



Behind the Scenes ~ Co-Marketing Promotions

CAC Vice President of Marketing Jan Delyser and Naturipe Vice President of Marketing Robert Verloop meet to discuss components of the co-marketing promotion.

Most of the California Avocado Commission's marketing communications focus exclusively on California avocados. However, at times CAC can leverage the strength of other brands to maximize the impact and reach of marketing programs that fit strategically with marketing partners, and extend the budget by sharing costs.

Co-Marketing Planning

Program planning and execution is a little bit like courtship, first getting to know what each brand wants and needs, then negotiating, working together to exchange and develop assets, building on each other's strengths and taking advantage of opportunities to make the program stronger.

CAC Co-Marketing Examples ~ Multi-Level Promotions

CAC co-marketing activities usually fall into one of two camps: multi-level brand tie-ins and online/social media exchanges. Multi-level brand tie-ins may involve recipe exchanges, retail point-of-sale materials such as recipe booklets, display materials, joint in-store product demonstrations,

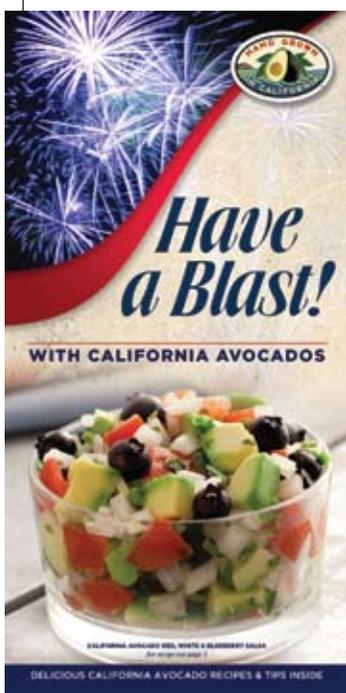
press releases and more. A good example of a multi-level co-marketing program is the commission's 2012 partnership with Dulcinea melons. CAC wanted to closely tie California avocados to picnics and parties for American summer holidays. What says American summer picnics? Watermelon. So CAC created *Firecracker Guacamole*, a concept to serve a large batch of guacamole in mini watermelon shell, and approached Dulcinea with the co-promotion idea.



The resulting program grew as each partner included the other in various activities, including CAC's recipe booklet, Dulcinea's watermelon display header cards, online and social media, trade press interviews and a press release, and Dulcinea even included avocados in their trade advertising. Trade press coverage was extensive. Supermarket registered dietitians promoted the recipes to their shoppers. A few even demonstrated the recipe during their television broadcasts. Today both CAC and Dulcinea continue to use the joint recipes when possible, further extending reach to consumers.



For this year's 4th of July program, CAC sought to work with a produce item that had added caché with retailer produce departments, and something that could help carry a red, white, blue and green theme. As one of nature's only truly blue foods, blueberries came to mind. CAC approached former CAC vice president of merchandising, Robert Verloop, now vice president of marketing for Na-



turipe Farms, about the possibility of a co-marketing effort with California avocados and Naturipe® berries. Verloop, who proudly proclaims to have some "avocado green running in his veins," agreed that a co-marketing program could benefit both parties.

The joint promotion with Naturipe includes recipes for use throughout the day, including muffins and parfaits for breakfast, salads, salsa and more that are being featured



in both the *Wake up to Breakfast with California Avocados* and *Have a Blast with California Avocados* promotions. Naturipe also will feature recipes with California avocados and the *Hand Grown in California* logo on packages of strawberries and blueberries starting in July. These co-marketing promotions provide retailers who support the brands with merchandising support as well as content ideas for in-store and dietitian programs. Importantly the promotions create a higher basket ring for retailers when shoppers purchase both products.



last year and continues to be very popular with California avocado fans. Recipes included *Sushi Rice Balls with California Avocado* and *Wasabi and Avocado Potato Salad*, a fan favorite.

Sometimes the exchanges simply involve providing a recipe for a partner to promote, which helps expand the recipe library and the reach of the usage idea without having to develop a new recipe or photograph. For Cinco de Mayo this year, CAC secured the permission of Tajín Seasonings to promote *Tuna Ceviche Tajín*, which is served in an avocado half.

A few of CAC's co-marketing programs are unique opportunities that come our way. In 2013 CAC is partnering with both the California Beef Council and the American National CattleWomen, Inc. (ANCW) through The Beef Checkoff program to promote the pairing of California avocados and lean beef through their bi-annual Beef Cook-off recipe contest. The California Beef program will also include a regional recipe booklet promoting avocados on hamburgers in the summertime.

Another co-marketing promotion in 2013 is a display and coupon program in cooperation with Anheuser Busch. When retailers in California and Arizona agree to build displays that include both Bud Light® beer and California avocados, Anheuser Busch representatives use point of sale materials and affix coupons for both products to packages of beer on the displays.

CAC Co-marketing Examples ~ Online and Social Media Exchanges

Online/social media exchanges are easy-to-execute co-marketing activities that usually only involve limited staff and agency time. These programs are very efficient at broadening the reach of California avocado messages because both brands share them with fans on their respective websites, email newsletters and social media networks. These simple exchanges also promote the versatility of California avocados through partner brand recipes.

An exchange with Kikkoman started





Sherry Hill

Cook-off Program Director for the ANCW Sherry Hill, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program explains the partner activity, "Our organizations' joint co-marketing strategy will leverage California avocado grower and Beef Checkoff dollars to broaden our programs' foundation, increase our influence as well as funding and extended reach. The partnering of our organizations allows us to engage consumers through multiple content and sharing opportunities," said Hill. "Our organizations will co-fund a 3-column newspaper release, distributed in late summer or early fall to 10,000 newspapers as well as tens of thousands of online sites, blogs and RSS feeds to thousands of editors. A second co-funded activity will include hosting a recipe media luncheon, featuring 'Craveable Fresh Beef and Fresh California Avocado Recipes' to media and bloggers in November. Lastly, The Beef Checkoff grants CAC a non-exclusive, limited, license to use the beef and avocado recipes submitted by finalists through December 2016."

An additional benefit of co-marketing promotions is the coverage garnered in trade press and consumer press that can generate interest in merchandising and purchasing California avocados as well as promote industry goodwill. 🥑

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