



IN THIS ISSUE, YOU'LL FIND:

[Farm Service Agency Opens Temporary Santa Paula Office for Those Affected by Fire and Mudslides](#)

[Reminder: U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division Educational Seminars](#)

[Winter Issue of From the Grove Available Online](#)

[Environmental Quality Incentives Program Offers Fire-Recovery Assistance](#)

[Growers Encouraged to Complete 2017 Census of Agriculture](#)

[Labor Laws and Regulations Workshops for Growers and Labor Contractors](#)

[California Avocado Social Media Posts Keep Fans Engaged During the Off-season](#)

[2017 Avocado Tracking Study Results](#)

[Market Trends](#)

[Weather Outlook](#)

Calendar

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

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

Farm Service Agency Office Hours to Assist Growers Affected by Wildfires and Mudslides

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has established a temporary satellite office in Santa Paula to meet with growers affected by the Thomas Fire and mudslides. Growers are encouraged to schedule an appointment by calling 805.933.2926, or to visit the satellite office during office hours. Additional dates and hours will be added as needed. [More information available here.](#)

January 18 & 25, February 1, 8, 15 & 22

January 18

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Ventura Ag Commissioner's Office, 815 East Santa Barbara Street, Santa Paula, CA

January 25

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Location: Ventura Ag Commissioner's Office, 815 East Santa Barbara Street, Santa Paula, CA

February 1, 8, 15 & 22

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Location: Ventura Ag Commissioner's Office, 815 East Santa Barbara Street, Santa Paula, CA

Coffee Summit

Cal Poly Pomona is hosting the "Coffee Summit" — an all-day event examining the opportunities and challenges of producing coffee in California, including inter-planting coffee with California avocado trees. Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

January 18

January 18

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: AGRIsCAPES Agricultural Outreach Center, Cal Poly Pomona, 4102 South University Drive, Pomona, CA

CAC Marketing Committee Meeting

January 30

January 30

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: CAC Office, 12 Mauchly, STE L, Irvine, CA

Safe Food Alliance Produce Safety Training Sessions

The Safe Food Alliance and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) are offering a Produce Safety Training session for produce growers, buyers and others interested in learning about produce safety, the Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule, Good Agricultural Practices and co-management of natural resources and food safety. **Please note, the January 31 and February 7 meetings are SOLD OUT.** Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

January 31, February 7 & April 17

January 31 – SOLD OUT

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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

February 7 – SOLD OUT

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Embassy Suites, 29345 Rancho California Rd, Temecula, CA

April 17

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Farm Bureau Office, 420 South Broadway, Escondido, CA

U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division Educational Seminars

February 6-8

February 6

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Pala Mesa, 2001 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA

February 7

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Santa Paula Ag Museum, 926 Railroad Ave., Santa Paula, CA

February 8

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: SLO Farm Bureau, 4875 Morabito Place, San Luis Obispo, CA

Farm Service Agency Opens Temporary Santa Paula Office for Those Affected by Fire and Mudslides

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that a temporary satellite office will be opened in Santa Paula to further assist growers impacted by the Thomas Fire and mudslides.

Growers are encouraged to schedule an appointment by calling 805.933.2926, or to visit the satellite office during the hours listed below. The temporary satellite office will be located at the Ventura Ag Commissioner's Office, 815 East Santa Barbara Street, Santa Paula, CA, 93060.

The FSA Santa Paula office hours are as follows:

- Thursday, January 18, 2018, 8:00am - 12:00pm (These hours are due to the closure of Hwy 101 on this day.)
- Thursday, January 25, 2018, 10:00am - 2:00pm
- Thursday, February 01, 2018, 10:00am - 2:00pm
- Thursday, February 08, 2018, 10:00am - 2:00pm
- Thursday, February 15, 2018, 10:00am - 2:00pm
- Thursday, February 22, 2018, 10:00am - 2:00pm

Additional dates and hours will be added as needed.

Reminder: U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division Educational Seminars

U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division (WHD) staff will provide California avocado growers and labor contractors with information concerning federal labor law requirements, an overview of the legal wage and hour requirements and answer employer questions. Growers and labor contractors are encouraged to attend.

February 6

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Pala Mesa, 2001 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA

February 7

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Santa Paula Ag Museum, 926 Railroad Ave., Santa Paula, CA

February 8

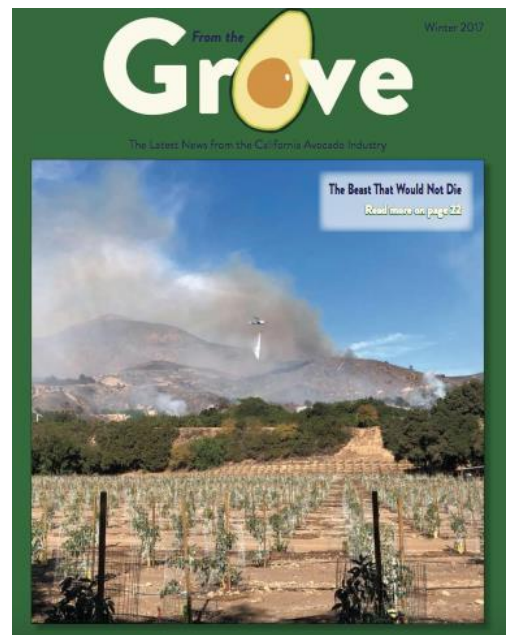
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: SLO Farm Bureau, 4875 Morabito Place, San Luis Obispo, CA

Winter Issue of From the Grove Available Online

The latest issue of From the Grove is now available online at the California avocado growers website. Highlights from the issue include:

- A review of the past year by the [California Avocado Commission's \(CAC\) President](#)
- The [CAC Chairman's report](#) on the past season and a look at the upcoming year
- A behind-the-scenes look at the [Thomas Fire](#) and its impact on area California avocado growers
- A summary of the California Avocado Commission's (CAC) recent meeting with the [U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division's San Diego District Office](#) to discuss compliance with federal wage and hour requirements



- Highlights from the [2017 Avocado Tracking Study](#)
- An overview of the approved [2017-18 CAC budget](#)
- A list of the [2017 CAC general election results](#)
- A look at packers' predictions for the [upcoming 2018 California avocado season](#)
- A profile of the [McIntyre family](#) and its three generations of California avocado growers
- Best practices for [post-grove fire recovery](#)
- A guide to [pruning California avocado trees](#)
- A summary of the insights provided by visiting Florida researchers concerning the threat of [laurel wilt](#)
- A look back at [California avocado growers' trip to Michoacán](#), Mexico and what they learned while touring Mexican avocado groves
- An assessment of the damage caused by [Hurricane Irma](#) to Florida's avocado industry
- Findings from [Dr. Gary Bender's high density research project](#) and the feasibility of adopting this cultural management model for high water cost regions
- A look at [sustainable grove management practices](#) and how growers can prepare themselves to answer buyers' sustainability questions
- Key points from the upcoming [Food Safety Modernization Act](#) compliance deadlines
- A review of [California avocado festivals](#) and CAC's role at these popular events
- An insider's look at [pre-season preparation with CAC's foodservice team](#)
- A high-level profile of [CAC's nutritional messaging](#) and the impact the Commission's partnerships with registered dietitians and supermarket dietitians have on sharing relevant information with consumers

Environmental Quality Incentives Program Offers Fire-Recovery Assistance

The United States Department of Agriculture's National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in California is [offering assistance](#) to growers, farmers and ranchers affected by the recent California wildfires. NRCS is making \$4 million available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), which covers erosion control and water quality practices on eligible cropland, rangeland and nonindustrial private forestland.

The purpose of the NRCS Catastrophic Fire Recovery Fund Pool is to provide immediate resource protection in areas affected by wildfires in the last 18 months. The priority resource concerns for this fund include:

- Preventing soil erosion
- Minimizing noxious and invasive plant proliferation
- Protecting water quality
- Restoring livestock infrastructure

NRCS will accept applications for typical practices such as mulching, seeding, grade stabilization, tree planting and other measures used to protect burned areas from eroding and minimizing the transport of sediment and pollutants into waterways. The cutoff date for this specific fund pool is December 11, 2018.

Applicants may request early-start waivers in order to get started on their recovery efforts as soon as possible. Applicants will still need to meet NRCS' standards and specifications and will need to secure the proper permits before beginning the recovery work.

In addition, NRCS is offering technical and educational assistance to those faced with erosion and flooding in a damaged watershed area to help them mitigate damage.

For more information, download the [Catastrophic Fire Recovery EQIP Fund Pool Description](#) information sheet. To apply, complete the [Catastrophic Fire Recovery EQIP Fund Pool Screening Worksheet](#). More complete information about the application process can be found on the [NRCS website](#).

Growers Encouraged to Complete 2017 Census of Agriculture

In light of the impacts caused by floods, fires and mudslides the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) encourages California avocado growers to complete NASS' [online 2017 Census of Agriculture](#). The census is the only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial data concerning the nationwide agricultural industry. Data from the census is used to develop farm programs and services that impact the industry. Responses are kept confidential.

The online survey has been improved, making it easier for respondents to complete and is now accessible via mobile phone, tablet or computer. Respondents can skip questions that do not apply to them and the online survey also calculates totals automatically and provides drop-down menus for common answers. Respondents also may save a partially completed survey and return to it later.

In addition, the 2017 census has added new questions in order to document changes and emerging trends in agriculture such as military veteran status, food marketing practices and on-farm decision-making.

To complete the [online 2017 Census of Agriculture](#) respondents will need to enter their unique 17-digit survey code, which is noted on the questionnaire received in the mail. For more information, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call 916.738.6600.

Labor Laws and Regulations Workshops for Growers and Labor Contractors

AgSafe will host a series of daylong workshops (7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) concerning agricultural laws and regulations. The workshops will be offered in both English and Spanish.

Workshop topics include:

- Agricultural labor relations act
- California OSHA safety and health laws
- Farm labor contractor/grower relations
- Wage and hour laws and regulations
- Workers' compensation insurance
- Effective management and communication

- Transportation and housing laws
- Child labor laws
- Incident investigation
- Paid sick leave
- Sexual harassment prevention

This course does meet the nine-hour continuing education requirement for FLC licensing. Sessions will be held at the following locations:

February 6 — Paso Robles (English)

Masonic Complex
320 Sherwood Road
Paso Robles, CA

February 7 — Paso Robles (Spanish)

Masonic Complex
320 Sherwood Road
Paso Robles, CA

March 14 — Oxnard (English/Spanish)

Courtyard Marriott
600 East Esplanade Drive
Oxnard, CA

The fee is \$240 for AgSafe/UnitedAg members and \$270 for non-members. Interested parties can register [online](#). Those who register after March 4 will pay a higher registration fee. The fee includes lunch and a certificate.

California Avocado Social Media Posts Keep Fans Engaged During the Off-season

Throughout the year, even during the off-season, California avocado fans are eager for new avocado usage ideas they can incorporate into their meals, holiday menus and share with friends on social media channels. To maintain engagement with fans year-round and ensure they have access to the California avocado-centric content they seek, the California Avocado Commission (CAC) shares educational and nutritional avocado information, avocado usage tips and innovative recipes on its Facebook, Twitter and Instagram social media channels.

Some of the most popular off-season posts have been those providing usage tips on how avocados can be used as a substitute in baking. Two Facebook posts with paid promotion encouraged fans to use avocados in place of other higher saturated fats, for freshly-baked [California Avocado Dinner Rolls](#) and [whole wheat chocolate scones](#) garnered more than 109,000 impressions and 7,900 engagements. From the end of October through December, social media posts that provided consumers with tips on how to substitute California avocados in their favorite recipes reached more than 182,000 users across all CAC social media channels.

The Commission encouraged consumers to incorporate more avocados into their recipes by sharing recipes they could use to spruce up [holiday](#) and cultural events or [everyday entertaining](#). In response to the Commission’s Facebook post featuring California avocado Thanksgiving recipes, [fans shared their favorite family holiday recipes](#) featuring the fruit and asked questions about recipe preparation and avocado storage. That post performed particularly well, garnering more than 6,800 engagements and reaching more than 63,000 users.

Guacamole’s popularity with American consumers makes it a great conversation starter on social media. CAC engaged with its [Twitter](#) fans by asking them to share what they thought was the most important fresh ingredient in guacamole (other than avocados). California avocado Facebook fans also weighed in on their favorite guacamole ingredient by commenting on a post featuring the perfect [Thanksgiving guacamole recipe](#). CAC’s guacamole content reached more than 125,000 social media users and yielded more than 19,400 engagements via poll votes, likes, shares and comments.

For those eager to learn more about avocados, the Commission shared [educational content](#) about the California avocado growing process and the nutritional benefits of the fruit. Facebook fans virtually toured California avocado groves thanks to a [video post](#) showcasing the hand grown care and harvest process. And CAC’s #WednesdayWisdom [tweet](#) highlighted California as the major domestic producer of avocados.



This California avocado mashed potatoes recipe inspired fans to share their own California avocado Thanksgiving recipes on Facebook.

2017 Avocado Tracking Study Results

The California Avocado Commission (CAC) has utilized consumer tracking studies for more than 20 years to assess consumer preferences, attitudes and usage of the fruit. The 2017 Avocado Tracking Study, conducted online by Temra Wald Consulting, was completed by nearly 2,000 adult avocado purchasers. The sample focused on California, with augmented sampling that allowed the study to delve into differences based on where consumers shopped within the state. The survey also measured opinions across the nation to ensure that regional differences could be measured as well. Once again, the survey incorporated responses from younger millennials ages 18 – 24.

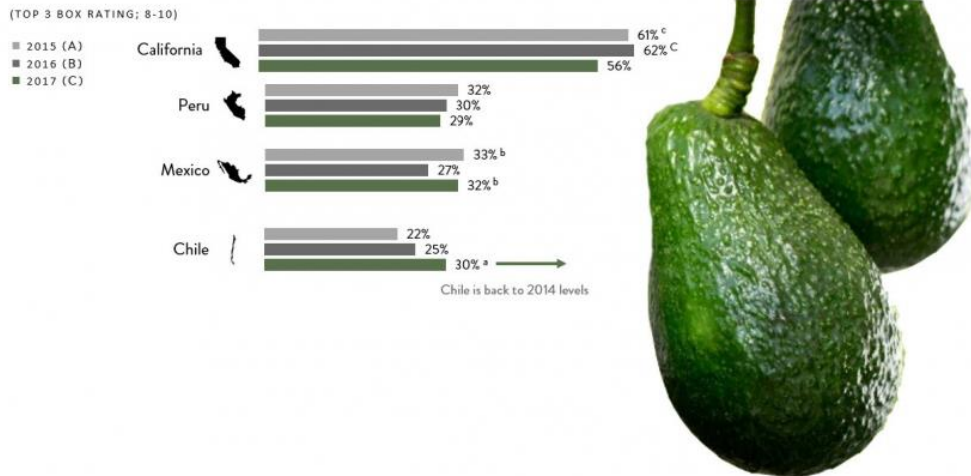
Results of the survey indicated that in CAC’s targeted advertising markets (Denver, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Portland, Sacramento, Salt Lake City, San Diego, San Francisco/San Jose and Seattle) consumer awareness of the California growing region remains higher than Mexico, despite a significantly higher marketing spend by Avocados from Mexico.

While California avocados are still rated — by a significant margin — as more premium than all other origins, the rating slipped a little this year in comparison to the previous two years. The study also indicates that given a choice, two-thirds of avocado consumers would prefer California avocados as compared to 13 percent for the largest competitor.

Ratings for most attributes held steady, but marks for freshness, premium quality and reliability of taste, texture and appearance were lower than the previous year. That said, these attributes are still ranked considerably higher for California avocados than for the nearest competitor.

PREMIUM RATING

California Avocados are still perceived as the most premium, but the rating declined since last year.



Base: Aware of growing region 2017 CA (n=845), HI (n=160), New Zealand (n=102), FL (n=267), Peru (n=182), MX (n=768), China (n=54), Chile (n=229)
 Q13a. Please rate how premium you feel avocados are from each growing region.

Consumers still perceive California avocados as the most premium, but this year the rating declined by a few points.

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 Commission Weekly Volume Summary (Pounds)

	Week Ending 1/14/2018	Season-to-Date (since 11/01/2017)	2018 Year to Date
Hass	857,407	2,435,523	1,785,535
Lamb	0	0	0
Other (Greens)	69,003	389,286	103,407
California Total	926,410	2,824,809	1,888,942
Florida	0	272,525	40,370
Chile	402,716	11,048,395	922,144
Mexico	51,478,544	446,872,220	95,729,456
Peru	0	0	0
Other (Imports)	0	10,140,000	800,000
Import Total	51,881,260	468,060,615	97,451,600
USA Total	52,807,670	471,157,949	99,380,912

Sources:

California = CAC (AMRIC)

Florida = Florida Avocado Admin Committee

Chile = Comite de Paltas, Chile

Mexico = APEAM

Peru = ProHass

Other Imports = USDA AMS website

California Avocado Society Weekly Newslines* Avocado Prices – January 10, 2018

	Organic #1	Conventional #1	Conventional #1
California Hass	(Field Price Per Lb)	(Field Price Per Lb)	(Carton Price)
#32's	\$1.60-\$1.68	\$1.44-\$1.60	\$41.25-\$45.25
36's	\$1.60-\$1.68	\$1.44-\$1.60	\$41.25-\$45.25
40's	\$1.60-\$1.68	\$1.42-\$1.56	\$40.75-\$44.25
48's	\$1.68-\$1.76	\$1.39-\$1.52	\$40.00-\$43.25
60's	\$1.45-\$1.54	\$1.25-\$1.38	\$36.50-\$39.75
70's	Insufficient Volume to Quote		
84's			
*To subscribe to the Weekly Newslines, please contact the California Avocado Society at (949) 940-8869 or www.CaliforniaAvocadoSociety.org .			

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

Summary- The MJO Cycle will be in its inactive phase until about 20-22nd. During the inactive phase, there will be support for more upper high pressure near the coast and into central California and S California, along with above normal temperatures. As the MJO becomes more active, we will see more of a normal increase in frontal passage through California, and at least a short period of seasonable rainfall during the last 9 days or so of January.

Support continues in the mid-latitude sea surface temperature anomaly (SSTA) field W of California for troughing at 140-145W, extending NE into Oregon-Washington coast and at times into N and northcentral California.

The *El Niño* Southern Oscillation (ENSO) continues in the cool (*La Niña*) phase. This leads to decreased energy in the subtropical westerlies, resulting in erratically moving cutoff lows near SOCAL and W Mexico.

For S California, warm sea surface temperatures are present to the west and southwest, but the *La Niña* pattern tends to discourage development of subtropical westerlies. Occasional lows and troughs develop in SOCAL as fronts move through central California.

In the Near Term – Jan. 19 – Feb. 1... In the southern California avocado growing areas, from San Luis Obispo County to San Diego County, we still have risk of warm and dry offshore flow with locally cold nights after mild or warm days. Best chances for rain will be on Jan 19th, 23-24th and 28-29th. A change to colder weather occurs from Jan 28th onward.

Summary – Feb. 2-14... In the southern California avocado growing areas, from San Luis Obispo south, rains will be mostly occurring in N California and the SierraNV. However, a cutoff low is always possible in such an erratic pattern, with some cold showers and low snow levels. Frosts and freezes will tend to be more frequent this period.

Seasonal Outlook / *La Niña* Update...Feb 15 – April 15... Latest solutions suggest continued cold and showery with low snow levels in the SierraNV during Feb, while coastal and valley areas are drier than normal from mid Feb onward.

Rains resume in March with some heavy rains possible in NW and central California coastal mountains, and N and central Sierra, with heavy snow in the central SierraNV and near Tahoe during March. Rainy and cold conditions possibly reach into Ventura and Santa Barbara Co's.

In central California, the SierraNV has a better than even chance for above normal rain and snow, from about Placer Co to Madera Co in Feb, and across the entire Sierra in March. There is a chance for some frosts in the first week or so of April in coastal valleys, (Salinas/Pajaro/San Benito Valleys, Edna Valley, followed by a shift to warmer and drier than normal during April 8-15th.

For S California, there is support for a few cold Santa Anas in Feb, and accompanying wetbulb freezes. The first part of Feb is cold and mostly drier than normal in S California. The ensemble (NMME) model suggests more showers in the first half of March 2018 for the southern half of California. In April, SOCAL appears to turn warmer and drier than normal after 10th.

...Alan Fox, Fox Weather LLC...