

# Retailers Build Demand for California Avocados with Combination of In-store and Digital Tools



*Mollie Stone's ran colorful, eye-catching California avocado promotions during Easter.*

**S**ince the beginning of the 2021 California avocado season, retailers across California and targeted Western U.S. markets have shown robust support for the fruit with retail promotions ranging from sales and display contests and California avocado-branded point-of-sale materials, to digital coupons, ads, e-newsletters and social media posts. Thus far, retail partners include loyal upscale California retailers who transitioned to the California crop at the start of the season, as well as Western divisions of large national chains and select retailers inside and outside the West.

To secure promotions with targeted retailers, California Avocado Commission retail marketing directors met virtually with select retail teams to discuss promotional timing and the

Commission resources available to them. In April, targeted retail key contacts received newsletters with avocado crop forecasts and marketing program information to ease their promotional planning concerns. A second newsletter was distributed in June.

The CAC retail team also sent the California Avocado Retail Resource Guide — with ready-to-use tips, recipes, images and content — to targeted retail communication teams composed of marketing, public relations and social media managers. To expand its reach and encourage retail dietitians and cooking school managers to share “why California avocado” messages with their customers, CAC provided them with a start-of-season package showcasing available Commission support tools. Each of these carefully planned activities



*Gelson's displayed California avocados in bins featuring the new "the best avocados have California in them" thematic.*

encourages targeted retailers to merchandise California avocados in season and provides support that encourages demand for the fruit while building loyalty to the California origin.

At press deadline, numerous local retail chains have run California avocado promotions in California and targeted regions of Oregon this season. Bristol Farms launched a Passport to Savings coupon using "the best avocados have California in them" creative to advertise large bulk California avocados' availability. Draeger's also advertised bulk avocados by running ads containing the CA GROWN logo and offering two bulk sizes of the organic fruit.

New Seasons Market, an early California avocado supporter, is testing bagged California avocados alongside its usual bulk avocado displays this summer. The Commission conducted a virtual "Farm Tour" for the New Season's Market produce director, store merchandiser and 10 store produce managers during which the new "California Avocados – History, Growers and Culture" video with picturesque grove photos was

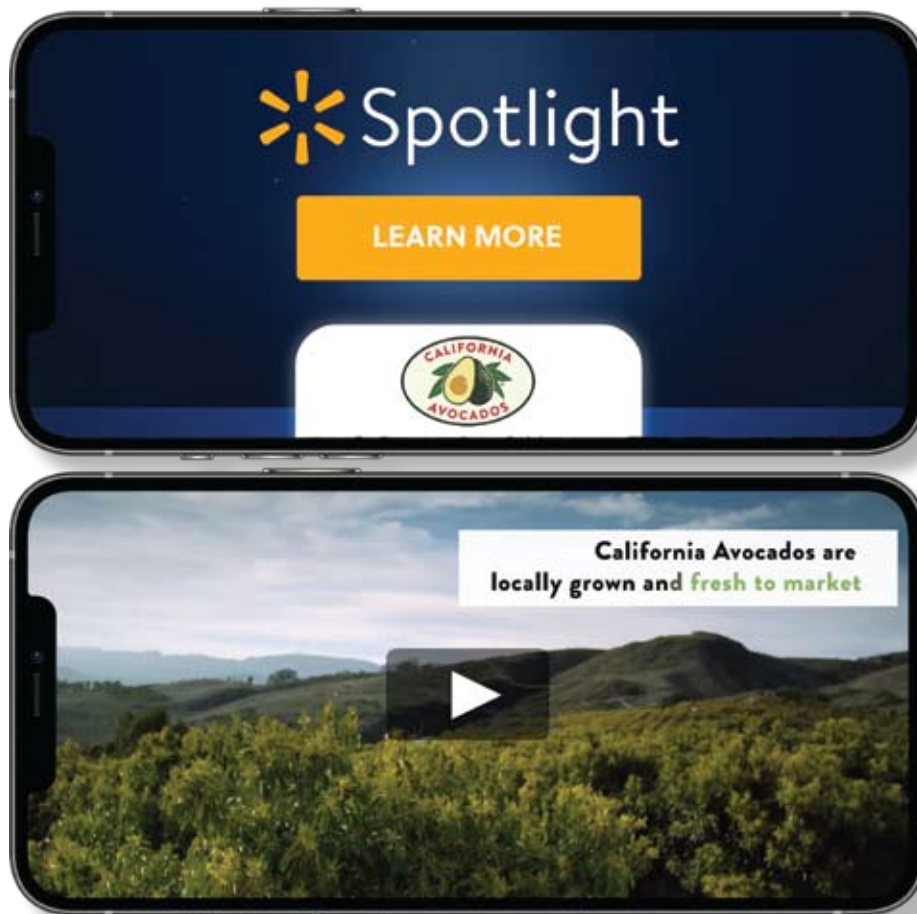
shown. During the "tour" the CAC RMD also discussed the difference California avocados offer at retail, shared quality education tips and the latest consumer campaign creative.

Nugget Markets supported both conventional and organic California avocados very early in the season using striking imagery coupled with the CA GROWN logo in their ad publication. Lazy Acres, part of Bristol Farms, announced the start of California avocado season with an Instagram post in February and Gelson's complemented its social media support with prominently placed display bins showcasing "first of season" fruit in March. To promote the availability of California avocados in its stores, Lunardi's ran ad promotions and sent an email newsletter showcasing the fruit.

Supermercado Mi Tierra promoted California avocados in its St. Patrick's Day and Easter promotions, while Mollie Stone's Markets conducted an Easter sales/display contest in all its stores using California avocado display bins.



*Sam's Club digital demos featured in-store signage for California avocados with nutrition messaging.*



*A Walmart spotlight recipe video announced California avocado availability.*

Four national corporate accounts — Kroger, Costco Wholesale, Sam’s Club and Walmart — also have merchandised California avocados thus far this season. Kroger’s largest division, Ralphs, supported California avocado growers early in the season with bagged California avocados prominently displaying the origin of the fruit. Other Kroger divisions — Fry’s, Smith’s and Fred Meyer — joined Ralphs in promoting bagged California avocados for Memorial Day and the Fourth of July. The American Summer Holiday promotions ran in a total of 800 Kroger banners.

During the last week of April, 161 Sam’s Club units in Arizona, California, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nevada, Oklahoma and Texas conducted digital displays featuring California avocado-branded signage and a video loop. The Commission’s partnership with the national chain expanded this year with the addition of the Kansas and Oklahoma locations.

In May, Costco Wholesale held a dedicated all-California event in its new Aurora, Colorado depot, which serves Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. The promotion included \$1 off for 65,000 avocado bag purchases. Walmart also ran California avocado promotions in May with 721 stores in the West delivering a spotlight recipe video featuring the

fruit that reached 1.6 million shoppers. A dedicated team of Walmart bloggers expanded the reach of the promotion with influencer posts across digital channels.

Reaching consumers beyond the Western region, Schnucks promoted four-count California avocado 70s in bags using display bins and in-store signage that showcase the grown-in-California origin. The promotions ran for all the major summer holidays — Cinco de Mayo, Memorial Day and the Fourth of July — and may continue through Labor Day pending availability of the fruit.

Additionally, feature ad activity highlighting the availability of California avocados has been increasing and is expected to continue through Labor Day.

Promotions such as these are critical to building demand for the fruit during peak season and help build sales movement that inspires retail loyalty to California avocados. The retailers showcased in this article are representative of the broader efforts of the Commission’s retail marketing team members, who work throughout the season to secure additional promotions as the season progresses based on harvest timing and fruit availability. 🥑