

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
January 9, 2024**

A meeting of the California Avocado Commission (CAC) Executive Committee was held on January 9, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. with the following people present:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jason Cole
Maureen Cottingham
Rachael Laenen
Daryn Miller

STAFF PRESENT

April Aymami
Ken Melban
Terry Splane

GUESTS PRESENT

John Berns
Will Carleton
Rob Grether
Jessica Hunter
Robert Jackson

OFFICIALLY PRESENT

Vickie Carpenter, *USDA*
Ben Kardokus, *CDFA*

ITEM #1 CALL TO ORDER

Roll Call/Quorum – Item 1.a.

Jason Cole, CAC Executive Committee chairman, called the meeting to order 10:06 a.m. and established a quorum.

Introductions – Item 1.b.

April Aymami, CAC director of industry affairs and operations, announced the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and US Department of Agriculture (USDA) representatives, CAC staff and known guests participating in the meeting.

ITEM # 2 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ITEM # 3 CONSENT CALENDAR

Consider approval of Executive Committee meeting minutes of November 6, 2023 – Item 3.a

Mr. Cole introduced the consent calendar items and asked for questions or comments. With no comments on the consent calendar items, the following motion was put forward:

MOTION:

The Executive Committee approves the Consent Calendar, Item 3.a as presented.

(Laenen/Cottingham) MSC Unanimous

MOTION 24-01-09-1

The *Consent Calendar* is included in the January 2024 Executive Committee Packet and is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A, Item 3.a.

ITEM # 4 UPDATE ON THE OVERALL ADMINISTRATION OF THE COMMISSION

Ken Melban, CAC vice president of industry affairs and operations, reported on his visits with CAC Board members and alternates, stating that he had already met with those in the south and was working to schedule with those in the north. He commented that the USDA would be at the CAC office later in January to conduct their management review of Commission operations. Lastly, Mr. Melban stated that CAC had received two letters from growers, one requesting that CAC call for the Hass Avocado Board to conduct a referendum, the second claiming that CAC had failed to protect California producers and requesting a response as to what CAC and the government was going to do for these growers.

The Committee discussed the letter regarding the HAB referendum, the process and procedures around the entities that can request a referendum and the CAC Board role. It was clarified that the “Board” mentioned in the HAB order is the HAB Board and not the CAC Board, however, because CAC

represents California growers, they could request a referendum if they so desire. The discussion concluded with the consensus that the item would be put on an upcoming Board meeting agenda for consideration.

Terry Splane, CAC vice president of marketing, reported that CAC's new agency, Curious Plot, was working to build out strategy for the current year campaign, which would be focused on the California grower. He noted that the plan was to get grounded this year, and then look at pushing the creative boundaries moving forward. Mr. Splane provided an update on the 2024 IFPA sponsorship, noting that CAC had scaled back the booth size and was no longer a bag sponsor, but had arranged for sponsorship of additional events focused on getting CAC's retail marketing directors facetime with retailers at a lower cost to CAC.

Ms. Aymami reported that CAC's 22-23 annual financial audit had been completed by Moss Adams with no findings.

ITEM # 5 REVISIONS TO EMPLOYEE VACATION POLICY

Mr. Melban provided an overview of CAC's existing employee vacation policy and management's recommendation to revise the policy with the goal of reducing CAC's current vacation liability by removing the potential for vacation payouts while incentivizing staff to utilize vacation time. Specifically, management proposed the following revisions to CAC's vacation policy:

Section C, Maximum Accrual be revised as follows:

Eligible employees may carry over accrued by unused vacation from one year to the next, but accrual may not exceed 1.5 times their annual accrual rate. Once an employee reaches their maximum accrual, they will stop accruing vacation until their balance falls below the established maximum.

Mr. Melban explained that if the Executive Committee were to approve this recommendation, to ensure compliance with the Department of Labor Standards Enforcement, a one-time vacation payout to employees would be required to provide employees at least one full year to utilize their future vacation accruals before reaching the maximum accrual.

The Committee discussed CAC's current vacation policy, and heard the perspective of what other companies do in regard to vacation accruals and payouts. The consensus of the Committee was that the goal of the vacation benefit was to incentivize the importance of work/life balance and that the proposed revisions would encourage employee utilization of vacation benefits each year.

MOTION:

The Executive Committee moves to approve management's recommended revisions to the Employee Vacation Policy as presented, as well as the necessary one-time vacation payout to reduce employee vacation balances to allow one year's worth of accruals before reaching the new accrual maximums.

(Miller/Laenen) MSC Unanimous

MOTION 24-01-09-2

The Revisions to Employee Vacation Policy Write-up is included in the January 2024 Executive Committee Packet and is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A, Item 5.

ADJOURN MEETING

Mr. Cole adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

California Avocado Commission
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

April Aymami, CAC Director of Industry Affairs and Operations

I certify that the above is a true statement of the minutes of the January 9, 2024, CAC Executive Committee, approved by the CAC Executive Committee on April 4, 2024.

Daryn Miller, CAC Board Secretary

EXHIBITS ATTACHED TO THE PERMANENT COPY OF THESE MINUTES

Exhibit A January 9, 2024 Executive Committee Packet

Exhibit B January 9, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary

CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION

AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary
To be attached to the Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name: <i>Executive Committee Meeting</i>	Meeting Location: <i>Hybrid - In-Person (Oxnard)/Online (Zoom)</i>	Meeting Date: <i>January 9, 2024</i>
--	--	--

<i>Attendees Who Voted</i>	<i><u>MOTION</u></i> <i><u>24-01-09-1</u></i>	<i><u>MOTION</u></i> <i><u>24-01-09-2</u></i>
Jason Cole	Did not vote	Did not vote
Maureen Cottingham	Yea	Yea
Rachael Laenen	Yea	Yea
Daryn Miller	Yea	Yea
<i>Outcome</i>	Unanimous	Unanimous