

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION**  
**MARKETING COMMITTEE WEB/TELECONFERENCE MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 16, 2021**

A web conference meeting of the Marketing Committee was held on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 with the following people participating:

**MEMBERS PARTICIPATING**

Gary Caloroso  
Phil Henry  
Denise Junqueiro  
Rachael Laenen  
Andy Lyall  
Carson McDaniel  
Ed McFadden  
Doug Meyer  
Peter Shore  
Steve Taft  
Angela Tallant  
Debbie Willmann

**MEMBERS NOT PARTICIPATING**

Patrick Lucy  
Doug O'Hara

**CAC STAFF PARTICIPATING**

April Aymami  
Tom Bellamore  
Zachary Benedict  
David Cruz  
Jan DeLyser  
Angela Fraser  
Ken Melban

**OFFICIALLY PRESENT**

David Anderson  
Carolyn Becker  
Hillary Brandaw (MullenLowe Mediahub)  
Candace Hollar (MullenLowe Mediahub)  
Kathleen Johnson (PJ/PR)  
Kim Kurata (Kurata Communications)  
Steven Muro (Fusion)  
Laura Paden (PJ/PR)  
Catie Stoneberg (Golin)  
Sean Wright (MullenLowe)

**GUESTS PRESENT**

Dave Fausset  
Rob Grether  
Lauren Kelley  
Bob Lucy  
Marji Morrow  
Jill Netzel  
Bryan Reugebrink  
Sam Schaitberger  
Matt Schraut  
Brittney Theriault

**ITEM #1 ROLL CALL/QUORUM**

The Marketing Committee (MC) teleconference meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Chairman Gary Caloroso. A quorum was established.

**ITEM #2 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Caloroso thanked Mr. Lucy for his role as Marketing Committee Chairman for many years, a sentiment echoed by CAC Chairman, Rob Grether, other Committee members and CAC staff, including Ms. DeLyser, who noted that Mr. Lucy served as chair from 2009 through 2020.

**ITEM #3 CONSENT CALENDAR**

Mr. Henry moved to approve the Consent Calendar, including minutes from the December 8, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Junqueiro and unanimously approved.  
*MOTION 21-02-16-1.*

#### **ITEM #4 DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### AMRIC Handler Forecast – Item 4.A.

Ms. Aymami shared the 2021 pre-season crop estimate from December handler survey, noting that the forecast at the time was 317 million pounds. She advised that CAC is currently surveying handlers for an updated, post Big Game estimate and expects results the week of February 22.

##### 2020-21 California Crop Projection, Timing and Sizing – Item 4.B.

The Committee discussed the impact of recent wind and frost events. Some groves have been hit hard while others have not seen much impact. Some of the Committee members expected their own forecasts to be around 10% less than before, others noted not much impact and one suggested that some young trees were loaded with fruit. The rain totals are not what growers had hoped for and lack of rain is not helping with tree health nor with fruit sizing. Market prices have been rising and could lead to some growers being more willing to pick sooner than later. This could lead to a bigger bubble in April and May if labor is available.

Ms. DeLyser asked about handler input on the GEM variety. Sales teams/merchandiser discussions will tightly target and marry interest with supply.

##### 2021 Import Crop Estimates, Timing and Sizing – Item 4.C.

Ms. Aymami shared the import statistics from Hass Avocado Board and historical projections where HAB did not include information.

Mexico: Mr. Caloroso reported that Mexico budgeted using 2.3 billion pounds through June of this year and they have at least that much fruit. However, they are behind in their harvest timing and could have carryover into July, the start of their new year. Committee members agreed, noting that the timing of Mexico's harvest is "the million-dollar question." Mexico may hold some fruit from the higher elevations for best market conditions.

Peru: The Committee felt the forecast of 180 million pounds is likely low. If California comes in earlier Peru may come in heavier later. They may have a play with size 40s and larger.

Colombia: Expected to have opportunistic shipments depending on market conditions.

##### California Avocado Marketing Program Updates – Item 4.D.

Ms. DeLyser introduced the presenters from the Marketing staff and agency team (shown in the "Officially Present" section). They showcased the 2021 California avocado marketing programs, including the advertising and social media plan and creative executions, noting that the majority of the advertising will occur from April through July. Other programs included consumer public relations activities, Living Well Brand Advocates, retail support (social/digital, dietitian relations, retailer immersive experiences and key account marketing communications).

Tiered-Account Review – Item 4.E.

CAC Retail Marketing Director Mr. Anderson explain the retail tiered-account market strategy of aligning marketing activities with the distribution of California avocados for optimized grower returns. He shared 2020 retail information, highlighting the results in California and outside the region, and noted an FOB price advantage of +7% over imports during the season. RMD Ms. Becker recognized the great job handlers have been doing at delivering a premium return to growers and reviewed Tiered 1 account performance. She walked through what the RMDs present and discuss on their customer calls and highlighted some of the 2021 retail marketing program materials. Ms. Kurata from Kurata Communications presented plans for the Commission’s Foodservice outreach. Mr. Cruz discussed the plans for CAC’s export programs in South Korea and China.

GTIN and UPC Presentation – Item 4.F.

Mr. Muro thanked handlers who have provided GTIN (Global Trade Item Number) information to CAC and/or syndicated data sources. GTINs are superior at providing information for in-depth business analysis compared to PLUs. He noted that in the avocado industry there is a lack of definition for the GTINs, which presents a missed opportunity. He acknowledged that hurdles faced by handlers due to retailer requirements, including private label and code sharing, complicate the opportunity to better define the GTINs. Mr. Muro shared a mushroom GTIN case study and explained that if avocado GTINs were defined more specifically, such as identifying how many avocados are in a bag and what size avocados are in the bags. He said this information would assist marketers in better understanding seasonal shifts of trends and promotions, and handlers would be able to compare their internal data to the general marketplace. He asked handlers who had yet to do so to provide information/additional information to syndicated data sources or CAC, noting that including origin in the GTIN definition would be ideal.

Shop.CaliforniaAvocado.com Merchandise Update – Item 4.G.

Ms. DeLyser gave a brief update on the shop and noted a status report would be presented at the CAC March 4 Board meeting.

Industry Updates – Item 4.H.

Mr. Melban advised that the CAC Board had been considering asking for trade relief from the U.S. government, but after deliberations at the February meeting they declined to do so. He noted that after the Board meeting the International Trade Commission ruled against the domestic blueberry industry, finding that imports had not harmed the domestic industry.

Ballots for the California Avocado Commission five-year referendum were mailed February 16. Mr. Bellamore said it is important to encourage all eligible growers to vote.

Mr. Caloroso noted that the Commission has played an important role in the growth of the California avocado industry over the past four decades and expressed hope that the referendum will pass.

CAC Marketing Committee Minutes  
February 16, 2021

**ADJOURN**

Mr. Caloroso adjourned the web/teleconference meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Submitted by:



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Jan DeLyser, CAC Staff