

CAC & PBH Partnership Reaps Rewards & Benefits

By Tim Linden

With a shared goal of increasing consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, the California Avocado Commission (CAC) has long forged a partnership with the Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH).

PBH is a nonprofit organization established by the produce industry with the main goal of achieving increased daily consumption of fruits and vegetables. It was the organization behind the “5 A Day” program and the current “Fruits & Veggies - More Matters” effort. CAC’s Vice President Marketing Jan DeLyster represents the Commission on the PBH Board of Trustees and CAC’s Marketing Manager Angela Fraser serves as a PBH Ambassador and on the Marketing and Communications Committee.

With both public sector and private funding, PBH has been able to support many programs that have a direct benefit to CAC and avocado growers. For example, by participating on the PBH board, the California Avocado Commission provides direct input on PBH programs and in support of that organization’s efforts toward targeting Supermarket Registered Dietitians (SRDs), which is also a target group for CAC. Through its involvement in PBH’s SRD program, the Commission is able to expand its push well beyond the dollars allocated. CAC sponsors the PBH SRD event at the Produce Marketing Association’s Fresh Summit and as such is able to present to this group of important influencers. Of course, SRDs play an important role in communicating the nutrition messaging and usage ideas for California avocados to their stores’ shoppers.

CAC also is able to interact with many Supermarket Registered Dietitians at PBH’s annual conference, which was held in April of this year. The 2016 event was held in Scottsdale, AZ, and attracted more than 200 produce professionals including many important decision-makers from the retail produce sector. CAC’s involvement allowed for important connections with some of those participants including representatives from Albertsons-Safeway, Giant Eagle, Hannaford Supermarkets, Hy-Vee, Kroger, Meijer, Roundy’s, Sam’s Club, Schnucks, Wakefern, Wal-Mart, and Wegmans.



Connie Stukenberg accepts the PBH Role Model Award on behalf of the California avocado Industry and Angela Fraser accepts a PBH Ambassador Award

Also in attendance were trade publication representatives and officials from health organizations. CAC’s Retail Marketing Director Connie Stukenberg and Marketing Manager Angela Fraser represented the Commission at the event. Among the highlights of the conference was a presentation on PBH’s effort to increase produce consumption, including the top accomplishments from 2015 as well as a look at the goals and initiatives for 2016. One initiative that will be beneficial to CAC is research and development of Function

Structure Claims by commodity that may result in new avocado health messages.

The Commission was recognized with the 2015 PBH Role Model Award, which Stukenberg received on behalf of CAC. The award recognizes organizations within the fruit and vegetable industry who help to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. Fraser also was recognized for her role as a PBH Ambassador (individuals who actively share their passion and personal testimonial about the importance of PBH).



Angela Fraser, Dan Johnson of Kroger and Connie Stukenberg

The CAC/PBH partnership also affords some very tangible results in recipe development and dissemination to keep fruit and vegetable consumption top of mind among consumers. CAC's content is included in PBH online toolkits used by health professionals and consumers. California avocados have been featured in PBH's Recipe of the Week e-newsletter and CAC has utilized the "More Matters" designation in more than 50 of its recipes. That's an important connection as research shows that almost 50 percent of moms say the logo and its messaging motivates them to eat more fruits and vegetables. Inclusion of this logo also increases use by the many retailers who support the PBH program.

As part of its connection to PBH, CAC sponsors the group's "Half Your Plate" effort, which advocates that for each meal half the plate should be utilized for fruits and vegetables. In 2015, the sponsorship resulted in the California Avocado Super Summer Wrap recipe and educational sheet being posted on the PBH website and promoted on social media channels reaching more than 250,000 people.

In addition, the USDA MyPlate program promotes the recipes on its website MyPlate.gov, which has received more than 72 million page views to date. CAC's "plate" is a regular feature on "What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl," the USDA's interactive recipe website. USDA also regularly features the plates on their social media channels reaching 629,000 people.

PBH's reach has an impact; on average, every American has been reached 336 times since the launch of the Fruits & Veggies – More Matters program in 2009. It has been estimated that the program has resulted in more than 110 billion consumer impressions. 🥑

California Avocado Super Summer Wrap

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Fresh California avocado doubles for dressing and filling complementing blueberries, carrots, avocado and chicken in this appetizing summer wrap.

Cooking Tip: Mash a ripe fresh California Avocado to create a satisfying dip, or use it as a spread on sandwiches and toast. Substituted as a spread in place of many other popular foods, avocados may help reduce dietary intake of calories, fat, saturated fat, sodium and cholesterol while adding good fats to your diet.





Ingredients

<p>1 ripe, fresh California Avocado, pitted, seeded, and cut into chunks*</p> <p>1/2 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt</p> <p>1 tsp. lime juice</p> <p>1/2 cup blueberries</p> <p>1/2 cup grated carrots</p> <p>1/2 cup chopped red onion</p>	<p>2 cups chopped fresh avocado</p> <p>12 oz. cooked chicken breast, cubed</p> <p>4-8" whole wheat tortillas</p>
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Mash half the avocado chunks with yogurt and lime juice in a medium bowl. Add remaining filling ingredients, including the rest of the avocado chunks; mix gently. Top each tortilla with 1/2 of filling mixture. Roll, tuck in ends. Slice in half diagonally, securing with toothpicks, if needed. Serves 4.

*Large avocados recommended for this recipe. A large avocado averages about 8 ounces. For easy instructions on how to choose and use avocado, visit CaliforniaAvocado.com.



2015 PBH California Avocado Super Summer Wrap recipe educational sheet