



AGENDA

California Avocado Commission
Marketing Committee Meeting

Meeting Information

Date: March 19, 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Hybrid Meeting

Physical Meeting Location:

UC ANR South Coast Field Station

Annex Building Conference Room

7601 Irvine Blvd.

Irvine, CA, 92618

Web/Teleconference URL:

<https://californiaavocado.zoom.us/j/84223173922?pwd=rvqqNixSfm3h9Agl8KA2Qxqk25o9A3.1>

Conference Call Number: (669) 900-6833

Meeting ID: 842 2317 3922

Passcode: 837602

Meeting materials will be posted online at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at:

<https://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/commission/industry-calendar>

Committee Member Attendance

Committee members, please contact Zac Benedict at zbenedict@avocado.org to confirm attendance no later than Friday, March 13, 2026.

Time	Item
9:00 a.m.	1. Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Roll Call/Quorumb. Introductions
	2. Opportunity for Public Comment <p>Persons may address the Committee on subjects within the jurisdiction of the Commission.</p>
	3. Approval of Marketing Committee minutes of February 18, 2026
	4. Retail Budget Reallocation Update
	5. Marketing Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Retail Program Check-inb. Marketing Program Nuts and Boltsc. Media Targeting and Timing

Time	Item
	d. Brand Evolution e. Public Relations
	6. Marketing KPI Discussion
	7. Business Planning Cycle
	8. The Avocado Conference 2026
11:00 a.m.	9. Adjourn Meeting

Disclosures

All meetings of the Commission are open to the public and subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. All agenda items are subject to discussion and possible action.

For information or a request regarding disability-related modification or accommodation for the meeting, please contact Zac Benedict at 949-341-1955 via email at zbenedict@avocado.org. Such requests should be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

This meeting schedule notice and agenda is available on the internet at <https://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/commission/meeting-agendas-minutes> and <http://it.cdffa.ca.gov/igov/postings/detail.aspx?type=Notices>.

Contact Zac Benedict at 949-341-1955 or via email at zbenedict@avocado.org if you have any questions.

Summary Definition of Conflict of Interest

Committee members are responsible to determine whether they have a conflict of interest.

A member has a conflict of interest in a decision of the Committee if it is reasonably foreseeable that the decision will have a material effect, financial or otherwise, on the member or an immediate family member that is distinguishable from its effect on all persons subject to the Committee's jurisdiction.

No Committee member shall make, or participate in making, any decision in which they know or should know they have a conflict of interest.

No Committee member shall, in any way, use their position to influence any decision in which they know or should know they have a conflict of interest.

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION
MARKETING COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 18, 2026**

A meeting of the California Avocado Commission (CAC) Marketing Committee was held on February 18, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. with the following people present:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Doug O’Hara, Chair
Jessica Hunter
Marty Ordman
John Dmytriw
Rachael Laenen, *CAC Chair Ex-officio*

STAFF PRESENT

April Aymami
Ken Melban
Zachary Benedict
Alya Hijazi

GUESTS PRESENT

Andy Sheaffer
Scott Savard
Russell Huizenga
John Berns
Will Carleton
Danny Klittich
Henry Dominguez
Michael Cravriotto
Jasmine Rastegar
Jacob Rastegar
Manolo Dubon

MEMBERS ABSENT

Peter Shore

OFFICIALLY PRESENT

Carolyn Becker, *CAC Retail Marketing Director*
Dave Anderson, *CAC Retail Marketing Director*

Item #1 Call to Order

Roll Call/Quorum – Item 1.a.

Doug O’Hara, CAC Marketing Committee chair, called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m. and established a quorum.

Introductions – Item 1.b.

April Aymami, CAC director of industry affairs and operations, called on Committee members, CAC staff and guests to introduce themselves and recorded all participants in attendance.

Item # 2 Opportunity for Public Comment

Jacob Rastegar gave background on his career and explained that he is starting to feel the pressure of rising costs, water regulation, and weather threats as a grower for five years. He said he wants to serve as a voice for growers and to address concrete steps for a stronger market.

Item # 3 Approval of Marketing Committee minutes of February 25, 2025

Mr. O’Hara asked for a motion to approve the Marketing Committee meeting minutes of February 25, 2025 as included in the meeting materials.

Motion:

The Marketing Committee approves the February 25, 2025 meeting minutes as presented.

(Dmytriw/Hunter) MSC Unanimous

MOTION 26-2-18-1

The *February 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes* are included in the February 2026 Marketing Committee Packet and are attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A, Item 3.

Item # 4 Marketing Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Ken Melban, CAC president, presented the definition of the Committee in the bylaws as approved by the Board. He explained that the role of the Committee should be addressing how to best activate the

marketing dollars CAC has and adjust based on market dynamics. Rachael Laenan, CAC board chair, added that the Committee has the best opportunity to dig into research and to review and make recommendations on best marketing practices.

Item #5 Trade Retail Investment

Ms. Becker and Mr. Anderson provided an update on their ongoing meetings with retailers before the kick-off of the season. Mr. Anderson gave some background about the market conditions of the year prior and how late-season imported fruit affected the promotional timeline. Ms. Becker explained what CAC offers retail partners during the season, such as digital advertisements and customized bags, and how the retail marketing directors follow up with store audits to demonstrate the sales performance of California avocados.

Retail Promotion Program is included in the February 2026 Marketing Committee Packet and identified as EXHIBIT B, Item 5.a

Zachary Benedict, CAC marketing director, presented a suggested marketing budget reallocation to divert funds from consumer marketing programs to retail marketing for the 2026 season to aid in pushing fruit through the supply chain. The new allocation would assist the retail marketing directors in their promotional meetings with chain, club and specialty retailers with the goal of keeping California fruit in stores for longer periods of time during the season. The suggested budget amount was presented to Committee members with the possibility of a second, additional allocation.

Henry Dominguez mentioned that margin is what matters to growers, and he suggested focusing on initiatives such as promoting California avocados in high income areas. John Dmytriw explained that the priority should be on buying shelf space with retailers since people buy whatever fruit is in store. Jessica Hunter added that in order to increase grower margins, demand would have to exceed supply, and a general discussion followed on how to differentiate when most of the business is conducted between handlers and retailers, and that each handler has their own brand and labeling they're trying to push.

Marketing Reallocation is included in the February 2026 Marketing Committee Packet and identified as EXHIBIT C, Item 5.b

Item #6 2025-26 Marketing Budget Allocations

Mr. O'Hara asked for a motion to recommend to the Board the proposed marketing budget reallocation.

Motion:

***The Marketing Committee approves the recommendation as presented.
(Ordman/Hunter) MSC 3 Yea/1 Abstain***

MOTION 26-2-18-2

ADJOURN MEETING

Mr. O'Hara adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alya Hijazi, CAC Marketing Coordinator

EXHIBITS ATTACHED TO THE PERMANENT COPY OF THESE MINUTES

- Exhibit A February 2026 Marketing Committee Packet
- Exhibit B Retail Promotion Program Presentation
- Exhibit C Marketing Reallocation Presentation
- Exhibit D February 18, 2026 Marketing Committee Meeting AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary



EXHIBIT D

CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION

AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary

To be attached to the Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name: <i>Marketing Committee Meeting</i>	Meeting Location: <i>Hybrid Meeting In-person (Oxnard) Online (Zoom)</i>	Meeting Date: <i>February 18, 2026</i>
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Attendees Who Voted	<u>MOTION 26-2-18-1</u>	<u>MOTION 26-2-18-2</u>
Doug O’Hara	Yea	Yea
Jessica Hunter	Yea	Yea
Marty Ordman	Yea	Yea
John Dmytriw	Yea	Abstain
Outcome	Unanimous	3 Yea/1 Abstain



COMMITTEE INFORMATION

ITEM 6: Marketing KPI Discussion

SUMMARY:

CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION DASHBOARD – 2024-25

- The Dashboard provides an in-depth overview of the performance of the Commission's marketing programs from November 1, 2024 through October 31, 2025

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

- N/A

COMMITTEE OPTIONS:

- Information only

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- N/A

EXHIBITS / ATTACHMENTS:

- CAC Dashboard 2024-25 is viewable online at the following URL:
<https://californiaavocadogrowers.com/marketing-california-avocados/marketing-dashboard>

2026-27 BUSINESS PLANNING CYCLE

JANUARY (2027)

- Monitor, Evaluate, Adjust

DECEMBER (2026)

- Monitor, Evaluate, Adjust
- Prior Year Performance Against Measures Tracking December 7 – 14
- Marketing Committee Meeting December 16?

NOVEMBER (2026)

- Launch of new Business Plan

OCTOBER (2026)

- **Board Meeting October 1**
 - Approval of Business Plan, Budget and Assessment
 - Discuss Monitoring/Measurement Process
- Final 85% Business Plan and Budget Draft October 2
- Submit CAC 85% Plan, Budget and Contract Drafts to USDA October 5

SEPTEMBER (2026)

- Business Plan Draft and Board Summary to CAC President September 10
- Final Business Plan and Board Summary from CAC President to Board September 17

FEBRUARY (2026)

- Monitor, Evaluate, Adjust
- Marketing Committee Meeting Feb 18

MARCH (2026)

- Monitor, Evaluate, Adjust
- **Board Meeting March 5**
- Marketing Committee Meeting March 19



2025-26 Marketing Objectives

1. Achieve a premium average price per pound that meets or exceeds the four-year historical F.O.B. price differential between California Avocados and imports
2. Maintain or increase California Avocado awareness with our consumer targets
3. Maintain or increase perceived value and preference with our consumer targets
4. Build loyalty with existing and target new trade customers

APRIL (2026)

- Monitor, Evaluate, Adjust
- **Annual Meetings 4/14-4/16**
- Commencement of 2026-27 Planning Process
- Zoom: Marketing Staff/Agencies Pre-Planning, Save the Dates and Assignments week of April 20

MAY (2026)

- Trend/Data Research, Foundational Briefs May 8
- Zoom: Marketing Staff/Agencies/RMDs Assignment Integration May 15
- CAC Leadership Strategic Frame May 29
- Marketing Committee Meeting June 2/3/4 Committee input on planning, review strategic frame and proposed updates to 2026-27 Marketing Objectives

JUNE (2026)

- **CAC Board Meeting June 10-11 with Board input on Strategic Frame**
- CAC Leadership Strategic Frame by June 15
- Marketing Staff/RMDs/Agencies/Strategic Planning In-person meeting June 23
 - Review Board Direction & Objectives
 - Review Staff-generated Preliminary Strategies
 - Preliminary Budget Direction, Timeline Review
 - Ideation and integration

JULY (2026)

- Submit Preliminary Strategies to Management July 21
 - Consumer, Trade
 - Research, Industry Affairs

AUGUST (2026)

- Individual Agency Video Conferences with CAC Teams (July 31) August 1 – 11
- **CAC Board Meeting August 20**
 - Approve Tentative 2026-27 assessment rate
 - Approve Preliminary 2026-27 budget and draft strategies
- Draft Objective Performance Measures August 21
- Draft Action Plans, Performance Measures and Budgets Due August 24
- Topline Budget and programs to USDA by August 31
- Marketing Committee Meeting August 4/5/6 – Review board input on planning, topline budget and program allocations



February 9, 2026

Dear Member Organizations:

Following the success of the 2024 Avocado Forum and in alignment with HAB's strategic plan for industry engagement, we are excited to announce The Avocado Conference, a landmark event designed to bring together industry stakeholders for networking, education, and collaboration on November 18 to 20, 2026 at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront.

The Avocado Conference 2026 will be the power summit of the U.S. avocado industry—where producers, importers, exporters, marketers, customers, and industry leaders converge to set the agenda for crop volume, research, marketing, demand creation, and long-term growth. It's the only event unapologetically dedicated to propelling the U.S. avocado market forward across every link of the value chain.

New and exciting this year is our partnership with Farm Journal's *The Packer*—America's most trusted and widely recognized produce trade media company, for the financing, planning, and execution of the conference. By joining forces with Farm Journal, we're pairing industry convening power with media reach, so that attendance is strong and broad and the ideas shared at The Avocado Conference scale across the supply chain.

In addition to partnering with a well-known media company, we have designed a framework with USDA's approval, whereby Farm Journal has agreed to assume the financial risk necessary to make the conference and exhibit a success for the industry.

The Hass Avocado Board has provided Farm Journal with \$100,000 in seed funding to support the conference, and we are seeking Member Organizations under HAPRIO to support the event with a \$15,000 sponsorship. Enclosed is additional information about the conference and a prospectus tailored for your organization, which provides all details included in the sponsorship package.

We hope you will join us in supporting the first and only event of its kind in the United States. Thank you, as always, for your partnership.

Sincerely,

Emiliano Escobedo
Executive Director



Attendance and Registration Fees

Attendance will be open to anyone in the industry, with registration fees at different levels depending on industry segment. The affordable \$200 fee for producers will maximize participation and broaden industry impact. The fee covers full access to education sessions and the exhibition floor plus the opening reception, breakfast and lunch for all days of the conference (four meals in total). As a sponsor, your association will receive six (6) complimentary registrations for the conference. Additionally, we plan to host retailers across key accounts and provide reduced registration fees for customers. For more information, visit [the registration information page](#).

Exhibition/Trade Show

In addition to education sessions, an adjacent exhibition floor will feature 8 x 10 booths on November 19 and 20. As an association, you are driving the industry forward and we want to make sure you can tell your story by providing you with a premium position on the floor and an exclusive 8 X 20 booth to highlight your work and connect with attendees.

Content and Program

Similar to the Avocado Forum in 2024, the conference will feature keynote speakers, panels, and opportunities for countries of origin to highlight their crop outlooks and their role in driving industry growth. The conference content will be carefully crafted, with input from avocado producers, exporters, and importers/marketers. Your sponsorship provides you with an exclusive 20-minute presentation on the main stage for your association to give a country/crop/commercial outlook report. In addition, you'll have the opportunity to showcase a 2-3-minute video highlighting your marketing efforts, which will be played in the general session between speakers.

Brand Exposure in Communication Materials and Onsite Marketing

Logo exposure will be featured on the website, onsite, and other channels including the pre and post-show marketing package. Please refer to the association prospectus for details.

Closing Gala

To close and celebrate everything we've built over the three days of the conference, the closing gala (separate fee applies) will allow attendees to further network and celebrate with industry colleagues and peers on the last evening of the conference. As a sponsor, you'll receive four (4) complimentary tickets.

Hotel Information

We have negotiated a nightly hotel rate of \$219 plus taxes, ensuring the event remains affordable and accessible in a beautiful, conveniently located setting.



THE

AVOCADO

CONFERENCE 2026

November 18–20, 2026 | Hilton San Diego Bayfront

Brought to you by:

THE PACKER

HASS AVOCADO BOARD



TheAvocadoConference.com

ASSOCIATION SPONSORSHIP PROSPECTUS

The Avocado Conference 2026

Association Sponsor Package

As part of our partnership with your association, we have a special event package for you ... Join us at The Avocado Conference designed to connect industry leaders, innovators, and enthusiasts in the world of avocados. This year, our focus is on fostering invaluable connections, developing forward-thinking strategies, and unlocking new levels of knowledge to drive the future of the Hass avocado industry.

2026 Sponsorship Package* \$15,000

Exhibitor Booth	
8x20 Booth with Premier End Cap Placement	✓
Standard Booth Furnishings (table, chairs, wastebasket)	✓
Company Listing on Website	✓
Company Listing on Show Guide	✓
Expo Floor Sticker	✓
Complimentary Registrations	6
Logo Exposure	
Logo on Website	✓
Logo on Post Show Thank You Ad	✓
Logo on Sponsor Thank You Signage at Show	✓
Logo on Rotation During Sessions	✓
Logo Recognition on all Expo Print Advertising, Emails and Eblasts Pre- and Post-Show	✓
Show Guide Marketing Package	
Complimentary Show Guide Ad	Full Page
Enhanced Listing in Show Guide	✓
Pre- and Post-Show Marketing Package	
Early Attendee List in October 2026	✓
Attendee List in November 2026	✓
Social Media Asset Provided by The Packer	✓
Logo/Listing on Mobile App	✓
On-Site Marketing Package	
20 min. with Q&A presentation the main stage	✓
2-3 minute video highlighting your marketing efforts played in general session between speakers	✓
Giveaway Item in Attendee Bags (sponsor provided, no literature)	✓
Other Items	
Gala Dinner Complimentary Tickets	4
Gala Dinner Reserved Table	✓

*Custom sponsorship packages are available. Please discuss with your account representative.