

Statewide Grower Referendum Affirms Continuation of California Avocado Commission


The California Department of Food and Agriculture recently completed a state-mandated referendum vote that determined the California Avocado Commission is approved to continue in operation for the next five years. By law, a continuation vote among eligible commercial California avocado producers must be held every five years. This year's voting results showed that 75% of voting producers support continuation of CAC for another five years, well above the legally required percentage. This is the ninth reaffirming referendum since the establishment of the California Avocado Commission in 1978.

"California avocado growers have clearly affirmed the value they see in the California Avocado Commission," said Rob Grether, chairman of the CAC board of directors. "This vote allows the Board and management of the Commission to continue their critical work of bolstering grower viability through innovative marketing, industry affairs, production research and grower education."

This referendum is the first in which the voting was held among California's commercial avocado producers only. In 2017, the law that governs the California Avocado Commission was amended to exempt growers of California avocados who produce an annual average of less than 10,000 pounds of avocados in the prior three years from paying the mandatory assessments that fund the Commission operations and programs. Consequently, those exempt growers are not eligible to vote in CAC elections and referenda.

"What was unknown was any potential effect exempting smaller growers might have in a referendum vote, as there were significantly fewer eligible voters this year," said Tom Bellamore, CAC president. "We are pleased that the 2021 re-

sults once again affirmed the industry's support for the Commission and its work, which has benefited California avocado growers for more than four decades and will continue to do so." 🥑



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE
Karen Ross, Secretary

April 7, 2021

AVOCADO PRODUCERS APPROVE CONTINUATION OF THE CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION

To the California Avocado Producer Addressed:


In a referendum recently conducted by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (Department), the state's avocado producers voted in favor of continuing the operations of the California Avocado Commission (Commission). Such a reapproval referendum is required to be conducted every five years. Below is a summary the referendum results:

Participation	
Number of valid ballots received during the referendum	600
Total number of eligible producers who were issued a ballot	1,964
Percentage of producers who participated in the referendum	30.55%
In Favor of Continuation	
Number of producers who voted in favor of continuation	447
Percentage of producers who voted in favor of continuation	74.50%
Opposed to Continuation	
Number of producers who voted in opposition of continuation	153
Percentage of producers who voted in opposition of continuation	25.50%

Pursuant to the Commission Law, in order for the operations of the Commission to be reapproved and continue in effect for another five-year period, a majority of the eligible producers voting in the referendum must vote in favor of continuance. Since this criteria was achieved in this referendum (74.5 percent of producers participating in the referendum voted in favor of continuation), the Commission has been authorized to continue operating through the end of its 2025-2026 fiscal year, which is October 31, 2026.

The California Avocado Commission conducts promotion, research and issues management activities on behalf of the California avocado industry. These activities are funded by a mandatory assessment upon avocado producers in the state with an annual average production of at least 10,000 pounds in the three preceding marketing years. The Commission has been in existence since 1978.

If you have any question regarding this referendum, please contact Ben Kardokus of the Department's Marketing Branch at (916) 900-5018. For questions regarding the activities of California Avocado Commission, please contact Tom Bellamore, President of Commission, at (949) 341-1955.

Sincerely,

 Joe Monson, Branch Chief
 Marketing Branch

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CDFA Marketing Branch • 1220 N Street • Sacramento, California 95814-5603
 Telephone: 916.900.5018 • Fax: 916.900.5343 • www.cdffa.ca.gov/mktbrnd

State of California
 Gavin Newsom, Governor

