC Chairman Doug O’Hara, incoming CAC Chairman Rick Shade and CAC President Tom Bellamore
- Highlights from the season’s consumer campaigns and the tiered marketing programs for foodservice and retail outlets
- A review of steps taken by the Commission to modernize the organization
- A breakdown of grants secured by the Commission
- A status report on advances made by CAC in accessing global markets
- Summaries of independent research studies tracking avocado category growth and consumer preferences
- Recent developments in the diminishing threat of the polyphagous shot hole borer (PSHB) and Kuroshio shot hole borer (KSHB)
- Audited Financial Statements (2015-16)
- Ten-year Industry Statistical Data



## **CAC Field Day to Cover Grove Rehabilitation, Soil Moisture Sensors and High Density Planting**

Growers are encouraged to attend the California Avocado Commission’s Pine Tree Ranch Demonstration Grove Field Day that will be held on March 15 from 10:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m. The Field Day will consist of three sessions.

- Session 1 — Tour of the two-acre block of mature avocado trees that are being rehabilitated. We will discuss the four rehabilitation strategies being evaluated.
- Session 2 — Soil moisture sensor system discussion. Topics will include a review of the new soil moisture sensor test plot being installed, a review of three different soil moisture systems and a comparison of automatic irrigation to traditional irrigation scheduling.
- Session 3 — Tour of the high-density block and the nine different spacings within. We will discuss the different strategies for managing trees and the potential pros and cons of each.

Pine Tree Ranch is located at 19455 E. Telegraph Road, Santa Paula, CA, 93060.

## **Registration Open for 2017 Ventura County Ag Summit**

This year the Ventura County Ag Summit will focus on the role that STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) disciplines play in the agricultural industry. The free seminar will showcase how innovative technologies support the sustainability of Ventura County agriculture and can help the industry maintain a competitive edge in the future.

The seminar will be held on Friday, March 31 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Ventura County Office of Education Conference and Educational Services Center located at 5100 Adolfo Road, Camarillo, CA, 93012. Interested parties should RVSP [online](#).

For more information, contact the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner at 805.388.4222 x 7110, 805.377.4987 or [VenturaCountyAg.Commissioner@ventura.org](mailto:VenturaCountyAg.Commissioner@ventura.org).

## Update on Immigration and Possible Enforcement Actions

As President Trump promised to do if elected, within the first few weeks of his administration a renewed focus on immigration enforcement actions have occurred. On January 25, 2017, President Trump issued an Executive Order, “Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States,” which was followed by the announcement on February 20, 2017, that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) will begin hiring an additional 10,000 agents. It will take a few months before these new agents are hired and trained, but it is a strong indication that President Trump is serious about taking increased enforcement actions. The current actions have focused on rounding up criminal illegal aliens, but as with previous administrations it’s a possibility that ICE employer raids will resume.

As such, it’s important that you are aware of your legal responsibilities and rights as an employer under existing law. All employers, including those in agriculture, are required to have a properly completed Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification (<https://www.uscis.gov/i-9>), for every employee. As an employer, you are prohibited, under the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), from “knowingly” hiring or continuing to employ undocumented aliens.

During the last few years ICE actions primarily focused on Form I-9 audits. Employers should be prepared for increased worksite enforcement to include Form I-9 audits by ICE. If ICE is planning to conduct a Form I-9 audit, a Notice of Inspection will be sent to the employer. To be proactive employers can conduct an internal audit on all Form I-9s to ensure the information is complete and accurate.

Employers may see costly penalties levied if an ICE audit identifies “minor paperwork mistakes” or “technical errors.” If, however, the employer waits to make corrections on Form I-9s until after receipt of a Notice of Inspection, the fines will likely be steeper, as much as \$1,100 for each “minor” technical violation. In addition, if an ICE Form I-9 audit results in a more substantive violation, such as an employer knowingly employing unauthorized workers, the fine can be up to \$16,000 and the employer could face criminal action.

In response to the administration’s immigration actions significant media coverage has resulted, and in some instances, reporters are seeking information on how these actions may impact agriculture. In at least one article a farmer was quoted as saying he is “knowingly employing an undocumented worker.” Although it seems obvious that this is intuitively not a good idea, to remove any uncertainty, this type of statement may be cause for ICE to conduct a Form I-9 audit or potentially a raid.

We recommend that growers not respond to media inquiries on this issue, and instead direct inquiries to the Commission.

Included [here](#), for your informational purposes is a comprehensive document prepared by the National Council of Agricultural Employers and AmericanHort that provides a very detailed overview of a Form I-9 audit; what would likely initiate an ICE raid and what to expect; employer rights; and much more.

The time for a guest worker program that addresses agriculture’s needs has never been more pronounced. The Commission will continue to work with Western Growers Association, Farm Bureau, the Agriculture Coalition for Immigration Reform and the Agriculture Workforce Coalition to achieve agriculture’s objectives on the critical issue of immigration. As we all know, a stable, skilled workforce is the cornerstone of California agriculture.

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS ARTICLE IS PROVIDED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY, AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS LEGAL ADVICE ON ANY SUBJECT MATTER. READERS ARE DIRECTED TO SEEK INDEPENDENT LEGAL COUNSEL WITH SPECIFIC QUESTIONS.

## Big Game Promotions Showcase Early Season California Avocados

The Hass Avocado Board reported that more than 126.8 million pounds of avocados were consumed for Big Game festivities. In preparation for the event — and to build awareness of availability of California avocados at select retailers — the California Avocado Commission (CAC) conducted contests in Gelson's and Mollie Stone's stores during the three weeks leading up to the game.

Twenty-five Gelson's stores in Southern California, and nine Mollie Stone's stores in the Northern California Bay Area, participated in the contests. Presented with a unique sales opportunity, retailers utilized their creative talents to showcase California avocados. Displays featuring football goal posts, California-branded POS and cross-merchandising inspired consumers to select early-season California avocados for Big Game parties. CAC supported the promotions with geo-targeted Facebook and Twitter posts that encouraged premium grocery shoppers to seek California avocados at participating stores.

CAC's customer-specific Big Game Day social media posts garnered more than 95,000 impressions and CAC's Big Game promotions resulted in sales increases for participating accounts.



*Football goal posts and cross-promotional products were utilized at the Mollie Stone's store located in Twin Peaks.*

## CAC's Connie Stukenberg Elected as Chair of the Fresh Produce and Floral Council

On January 28, 2017, more than 525 industry members attended a dinner and dance to recognize the outgoing Board of Directors and celebrate the new members of the Board of Directors with Connie Stukenberg, California Avocado Commission retail marketing director, serving as chair of the Fresh Produce and Floral Council (FPFC). The FPFC is a community of professionals across all sectors of the fresh produce and floral industry who conduct business in California and the western region of the United States.

A number of retailers currently serve on the FPFC Board of Directors, including Albertson's-Vons-Pavilions, Food 4 Less, Gelson's, Northgate Markets, Raley's and Stater Bros. CAC has a long history of participating, and assuming leadership positions, in the FPFC and Stukenberg's appointment marks yet another opportunity for the Commission to build deeper relationships with retailers, develop business skills and advance industry networking opportunities.

Stukenberg is currently responsible for retail marketing in CAC’s core Northern California, Southern California and Arizona markets. She also manages several of CAC’s corporate accounts. She has been involved with the FPFC for more than 25 years and has served on the FPFC Board of Directors three times.

On February 8, Stukenberg presided over an FPFC Southern California membership luncheon for the first time. Jan DeLyser, CAC vice president of marketing, and CAC staff networked with retailers, handlers and colleagues at the luncheon. Trade press coverage of the Commission via the FPFC dinner dance and the membership luncheon garnered more than 400,000 impressions.



*FPFC Chair and CAC Retail Marketing Director Connie Stukenberg presided over the FPFC Southern California luncheon.*

## California Market Trends

To view all market trend graphs, including “Weekly Volume Summary,” “Weekly Avocado Prices” and “U.S. Avocado Supply,” please visit: <http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/industry/market-statistics>.

California Avocado Commission Weekly Volume Summary (Pounds)

	Week Ending 2/26/2017	Season-to-Date (since 11/1/16)	2017 Year to Date
Hass	2,413,721	8,099,526	7,699,712
Other (Greens)	16,399	529,816	392,156
<b>California Total</b>	<b>2,430,120</b>	<b>8,629,342</b>	<b>8,091,868</b>
Florida	23,980	10,385,705	2,331,395
Chile	1,022,209	30,729,521	10,656,175
Mexico	44,689,047	632,970,816	362,883,365
Peru	0	50,000	0
Other (Imports)	1,210,000	23,110,000	13,670,000
<b>Import Total</b>	<b>46,921,256</b>	<b>686,860,337</b>	<b>387,209,540</b>
<b>USA Total</b>	<b>49,375,356</b>	<b>705,875,384</b>	<b>397,632,803</b>
Source(s):	California = CAC (AMRIC), Chile = Comité de Paltas, Chile		
	Florida = Florida Avocado Admin Committee		
	Mexico = APEAM, Peru = ProHass		
	Other Imports = USDA AMS website		

	Organic #1	Conventional #1	Conventional #1
California Hass	(Field Price Per Lb)	(Field Price Per Lb)	(Carton Price)
#32's			
36's	Current prices from the CAS Newslines are unavailable. Please contact your handler for more information.		
40's			
48's			
60's			
70's			
84's			
*To subscribe to the Weekly Newslines, please contact the California Avocado Society at (949) 940-8869 or <a href="http://www.CaliforniaAvocadoSociety.org">www.CaliforniaAvocadoSociety.org</a> .			

### Weather: 30-Day Outlook For California's Coastal & Valley Areas

Summary- Westerlies occur across most of Calif. The troughing pattern is bi-modal, with some troughs developing just off the coast of central and N Calif, and some focusing into the Great Basin. Forcing for troughs occurring from the Calif coast southwestward is from the sea surface temperature anomaly (SSTA) pattern W of Calif. Forcing for troughs over the Great Basin are related to the current new *El Niño* that has begun. Periods of WNW flow with troughing occur, bringing more occurrence of cold conditions with lower snow levels into N and central Calif, due to troughing over the Great Basin. Individual troughs contain moisture but lack strength as they reach the coast, but intensify while moving inland. This new pattern of development, related to *El Niño* favors development of troughs in S and SE Calif, NW Mexico, and Arizona, and a colder and occasionally showery pattern in central and N Calif. This maintains a colder than normal pattern with periods of snow showers thru the Sierras. As *El Niño* becomes more active during late March thru early May, the southern storm track continues. The southern storm track will induce showers and continued snowy conditions in the Sierras in late March thru April. The southern storm track will tend to support the development of severe weather events (thunderstorms and tornadoes), with above normal rainfall in Oklahoma, north Texas in April and Kansas-Nebraska in May.

**In the Near Term – March 2-16...** After the rains that we expect thru March 7th, the NOAA/CPC outlook for March 7-13 shows drier and warmer than normal for all of Calif, with a trough W of Calif, a weak ridge of high pressure over the N Great Basin, and a weak southern branch of the westerlies thru S Calif to southern Rockies. We suggest that the warm and dry pattern for Calif will not last that long, and revert to wet for central and N Calif about March 9-15th.

In the southern California avocado growing areas from Santa Barbara County to San Diego County, rains or showers occur from March 4-5. It will be dry and warmer, but with some cold mornings in the valleys about March 7-8. Periods of showers are suggested for March 9 and 13-15.

**Summary – March 17 – 31...** In the southern California avocado growing areas, from San Luis Obispo south, it appears to be mostly dry, but with some rains about March 27-28. The best chance for frosts would be about the 17-19, then a warmer period develops. The oddity unique for SOCAL is the southern storm track which may generate more periods of showers and troughing than we currently see in the numerical guidance.

**Seasonal Outlook/ *El Niño* Update...April 1 – May 31, 2017...** *El Niño* contribution will continue to increase, inducing troughs in S and central Calif and Arizona. We still have the mid-latitude SSTA pattern that will tend to support troughs near the coast of central and N Calif. Currently, in agreement with CFSv2 guidance, we look for a better than average chance for a wet April thru N and central Calif to Ventura Co, as well as some late season rains into San Diego County.

Current guidance for temperatures continues near or a little cooler than normal across Calif and the Sierras. This is good news because it will tend to maintain the current snowpack well into mid-spring with slightly slower than normal snowmelt.

For SOCAL, in April there will be a recurrence of the trend for it being cooler and possibly a little wetter than normal. May is a little wetter than normal during the first week, then the hot conditions inland may be slow to develop.

...Alan Fox, Fox Weather LLC...