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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>

PSHB and Fusarium Dieback Professional Development Training

Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

April 24

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Location: Rincon Beach Club, 3805 Santa Claus Lane, in Carpinteria, California

CAC Board Meeting

May 15

Time: TBA

Location: CAC Board Room, 12 Mauchly, Suite L, Irvine, CA 92618

La Habra Heights Avocado Festival

May 17

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: "The Park," 1885 Hacienda Road, La Habra Heights, CA

Rootstock Selections

Presented by the California Avocado Society, Inc., the California Avocado Commission and the University of California Cooperative Extension.

June 10-12

June 10

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Location: Cooperative Extension Office / Auditorium, 2156 Sierra Way, San Luis Obispo

June 11

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Location: Cooperative Extension County Office / Conference Room, 669 County Square Drive, Ventura

June 12

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Location: Fallbrook Public Utility District Board Room, 990 East Mission Road, Fallbrook

Avocado Problem Solver Field Guide Survey

The Queensland avocado industry has compiled an Avocado Problem Solver Field Guide. The Guide:

- Provides clear and practical advice that describes, illustrates and recommends prevention and control measures for 98 different pests, diseases and disorders
- Includes details and pictures of 23 beneficial insects and the nine exotic pests and diseases identified as the top risks to the Australian industry
- Is designed for use in the field with A5 size, plastic coated pages and spiro binding that allows the book to lay flat at any page
- Contains 220 pages with over 400 color photographs and comprehensive notes on each disorder.

If enough California avocado growers are interested, the Commission will make a bulk purchase of the Guide. By making a bulk purchase of the Guide, interested California growers can obtain the Guide from the Commission for between \$75-\$80. In order to determine interest level in the Field Guide, the Commission requests GreenSheet recipients complete the following four-question survey. To complete the survey, [click here](#).

GAP Rebate Funds Still Available

While GAP certification is currently voluntary for California avocado growers, the California Avocado Commission (CAC) strongly encourages growers to become GAP certified in light of regulatory developments that will soon make it necessary for every facet of the supply chain to verify and document the safety of their produce operations. To that end, the Commission is again offering a GAP incentive rebate (GIR) that reimburses participating growers for the actual GAP audit costs up to \$300 per ranch audit. The rebates are available through October 31, 2014, subject to funds availability.

To apply for a GIR, visit the [GAP/GHP/Food Safety page](#) of the grower's website or download the following resources:

- [2013-14 GAP Rebate Guidelines](#)
- [GAP Rebate Form](#)

The completed form and required documentation can be sent to:

California Avocado Commission
ATT: GAP Rebate Program
12 Mauchly, Suite L
Irvine, CA 92618

CAC Continues to Advocate for Growers During Drought Emergency

As California's drought emergency continues, avocado growers face significant challenges. In the north many growers are dependent on wells, many of which are running low.

In the southern region, growers face a different set of challenges — rising water prices and dwindling water supplies. With water costs as high as \$1,300 per acre-foot, CAC has been advocating on behalf of growers to obtain water price relief. Charley Wolk, CAC Water Committee Chair, and Ken Melban, director of issues management for CAC, have met repeatedly with Metropolitan Water District

(MWD) staff and board members to discuss the importance of the \$40 billion agricultural industry to southern California, as well as to discuss the value of agriculture as a purchaser of water. As Melban noted in an [interview in *The Packer*](#), the Commission is not looking for a “handout,” but is trying to “establish the value that agriculture provides, and (ensure) that we are only charged for services that we benefit from.”

To that end, CAC is also developing relationships with other community members and decision makers to help raise awareness about the value of agriculture and the challenges growers face in a drought emergency situation. The Commission will continue discussions with MWD and other key stakeholders in order to develop a water pricing and supply system that “works for the water agencies and the growers,” added Melban.

Melban’s entire interview can be read by clicking [here](#).

PSHB Exploration in Vietnam

Although the polyphagous shot hole borer (PSHB) has been present in California since 2003, it was not until 2012 that PSHB, and fungi associated with PSHB, were recognized as potential threats to California avocado growers. Dr. Richard Stouthamer’s lab at the University of California Riverside (UCR) determined that a PSHB beetle discovered in a South Gate backyard avocado tree shared the same DNA fingerprint with a PSHB/fungus combination invading Israel. Subsequently, it was discovered that beetle samples from Vietnam had identical DNA fingerprints to the California PSHB beetle indicating that Vietnam was the most likely origin of the California pest.



Because an insect’s native region contains a diverse selection of predaceous enemy species, Dr. Stouthamer, Dr. Akif Eskalen (UCR) and their team visited Vietnam from February 9, 2014 – March 2, 2014 to learn more about possible opportunities to control PSHB outbreaks in California. Dr. Thu and his research team from the Forest Protection Research Center of the Vietnamese Academy of Forest Sciences led Dr. Stouthamer and his peers to a variety of locations where PSHB have been found. They visited acacia and cinnamon plantations, as well as commercial avocado groves.

At each of the locations the researchers would collect samples of PSHB-infested acacia, cinnamon, castor bean, tea and avocado trees and then dissect the samples in the lab. The researchers collected all of the insects and mites found in the galleries, made fungal preparations from the galleries to determine the composition of the fungi and collected potential antagonists of the harmful fungi carried by the PSHB beetle.

Researchers collected beetles, predaceous thrips, a variety of mite species, predaceous beetle larvae and fly larvae from approximately 450 samples. Dr. Thu also provided samples of two to three fly species believed to be PSHB enemies. Dr. Stouthamer is currently examining the fly species to determine if they are PSHB predators. Dr. Eskalen made 142 fungal isolates and is in the process of identifying them. He is working to isolate fungal entomopathogens that had apparently attacked several beetles.

Drs. Stouthamer and Eskalen were surprised by the pattern of PSHB infestation in Vietnam. In California, PSHB thrive on a range of host plants. In Vietnam, there was little infestation of street trees, and castor bean plants in heavily infested commercial groves were often beetle-free. Similarly, a PSHB-free grove often existed in close proximity (5 km) to a heavily PSHB-infested grove. Drs. Stouthamer and Eskalen posit that in Vietnam there may be biotic factors that limit beetle populations to hosts in plantations where the beetles have adapted to the host species. California may lack these biotic factors, thus the beetles are able to invade additional hosts. The researchers will test a couple of hypotheses to see if they can determine why PSHB infestation patterns differ in Vietnam and California.

CAC Launches 2014 Season with 100-calorie Avocado Snack Recipes

Having identified “snacking” as an opportunity to increase consumption of California avocados, the California Avocado Commission’s (CAC) marketing team will launch the 2014 fresh California avocado season with a targeted April release of four 100-calorie snack recipes created by CAC’s registered dietitian ambassador, Katie Ferraro, MPH, RD, CDE. The season opener press release will spread awareness about the start of the California avocado season and, together with the Commission’s snack and nutrition messaging, help promote California avocados as the perfect ingredient for healthy, everyday, on-the-go snacking.



In 2013, the Cinco de Mayo themed season opener press release garnered more than 2.5 million media impressions. This year, the season opener press release will utilize nutrition messaging and snacking statistics to emphasize the importance and prevalence of snacking and demonstrate ways in which premium California avocados add flavor and texture to healthy snacks. The release will feature four 100-calorie recipes created by Katie Ferraro:

- BLT and Avocado Potato Bites
- California Avocado Cucumber Cups
- Jicama Avocado Slaw on Rice Crackers
- Power Hour Pick-Me-Up Smoothie

The Commission also will distribute a mat release — a high-quality feature article used by editors to supplement and complement staff-written stories in feature sections. The mat release will contain the same thematic messaging as the press release and will highlight one or two of Ferraro’s 100-calorie California avocado snacking recipes.

CAC's First Consumer Blog Launched

More than ever, today's consumers are interested in gathering product information from credible online sources. To meet that demand, the California Avocado Commission (CAC) launched its first consumer blog, The Scoop, on March 18, 2014.

The Scoop is similar to an online journal, allowing readers to share a variety of avocado-centric content — articles, images, videos and recipes — via social networks like Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and Instagram. To engage with consumers on a deeper level, the blog will provide information in a casual, approachable manner while building awareness around the availability and premium qualities of California avocados. California avocado growers, chefs, food bloggers and dietitians will serve as guest bloggers, adding another layer of credibility for readers.

Ultimately, the blog adds a level of personalized communication to CAC's marketing mix that should increase consumer engagement on CaliforniaAvocado.com. Because The Scoop will provide a variety of avocado-centric information, it also is expected to improve Google, Yahoo! and Bing search engine rankings for the consumer site.



Zac Benedict, CAC's Online Marketing Manager, and CAC's consumer online agency will be responsible for the content of the blog and will monitor blog metrics to ensure the content meets the changing needs and interests of consumers.

Spring Avocado Recipe Page Has a Fresh Look

To generate buzz around the early California avocado season, the California Avocado Commission (CAC) launched a fresh version of the [consumer spring recipe page](#) during the second week of April. To drive demand for California avocados, the redesigned spring-themed landing page:

- Features spring avocado recipes
- Provides consumers with nutrition tips
- Educates consumers about the California avocado season
- Helps shoppers find and request California avocados in stores

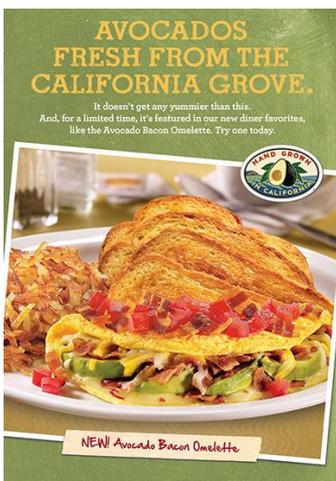
The functionality and layout of the new spring recipe page were updated to improve usability, and the page includes responsive design that allows consumers to easily view and navigate the webpage on their mobile devices.

To drive traffic to the refreshed spring recipe page, CAC created engaging promotional elements to be featured on [The Scoop blog](#), the [homepage](#) of the consumer website and the [recipe landing page](#). In addition, the promotional elements will be featured on the [What's New tab of the consumer Facebook page](#) and on social media channels including Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest.

The early spring recipe promotion is designed to generate excitement about the Spring 2014 California avocado season and encourage consumers to insist on California avocados.



Foodservice Chains' Limited-time-offers Kick Off California Avocado Season



Over the years, CAC has partnered with foodservice chains to provide additional exposure for California avocados through menus, merchandising tools, coupon advertising and, more recently, social media. This year, the California avocado season will kick off with a Denny's national promotion, as well as a regional promotion with El Pollo Loco.

Denny's, the Spartanburg-based national chain, will promote fresh California avocados using the *Hand Grown in California* logo on menus and a table tent from April through June. On the national front, more than 1,500 units will dedicate an entire panel of Denny's limited-time-offer menu to California avocados. In June, Denny's will initiate additional activities promoting fresh California avocados. On June 1, Denny's will send an eBlast to fans featuring avocado menu items. An avocado stanchion poster also will be displayed in restaurants throughout the month of June. Regionally, 412 California units will bring back the ever-popular *Bacon Avocado Omelet*, *Avocado Santa Fe Skillet*, and *Avocado BLT*.

Regional chain El Pollo Loco, which has 400 units in California, Arizona, Texas, Nevada and Utah, will run an avocado salad promotion from April 26 – May 30. The promotion will be supported with a variety of in-restaurant merchandising pieces, and a free-standing insert promoting the avocado salad. The *Hand Grown in California* logo will be prominently featured in all promotional materials.

Foodservice promotions such as this help increase awareness about the premium qualities and availability of California avocados while also providing consumers with new ideas to incorporate fresh California avocados in their meals at home.

Networking, Awards and Opportunities at the Produce for Better Health Annual Conference

The California Avocado Commission (CAC) participated in the Produce for Better Health Foundation's (PBH) Annual Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona with produce industry representatives, retailers and supermarket registered dietitians. The three-day event, held March 17 – 19, offered the Commission the opportunity to meet one-on-one with SRDs and industry associates it might not otherwise be able to meet with. It also helped CAC gain insights into the latest trends in health and wellness, which will assist the marketing team in determining the best ways to increase consumption of California avocados.



During the conference, the CAC team participated in a number of events to promote California avocados and grow awareness of the brand. Highlights include:

- During the conference Awards Luncheon CAC was recognized with the PBH "Role Model" Award
- The CAC team met with SRDs to discuss the nutrition benefits of avocados and brainstorm promotional ideas, including registered dietitians from Hannaford Supermarkets, Hy-Vee, King Soopers, Lowes Foods, Marsh Supermarkets, Meijer Inc., Safeway, SaveMart, Wakefern Food Corp., Wegmans, Weiss Supermarkets, and Whole Foods Market.
- Meetings with key industry influencers, including the American Hearth Association resulted in discussions of promotional opportunities with various commodities and brands.
- Participation in the PBH Marketing and Communications Committee Meeting.

Retail Merchandising Director Meetings with Retailers Build California Avocado Sales Momentum



In preparation for the upcoming 2014 California avocado season, the California Avocado Commission (CAC) retail merchandising directors (RMDs) have hit the road for a series of in-person retailer meetings with CAC's key accounts. The meetings, which will continue throughout the season, are designed to provide retailers with the information and marketing tools they need to maximize their sales fresh California avocados.

During the calls CAC's merchandisers have the opportunity to discuss CAC programs as well as the specific retailer's needs for the upcoming season. CAC also provides a variety of information to retailers: California avocado crop updates, a complete Retail Ad Kit, sales sheets on key programs, a synopsis of the 5 Star Performance Program and special account initiatives they feel will

help drive sales for the retailer.

The Retail Ad Kit is an important resource that provides retailers with the following information:

- Avocado per capita consumption data from 1994 – 2012 indicating continued growth in American consumption
- Retail dollar growth trend comparisons that illustrate total avocado growth is strong, even outpacing total produce

- Data illustrating growth in retail dollar sales during the California avocado season
- Research demonstrating more shoppers actively check for country of origin and consumer preference for California avocados
- Statistics noting the positive influence California labels on the fruit have on avocado sales
- Research showing reasons retailers choose to merchandise California avocados

These retailer meetings are critical to generating retail support for California avocados to increase demand and provide growers with greater value. The collaborative sessions also support CAC’s leadership position while helping RMDs to build on their established relationships with specific retailers. CAC will track the success of the merchandising outreach by monitoring the accounts that carry California avocados in season.

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/selling-avocados>.

California Avocado Commission Weekly Volume Summary (pounds)			
	Week Ending 4/13/2014	Season-to-Date (since 11/1/13)	2014 Year to Date
Hass	10,176,360	51,462,316	50,808,894
Lamb	69,994	252,522	252,522
Other (Greens)	25,802	834,296	703,858
California Total	10,272,156	52,549,134	51,765,274
Florida	2,090	14,125,465	4,980,580
Chile	2,783,539	86,377,578	59,884,201
Mexico	27,511,676	631,162,140	432,912,130
Other (Imports)	330,000	21,110,000	12,750,000
Import Total	30,625,215	738,649,718	505,546,331
USA Total	40,899,461	805,324,317	562,292,185
Source(s):	California = CAC (AMRIC)		
	Florida = Florida Avocado Admin Committee		
	Chile = Comite de Paltas, Chile		
	Mexico = APEAM		
	Other Imports = HAB and USDA AMS website		

California Avocado Society Weekly Newsline* Avocado Prices				
4/14/2014				
	FOB Price	Field Price	Retail Price	Last Year FOB
California Hass	(25# carton)	(per pound)	(per each)	(25# carton)
#2's	12.00-32.00	0.32-1.08		8.00-24.00
32's-36's	36.00-37.00	1.24-1.28		30.00-31.00
40's	36.00-37.00	1.24-1.28	1.79	30.00-31.00
48's	37.00-38.00	1.28-1.32	1.79	31.00-32.00
60's	30.00-31.00	1.00-1.04	0.79	22.00-25.00
70's	25.00-26.00	0.80-0.84	0.79	15.00-17.00
84's	19.00-20.00	0.64-0.69	6/3.99-4/3.79	11.00-12.00
Mexican Hass				
All Sizes	19.00-36.00	N/A	2/0.99-1.79	12.00-30.00
Chilean Hass				
All Sizes	15.00-31.00	N/A	2/0.99-5/5.99	
Peruvian Hass				
All Sizes	N/A			

*To subscribe to the Weekly Newsline, please contact California Avocado Society at (951) 225-9102 or www.californiaavocadosociety.org.

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

Synopsis... We have been in a hot period at times throughout the state and are now starting to develop a cold period with troughs returning to California.

In the Near-Term - Southern California Avocado Region -- April 16 to 30... There is a chance for showers in southern California during the 21st to 23rd and again on the 25th to 27th. Watch for cold mornings between rain events.

May 1 to 15... We still have the warm sea surface temperature anomaly to the west of California, although it is much weaker than it was just a month ago. This will continue to assist nighttime temperatures to be mild. Sea surface temperature anomalies (SSTAs) will continue to be on the warm side into early May. The equatorial sea surface temperatures will continue to slowly increase causing the development of *El Niño* conditions in the east equatorial Pacific.

May 1 to 15 for the Avocado Regions... It should be cool with coastal eddy conditions from the 1st to the 5th. Then, as high pressure builds after 5th, we expect a return of hot conditions inland with a shallow marine layer and fog at the coast.

Seasonal Outlook/El Niño Update... May 15 to July 25... *El Niño* will slowly increase through most of the summer. Coupled with *El Niño* is the area of warmer than normal sea surface temperatures west of central and northern California. There is support for some cutoff lows to drift into northern and central California at times during the second half of May. There is no longer support in the sea surface temperature field for an early start to the summer monsoon in western Mexico. We should expect a near normal progression of the monsoon early this summer.

One thing to watch is a belt of low latitude westerlies extending from the Philippine Islands to the east Pacific off central California near 135W. There has been a persistent feature in the sea surface temperature field to support this pattern, and we should keep an eye on it. In the fall (October), such a pattern could quickly redevelop after a short quiescent period over the summer, causing early and significant rains over central California, especially if old typhoon remnants are entrained into the low latitude westerlies.

Southern California Avocado Region – May 15 to July 25... It should be warmer and drier than normal from the middle of May to the middle of June. Monsoonal moisture should start to make an appearance about the 1st of July.

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