



Mollie Stone's "Big Game" California Avocado Display (Sausalito Store #1)

# Early Season Retailer Promotions and Activities

The California avocado season got off to a strong start this year with select California retailer Big Game promotions. Beginning in January several retailers merchandised California avocados supported with feature ads and display activity. California Avocado Commission (CAC) sponsored Big Game sales and display contests, providing extra incentives to motivate in-store personnel to get behind the sale and promotion of California avocados.

In Northern California, family-owned retailer Mollie Stone's conducted a California avocado display contest among its nine San Francisco Bay area stores. The produce managers were enthusiastic about the program and built large displays featuring California avocado bins and point-of-sale material. Mollie Stone's promoted the fact that they were the first retailer in the area to carry California avocados, just in time for Big Game festivities.

Mollie Stone's reported that it increased its sales over last year by 14,000 avocados. Their contest winners were: first prize, Jimmy Puccetti — Store # 8 Tower Market; second prize, Palei Tu'ipulotu — Store # 7 San Mateo; and third prize, Brian Carter — Store # 4 Greenbrae.

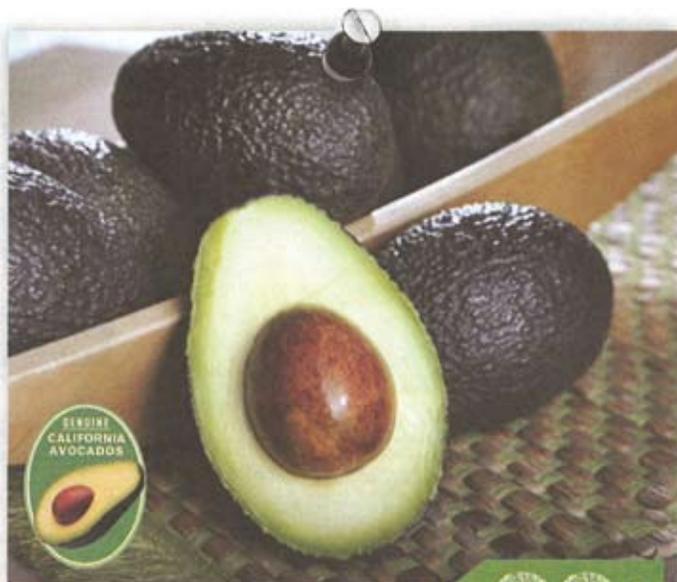
Gelson's Markets, a fine foods retailer with 12 stores in the Los Angeles market, committed to carrying organic California avocados in time for Big Game promotions. They de-

veloped a sales contest, with supporting ads and displays. Gelson's also sent out a "Super Value" email to its fans, promoting guacamole, dip and game day recipes. As of press time, the results for the Gelson's sales contest, which ran through February 17, had not been released. However, sales were reported as excellent and well over last year's Big Game sales.

Bristol Farms in Southern California also kicked off the California season by carrying California organic avocados in their stores for the run-up to the Big Game.

CAC supported the early season promotions with California avocado display bins and signage, and sponsored the prizes for the account contests. Because many produce managers enjoy competing with one another, the contest provided incentives for them to sell more California avocados than other stores in the same chain. Produce managers built creative displays of California avocados by cross-merchandising with related items and using point-of-sale material. This resulted in incremental movement of fruit during the programs.

In addition, the Commission used tightly-targeted social media campaigns with geo-fencing to attract shoppers to



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*Mollie Stone's ad*



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*Gelson's Dana Point*

the retailers' Big Game California avocado displays. Geo-fencing uses global positioning systems (GPS) or radio frequency identification (RFID) of computer or smartphone locations to select geographical boundaries. For example, using geo-fencing, CAC identified consumers within a seven-mile radius of Mollie Stone's locations and targeted them with California avocado advertisements. The commission also geo-targeted Twitter advertisements to consumers in the Bay Area.

CAC communicated these Big Game promotions with an email blast to the Commission's 200,000 subscribers and targeted messaging to social media fans.

Overall, contests and promotions encouraged retailers to transition into California fruit early with an eye to staying with California avocados throughout the season. 🥑



*Produce Manager Shawn Ashley (Gelson's Newport Beach) with CAC Retail Marketing Director Connie Stukenberg*