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Calendar

For a listing of industry events and dates for the coming year, please visit:

<http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/commission/industry-calendar>

FSMA Produce Safety Training Sessions

The Food Safety Alliance, in partnership with the California Department of Food and Agriculture, is hosting a series of Produce Safety training sessions at a discounted rate of \$35 per attendee. Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

April 18, 23 & 24 / May 3 & 10

April 18, 23 & 24 / May 3 & 10

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Several locations throughout Southern California. [Click here for more information.](#)

San Diego Area Invasive Pests Workshop

The University of California Cooperative Extension is hosting an Invasive Pests Workshop in San Diego County. Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

April 26

April 26

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Location: UCCE, San Diego Conference Room, 9335 Hazard Way, Suite 201, San Diego, CA

H2A Roundtable Sessions

California avocado growers who use H2A contractors or directly hire H2A workers — and those interested in learning more about H2A labor options — are encouraged to attend the H2A Roundtable Sessions organized by the Agricultural Personnel Management Association. Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

May 7-9

May 7

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: (Spanish session) Radisson Hotel, 3455 Skyway Drive, Santa Maria, CA

May 8

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location: (English session) Radisson Hotel, 3455 Skyway Drive, Santa Maria, CA

May 9

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location: Courtyard by Marriott, 600 East Esplanade Drive, Oxnard, CA

Growers Encouraged to Complete Crop Survey to Assist with the Crop Estimate Process

The California Avocado Commission's (CAC) annual grower crop survey is an important tool in helping the Commission adjust crop estimates, predict the flow of avocados to market and better understand the challenges growers face due to weather, global competition and water pricing and availability. Thus, the Commission strongly encourages all growers to complete the [online survey](#).

When completing the survey, growers are asked to provide their best estimate concerning their grove's production. The Commission has posted [avocado crop estimation instructions](#) for those who may need assistance estimating their crop.

The 2019 annual crop survey was mailed to all producers on record. The deadline for completing the survey is Tuesday, April 30.

Growers may submit their survey responses [online at the California avocado growers website](#) or by completing and returning the postage-paid survey they received in the mail. The form also may be faxed to 619.445.3346.

If you did not receive a crop estimate survey in the mail, or have questions regarding the process, please contact April Aymami at aaymami@avocado.org or 949.341.1955.

Goleta Water Board Lifts Drought Surcharge and Lowers Water Shortage to Stage I

On April 9, the Goleta Water District Board of Directors directed that the drought surcharge be lifted at the start of the next billing cycle. All water used on or after May 1 will not be subject to the drought surcharge. Removing the drought surcharge will mean a reduction of \$2.90 HCF (\$1,263.24 per acre foot).

The Water Shortage status of the Goleta Water District also has been lowered from Stage III to Stage I. As a result, restrictions on water days and times have been rescinded, effective immediately, and conservation is voluntary.

Prohibitions against wasting water are permanent and therefore will remain in effect. In addition, all leaks must be remedied within 24 hours. The following prohibitions, applicable to agriculture, remain in place state-wide:

- Runoff caused by irrigation is prohibited
- Outdoor irrigation is prohibited during and within 48 hours following measurable rainfall

Water Quality Impacts on California Avocado – A Collaborative Approach

Avocado consumption continues to grow both in the U.S. and around the globe. Greater demand creates an opportunity for growers to supply an expanding market with quality California fruit. More intensive production increases the need for attention to tree health, crop protection and irrigation practices. Many avocado root rot diseases are related to how

growers manage water, and given the salt sensitivity of avocado and limited selection of salt-resistant rootstocks, water quality is an inherent driver of avocado productivity and quality.

In the California avocado-growing regions of the Central and South coast, water quality can be highly variable. Groves may rely on a combination of surface and groundwater — yet water high in total dissolved solids, pH and salts such as sodium and chloride can be common place. Furthermore, water quality properties are subject to change as California faces more weather extremes and shifting water demand. As a result, avocado growers need to continue to be conscious of how local and regional water quality conditions impact their groves.

A comprehensive understanding of how water quality impacts avocado tree health and fruit quality is still limited. The consensus is irrigation with poor quality water reduces crop productivity, yet the extent to which crop loss is linked to water quality and specific practices to mitigate the risk is not entirely clear. The clonal rootstocks ‘Dusa’, ‘Toro Canyon’ and ‘Duke 7’ have some salt tolerance, but are still sensitive to salts. Even less information is available on the potential impacts of water quality on fruit quality, including both nutritional value and postharvest storage.

A collaborative approach to problem solving creates an opportunity for growers to participate in research and to generate regional and site-specific solutions. Dr. Sat Darshan Khalsa, Assistant Project Scientist in the Department of Plant Sciences at UC Davis, and Dr. Ben Faber, UCANR Soils/Water/Subtropical Crops Advisor for Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, are leading a collaborative study of water quality impacts on California avocado trees. The phases of this project include:

1. Identifying the range of water quality conditions in California avocado-growing regions
2. Building a network of ‘focus sites’ identified by grower participants using specific grove characteristics
3. Monitoring field indicators to quantify impacts of water quality on tree health and fruit quality

Results will be shared in aggregate to maintain the privacy of participants and also allow growers to compare their focus site with a wider population.

If you are interested in learning more about this collaborative water quality project, please contact Dr. Khalsa at sdskhalsa@ucdavis.edu or sign up for a follow-up conversation using the online [webform](#).

Upcoming Produce Safety Training Seminars

The Food Safety Alliance, in partnership with the California Department of Food and Agriculture, is hosting a [series](#) of Produce Safety training sessions at a discounted rate of \$35 per attendee. The US Food and Drug Association (FDA) Produce Safety rule requires that at least one supervisor or responsible party must have successfully completed food safety training recognized as adequate by the FDA. These courses will satisfy that requirement.

The course will cover the following topics:

- Introduction to produce safety
- Worker health, hygiene and training
- Soil amendments
- Wildlife, domesticated animals and land use
- Agricultural water
- Post-harvest handling and sanitation
- Developing a farm food safety plan

Attendees will receive additional resources including:

- Materials to help you determine how or if the regulation applies to your farm
- Records templates
- Calculation tool to determine if a small farm receives a qualified exemption
- List of allowable water treatment compounds
- Tools to assist with water analysis calculations

The \$35 fee includes course materials, coffee, lunch and a certificate. [Online registration](#) is available.

Training sessions will be held as follows:

April 18, 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. (Tulare)

Spanish language session

International Agri-Center
4500 South Laspina Street
Tulare, CA, 93274

April 23, 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. (Moreno Valley)

Spanish language session

Riverside Farm Bureau
21160 Box Spring Rd, Ste 102
Moreno Valley, CA 92557

April 24, 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. (Escondido)

Spanish language session

San Diego County Farm Bureau
420 South Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

April 24, 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. (San Luis Obispo)

English language session

Embassy Suites San Luis Obispo
333 Madonna Road
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

May 3, 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. (Salinas)

Spanish language session

UC Cooperative Extension
1432 Abbott St
Salinas, CA 93901

May 10, 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. (Temecula)

English language session

Embassy Suites Temecula Valley Wine Country
29345 Rancho California Rd
Temecula, CA 92591

Growers Encouraged to Attend Upcoming H2A Stakeholder Forums

A series of free [H2A Roundtable Sessions](#), organized by the Agricultural Personnel Management Association (APMA), will be held at a variety of locations across the state. California avocado growers who use H2A contractors or directly hire H2A workers — and those interested in learning more about H2A labor options — are encouraged to attend.

RSVPs are required. [Online registration](#) is now available. For more information, contact the APMA at 831.422.8023.

Topics include:

- Wage and hour H2A compliance
- H2A certification process best practices
- I-129 processing best practices
- Visa processing best practices and recruitment fraud in Mexico
- Federal, state and local housing codes
- Wage and hour legal issues and best practices
- H2A regulatory requirements
- H2A job orders
- H2A housing inspections
- Dealing with CNPC, USCIS and the U.S. Consulate

A Q&A session with representatives from government agencies also will take place. For a complete list of presenters and the agenda, download the event flyer.

The sessions will be held as follows:

Santa Maria Spanish Session

May 7, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Radisson Hotel

3455 Skyway Drive

Santa Maria, CA 93455

Santa Maria English Session

May 8, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Radisson Hotel

3455 Skyway Drive

Santa Maria, CA 93455

Oxnard/Ventura

May 9, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Courtyard by Marriott

600 East Esplanade Drive

Oxnard, CA 93036

Salinas

June 4, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Salinas Sports Complex

1034 N. Main St.

Salinas, CA 93906

Sonoma/Santa Rosa

June 6, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Sonoma County Farm Bureau

3589 Westwind Blvd

Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Hass Avocado Board Releases Annual Board Election Schedule

The Hass Avocado Board (HAB), whose mission is to promote the consumption of Hass avocados in the U.S., has begun its annual board election process. On April 10, HAB mailed announcements of open seats to all eligible producers and importers of Hass avocados in search of nominations for the positions.

HAB seeks nominees with a diverse industry skill set who are willing to share their expertise in an effort to promote the consumption of Hass avocados. The board has defined six strategic priorities as part of its [five-year strategic plan](#): building demand, nutrition, supply and demand data, sustainability, industry engagement and quality.

Nominations for board positions are due May 8. Ballots will be mailed to producers and importers by May 29; the deadline for receipt of ballots is June 26. The Board members and alternates will be appointed by the United States Department of Agriculture Secretary of Agriculture and seated at the November 2019 board meeting.

Complete information about the HAB election can be found [online](#).

USDA Launches New Online Tools to Assist with H-2A Applications and Farm Loans

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) [website](#) has two new tools to assist farmers with H-2A visa applications and to manage their farm loans.

The H-2A Visa Program helps growers fill employment gaps by hiring workers from other nations. The USDA's [H-2A Visa Program page](#) provides an overview of the program, defines what labor situations qualify for the program, summarizes the costs of the program and defines different H-2A visa application paths (standard, emergency, immediate need, extending workers.) In addition, growers can create their own [H-2A visa checklist](#). By answering a few online questions, growers can compile a checklist of requirements, fees and forms, as well as a timeline.

To help growers manage their farm loans, the USDA site also provides a [web portal](#) that growers can log into and view their:

- Loan information
- Interest payments
- Loan advance
- Payment history
- Paid-in-full and restructured loans
- Account alerts

NAP Buy-up Coverage Available and New Service Fees Announced

The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of commercial crops for which insurance coverage is not available. This insurance protects against natural disaster that lead to crop losses, lower yields or prevent the planting of crops. NAP is available for California growers of avocado varieties other than Hass, Lamb Hass and GEM (which are insurable under the [standard crop insurance program](#)), and for growers in other counties such as Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Kern and Tulare.

The USDA Farm Service Agency recently announced that higher levels of coverage will be offered via NAP — from 50 to 65 percent of expected production. The administration fee also has been increased from \$250 to \$325. Producers may exercise the “buy up” option to obtain NAP coverage of 100 percent of the average market price at the coverage levels between 50 – 65 percent of expected production. Producers have a one-time opportunity, until May 24, to obtain buy-up coverage for 2019 or 2020 crops for which the NAP application closing date has passed.

In addition, the 2018 Farm Bill also specifies that qualified veteran farmers are eligible for a service fee waiver and premium reduction. For more complete NAP information, visit the [NAP website](#).

CAC Annual Meeting Presentation Available Online

Presentation materials from the California Avocado Commission 2019 annual meetings are now available [online](#).

Because the Commission is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, the 2019 annual meetings provided attendees with an overview of the Commission’s history — showcasing how the industry has evolved and what is on tap for 2019.

Highlights from the presentation include:

- A review of past and current financials, including budget data, cash flow, reserves in comparison to volume and the assessment rate over time
- An evolution of the marketing program, including California’s changing position in the marketplace, the “rise” of the Hass variety, distribution, defining the targeted consumer and retail partners, and the impact of the internet on marketing tactics
- An overview of industry affairs — the development of AMRIC, industry communications, acreage inventory and crop estimating
- A look at the ever-changing issues facing growers — food safety, sanitary phytosanitary efforts and export markets
- Highlights of the production research program — pest and disease management, breeding and genetics, rootstocks and cultural management

Social Media Posts Garner More than 500,000 Impressions in Just Three Weeks

Leading in to the California avocado season, the California Avocado Commission shared engaging, relevant posts on its social media pages to generate excitement — and build anticipation — around the start of the season. From March 1 – March 20, the Commission shared a variety of illustrated GIFs, pre-roll videos and recipe content that had California avocado consumers — and customers — clamoring for their favorite fruit. During that period, the Commission’s social media content generated more than 500,000 impressions.

For Instagram, the Commission created illustrated GIFs that incorporated relevant brand messaging and popular social topics such as the West Coast, seasonality and avocado toast. GIFs are particularly popular on Instagram, a social media platform that favors artistic imagery and videos, because they are soundless animated images that automatically play in a

continuous loop and can be used as “stickers” on an individual’s Instagram posts. CAC uploaded the GIFs to GIPHY, a platform integrated with the Instagram interface, allowing users to locate the California avocado stickers with relevant key phrases (California, avocados, coming soon) and then create their own Instagram content featuring the Commission-branded stickers. To date, the pre-season Instagram GIFs have been viewed by users more than 300,000 times.

The Commission also built anticipation for the start of the California avocado season with pre-roll “Waiting Together” themed videos that featured a beautiful California avocado grove and “almost in season” messaging. Thus far, the Waiting Together videos have yielded 110,000 views.

To help California avocado fans celebrate St. Patrick’s Day, and leverage the social media buzz around the holiday, the Commission released a number of California avocado recipes perfect for the celebration. The St. Patrick’s Day content reached of more than 70,000 social media users and garnered more than 24,000 social engagements.



California Avocado Season: Let's Wait Together

The “Waiting Together” pre-roll videos showcased a picturesque California avocado grove.

California Market Trends

To view all market trend graphs, including “Weekly Volume Summary,” “Weekly Avocado Prices” and “U.S. Avocado Supply,” please visit: <http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/industry/market-statistics>.

California Avocado Society Weekly Newslines* Avocado Prices – April 10, 2019

	Conventional #1	Organic #1
California Hass	(Field Price Per Lb)	(Field Price Per Lb)
#32’s	\$1.40 - \$1.46	\$1.60 - \$1.66
36’s	\$1.40 - \$1.46	\$1.60 - \$1.66
40’s	\$1.40 - \$1.46	\$1.60 - \$1.66
48’s	\$1.50 - \$1.56	\$1.72 - \$1.78
60’s	\$1.38 - \$1.44	\$1.60 - \$1.66
70’s	\$1.18 - \$1.24	\$1.34 - \$1.40
84’s	\$0.82 - \$0.88	\$0.98 - \$1.04

*To subscribe to the Weekly Newslines, please contact the California Avocado Society at (949) 940-8869 or www.CaliforniaAvocadoSociety.org.

California Avocado Commission Weekly Volume Summary (Pounds)

	Week Ending 4/14/2019	Season-to-Date (since 11/01/2018)	2019 Year to Date
Hass	11,436,317	28,757,479	28,690,340
Lamb	0	0	0
Other (Greens)	11,972	285,797	101,195
California Total	11,448,289	29,043,276	28,791,535
Florida	11,385	5,900,455	1,033,340
Chile	0	27,859,040	5,512,278
Mexico	60,653,900	1,179,682,743	823,328,979
Peru	0	0	0
Other (Imports)	870,000	28,090,000	18,380,000
Import Total	61,523,900	1,235,631,783	847,221,257
USA Total	72,983,574	1,270,575,514	877,046,132

Sources:

California = CAC (AMRIC)

Florida = Florida Avocado Admin Committee

Chile = Comite de Paltas, Chile

Mexico = APEAM

Peru = ProHass

Other Imports = USDA AMS website

Crop Statistics

To help California avocado growers make informed harvesting decisions, below is the California Crop Weekly Harvest Projections versus Actual Harvest/Shipments for the first two quarters of 2019. In March the Commission issued revised weekly harvest projections to shift the harvest shortfall from January through March, into the April through June window. While the first quarter actual harvest lagged behind projections, the last two weeks have seen actual harvest exceed the revised March projections, resulting in the season-to-date harvest of 17% of the total crop volume and 2.6 million pounds over projections. The Commission has kicked off targeted marketing programs to support this fruit throughout the California season, and continues to stress the importance of growers communicating with their handlers and grove managers on a regular basis to determine the best harvest strategy.

2019 California Crop Weekly Harvest Projection				
Weekly Crop Movement vs. Distribution Projections				
All Varieties				
	4-Year Historical Forecast	AMRIC Handler Forecast	Industry Adjusted	
Week Ending (CAC Week)	2019 Pre-Season Crop Estimate	Mar 2019 Update	AMRIC Harvest	AMRIC Shipments
YTD Thru Feb 24 (17)	9,050,004	1,970,304	1,483,204	1,143,733
Mar 3 - (18)	2,758,217	785,219	716,519	628,068
Mar 10 - (19)	3,376,290	657,620	580,720	564,093
Mar 17 - (20)	4,280,515	1,211,730	1,149,730	698,237
Mar 24 - (21)	4,232,102	2,571,015	1,620,622	940,416
Mar 31 - (22)	5,271,164	4,047,012	3,537,471	1,747,653
1st QTR SubTotal	28,968,293	11,242,900	9,088,266	5,722,201
Apr 7 - (23)	5,750,819	7,058,700	8,256,079	4,191,696
Apr 14 - (24)	6,555,329	8,036,300	11,604,261	5,831,398
Apr 21 - (25)	7,092,633	8,688,900	-	-
Apr 28 - (26)	8,157,305	9,986,600	-	-
May 5 - (27)	8,386,056	8,411,900	-	-
May 12 - (28)	7,694,000	7,718,200	-	-
May 19- (29)	7,355,372	7,378,100	-	-
May 26 - (30)	8,180,321	8,205,900	-	-
Jun 2 - (31)	7,648,747	7,672,800	-	-
Jun 9 - (32)	6,794,936	8,792,800	-	-
Jun 16 - (33)	7,174,220	9,279,400	-	-
Jun 23 - (34)	7,439,590	9,610,500	-	-
Jun 30 - (35)	7,044,822	9,032,200	-	-
2nd QTR SubTotal	95,274,149	109,872,300	19,860,341	10,023,094
Season-to-Date	41,274,440	26,337,900	28,948,606	15,745,294
% of Crop	24%	15%	17%	9%
Crop Size	175,000,000	175,000,000	Left to Harvest	Left to Ship
Crop Variance	(12,325,834)	2,610,706	146,051,394	159,254,706

[Click Here to View the Complete 2019 Crop Projection](#)

Weather: 30-Day Outlook For California's Coastal & Valley Areas

(April 15 – May 15)

Summary- The area of intensification of lows is much more localized now off the northcentral California coast. This supports a generally drier and warmer scenario, except in the centers of the upper low near the north and central coast.

El Niño continues at a fairly steady state of development, both in areal extent and with moderate departure from normal (moderate warm anomaly). This gives continued support for more active westerlies near the California coast than normal, even into early May.

There is the long SST Anomaly feature that extends from the tropical Pacific near the Dateline (20N/170W) to near the central California coast. A colder than normal sea surface upstream from California out to 145W, coupled with warmer than normal sea surface WSW of Baja and southern California will contribute support for long wave troughing in the

central Pacific at 150W as well as frontal systems reaching into California from the WSW. The southern storm track is less active, but may still vary a bit between stronger westerlies with some fronts with showers in N California in late April, and cold upper lows in May.

There continues support for above normal rainfall throughout the Northern SierraNV Lake Tahoe north, and showers through the San Joaquin Delta and north, with snow in the higher SierraNV, into early May. We suggest thunderstorms (TSTMS) will tend to associate with the upper lows which develop in May.

Cooler than normal daytime conditions, due to clouds and rains continue in end of April and well into May, and some very late season or off-season rains in June, for the SierraNV, NE California and central coast area and Delta-south Sacramento Valley.

There is above normal risk for upper lows and troughs to produce showers and thunderstorms (TSTMS) in May and June in N California mountains (especially N Sierras).

High pressure in the Gulf of Alaska will tend to associate with continuation of troughing near the central and N California coast in May and early June.

The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) is expected to remain slightly more active than normal through the end of May, and possibly early June.

Watch for occasional dry, gusty wind events in interior N California in May and June.

In the Near Term – April 20 – May 4... Salinas Valley-San Luis Obispo Co...After the cold period of April 15-16th with showers, it dries out and warms up. Rain days, with snow showers in the S SierraNV and Tehachapi's can still occur. Rain days are mainly on the 15th, when this report was written. Watch for a hot and dry period but with cold nights during April 17-21, then dry and warmer as the storm track retreats north into Oregon from the 24-30th.

...S Calif Avocado Area, San Luis Obispo Co to San Diego Co...Precipitation continues in a mostly end-of-season pattern for San Diego, a little above normal, in Santa Barbara-San Luis Obispo Co's where showery periods are possible. We expect a return to warmer than normal conditions during April 23-30th through San Diego and Orange/W Riverside Co's and San Bernardino Valley.

As in other areas, degree day accumulations will continue below normal during this period despite a few warm days that will begin to occur.

Frosts and freezes are most likely in Paso Robles, Los Alamos, Sisquoc, Santa Ynez Valley to Lompoc on a few days within the period from April 12-17th in the intervals between showers (13th, 15th).

Summary – May 4-18... This is the season for cutoff lows and troughs that move erratically down the coast, alternating with some hot conditions for inland valleys, while low clouds and fog form at the coast.

The usual springtime dry gusty downslope N-NE winds may be more likely in NW California coastal and N Sacramento Valley and N Sierra than in SOCAL during this period.

Seasonal Outlook / El Niño Update... May 10 – June 30... As speeds of the westerlies decrease, and the belt of westerlies migrates gradually poleward, we should see more development of cutoff upper lows near the central California coast.

We will continue to have the risk of showers and TSTMS at times in May. As this pattern continues in May, it does not necessarily follow that rain amounts will increase, but at least prepare for an increase in TSTMS, along with gusty wind events. Although the CFSV2 outlook map is showing well above normal rainfall, this may actually be realized as smaller raincell sizes (which normally occurs in May) but heavier and more convective rains, and higher risk for severe TSTM

events. Hot days will eventually be more frequent in late May and June (as is normal), but the length of hot periods should tend to be shorter than usual for May and June, as upper lows and troughs continue to develop.

For southern California, recurrently moist conditions in April will tend to become less frequent in May, due to enhanced SW flow aloft to bring a deeper marine layer into the coast and coastal foothills and valleys. This would be generally a remnant of activity left over from earlier in the spring, with residual energy from *El Niño* forcing, slow to recede during the first part of May.

Seasonable (near or above normal) rainfall and a few periods of frost are still possible in first part of May, for the colder valleys of SOCAL (Paso Robles, Edna Valley, Lompoc, Santa Ynez).

At this time, we do not expect an early start of the monsoonal TSTM season for SOCAL as we transition through May into June, but more likely a period of cool and unsettled conditions with a few cold overnight periods through May, and the first week or so of June.

Even as periods of low clouds and nighttime drizzle occur, nursery and flower growers should be prepared for the cold episodes, even if frost does not occur. These will tend to exert more tests of plant hardiness than normally experienced in SOCAL during the mid to late spring.

Alan Fox...Fox Weather, LLC

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