



Tour attendees assembled after a lunch showcasing California avocados in a variety of uses.

CAC Season Opener Activities

To celebrate and spread awareness about the start of this year's California avocado season, the California Avocado Commission (CAC) implemented several successful programs in April and May.

As a way to launch the season to media and consumers, CAC worked with registered dietitian (RD) partner Katie Ferraro to have her create four new, exclusive California avocado snack recipes that were all less than 100 calories per serving. These recipes showed how versatile avocados are and highlighted how they can serve as a key ingredient in snacks. The recipes were featured in a press release that was distributed nationally.

Additionally, CAC provided key influential bloggers with a delicious avocado-grove-luncheon of dishes made with fresh California avocados to inspire them to create new recipes and blog posts about the start of the season. The 15 bloggers and media received avocado shipments, which resulted in more than 50 blog and social media posts, and 500,000 impressions so far.

To further engage consumers on social media, CAC hosted three Facebook chats to help kick off the season. The CAC-hosted chats provided consumers the opportunity to interact with various California avocado key influencers including California avocado grower Doug O'Hara, RD Emily

Schiller and artisan chef partner Ivy Stark. These sessions encouraged fans to engage with each guest and ask questions about how California avocados are grown, the nutrition and health benefits and ways to incorporate California avocados into recipes at home.

Participants had the opportunity to win prizes including fresh California avocados and Chef Ivy Stark's new cookbook. This year there was a 34 percent increase in RSVPs over last year. The program led more than 2,000 people to CAC's *The Scoop* blog and had a reach of 15,260.

CAC also hosted an exclusive tour that provided a broad cross section of communicators with a more in-depth view of California avocado production from nursery through packing house. The tour was topped off with a delicious lunch of dishes featuring California avocados in a grove. Ferraro was on hand to give a live demonstration of one of her recipes and to highlight the nutritional benefits of the fruit. The attendees included consumer and trade media, foodservice operators and supermarket registered dietitians (SRDs).

Additionally, a trade press release was distributed to trade media in late April summarizing CAC's season opener activities and partnership with Katie Ferraro. The release had excellent pick up, resulting in articles in *The Packer*, *The*

Produce News, AndNowUKnow and The Shelby Report.

CAC's season opener activities have set the tone for 2014, creating momentum for the rest of the season. The activities serve to create excitement and anticipation for California avocados, and also serve to inspire consumers and media to think of California avocados as a premium product, perfect for summertime meals. 🥑



Katherine Anne Good of the popular blog "Bombay Blonde" got a kick out of picking a California avocado in the grove.



RD Katie Ferraro demonstrated how to prepare a 100-calorie snack with California avocados.



Clement Saseun, Director of Quality for DineEquity (IHOP/Applebee's), Inc. (right) learned how to pick avocados from Hayden McIntyre, son of avocado grower Scott McIntyre.



Alex Gonzalez led the group of communicators on a tour of Persea Nursery.