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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>

No events are scheduled for January 4, 2021 through January 15, 2021.

Winter 2020 Issue of From the Grove Available Online

The [Winter 2020 issue of From the Grove](#) is now available on the California avocado growers website. The latest issue provides a wide range of articles that examine the unprecedented challenges of the past year and look ahead to the opportunities of the 2021 season.

Highlights from the issue include:

- CAC President Tom Bellamore examines FOB price data, recent tracking research and the marketing team's "Dashboard" report as he [discusses the success of the Commission's brand-building strategy despite a challenging year](#)
- [CAC Chairman Rob Grether's inaugural column reflects on the four pillars of the Commission that fill him with confidence for the future](#) — Commission staff, marketing efforts, board members and California avocado growers.
- Results from the [2020 CAC General Election](#) and the election of new CAC Executive Committee members
- CAC Industry Affairs Director April Aymami discusses the [reduced 2020-21 assessment rate and provides highlights from the Commission's business plan and budget](#)
- Profiles of the [Commission's new four-person Executive Committee](#)
- Insights from [The Economic Impact of Avocado Growers and Handlers in the State of California](#) report showcasing California avocado growers' state-wide impact on economic output, labor income, jobs and indirect business taxes



- CAC Vice President of Industry Affairs Ken Melban outlines the [Commission's consideration of a Section 201 investigation](#)
- A [summary of the Commission's advocacy efforts on behalf of California avocado growers](#), including a push for including growers in the second round of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act and negotiations that led to permanent reduced agricultural water rates in San Diego County
- A high-level review of the [Commission's outstanding marketing accomplishments](#) in a season marked by a pandemic and social unrest
- A look at the [re-launched CaliforniaAvocado.com consumer website](#) and a review of the [Commission's participation in virtual trade shows](#)
- Highlights from the [Commission's blogger advocate and influencers program](#) and the newly-launched [California avocado online merchandise shop](#)
- A [profile of California avocado grower Chris Sayer](#) and his Saticoy- and Santa Paula- based ranches
- Dr. Tim Spann walks growers through the [steps they can take this winter to prepare their avocado groves for the 2021 season](#), from irrigation and fertilization to harvesting and pruning
- A high-level summary of [Dr. Patricia Manosalva's rootstock breeding and organic disease management projects](#)
- Findings from Dr. Mark Hoddle's research concerning [big avocado seed weevil integrated pest management](#)
- [Insights from California avocado handlers](#) concerning the potential and challenges of the 2021 season

2020-2021 California Avocado Release Dates Available

The California Department of Food and Agriculture's Avocado Inspection Program has announced the avocado release dates for the 2020/2021 season. The [CDFA's official announcement](#) can be found in the right-hand navigation.

For additional information regarding avocado maturity release dates, visit the [Maturity Release Dates page on the California avocado grower website](#), or contact AIP at 760.743.4712.

California Weed Science Society Hosts Virtual Annual Conference

The [California Weed Science Society](#) will host a virtual conference that allows interested parties to engage in continuing education opportunities from January 25 – February 26, 2021. A total of 13 hours of current and relevant presentations and CEU credits are available at a reduced registration cost.

The online courses will include the following topic sessions that may be of interest to California avocado growers:

- Laws and regulations — includes presentations concerning pesticide research authorization, common pesticide use violations, respiratory protection, safe pesticide storage/transport and disposal, chemical resistant glove selection
- Weed school: adjuvants update — covers a range of topics concerning the use and application of adjuvants, the importance of water quality on herbicidal efficacy and minimizing herbicide drift with surfactants
- Forestry, range and natural areas sessions — including a presentation on prescribed fires
- Tree and vine session — includes a session on herbicide resistance, weed management in avocados and grower application considerations on tough orchard weed species

- Aquatics session — includes a session concerning the mitigation of groundwater contamination
- Roadsites, utilities and industrial sites session — includes two wildfire management sessions

A complete [CWSS conference program and agenda can be found online](#). [Registration for the CWSS annual conference](#) is now available.

Marketing Dashboard Reports on Key Performance Indicators for 2020-21

The Commission’s Year-End Dashboard report showcases the marketing team’s fiscal year achievements via a series of key performance indicators. It was presented to the California Avocado Board of Directors at their November meeting and the following are report highlights.

The new “the best avocados have California in them” advertising campaign combined with other marketing activities led to big gains in unaided and aided brand awareness and rebounds in consumer perceptions of the premium fruit. The Dashboard Report showed that the Commission garnered nearly 290 million consumer media impressions via its online, social media and offline advertising efforts, including:

- Outdoor advertising with billboards in Los Angeles and San Diego, as well as a BART train wrap in the Bay Area generated more than 9 million impressions
- Audio advertising on the digital Spotify and Pandora music channels secured 2.8 million video views and 32 million impressions
- Digital brand advertising resulted in 153 million impressions and 89 million video views
- Instagram influencers via Social Native showcased California avocado inspired dishes paired with their own stunning photography
- Social-retail advertising was hyper-targeted for participating retailers and included store location data to direct consumers to grocery stores with California avocados (secured 9.3 million video views)
- Season-long advertising across top social platforms earned 5.5 million engagements and 24 million impressions

As the pandemic spread across the nation, the lifestyles of Americans began to noticeably shift due to stay-at-home orders and restrictions placed on retailers and restaurants. The Commission successfully transitioned its media plans to engage with consumers where they were — at home. Hulu, a digital television platform, emerged as the Commission’s best performing media site. YouTube was a standout performer with a 60% increase in subscribers and 11.1 million video views, a 270% increase versus the prior year.

CAC consumer public relations activities in 2020 garnered 956.4 million impressions from media coverage secured with print, broadcast and online media outlets as well as retailer communications. The Commission did alter many of its public relations plans in light of stay-at-home orders, pivoting from in-person events to safe, contactless media events that created momentum during the peak season. The PR team hosted various virtual media dinners in Los Angeles, Portland, Sacramento and Seattle for California Avocado Month and its Summer at Home program. The Blogger Advocate program continued, yielding more than 38 million impressions.

While many websites and brands saw steep drops to their unpaid traffic during the pandemic, visits to the Commission’s recipe page grew 36% year over year. As preserving and growing your own foods began trending in the U.S., the “How to Freeze California Avocados” page grew 125% over prior year. Overall, the consumer website had nearly 2.3 million visits, The Scoop blog reported 707,000 visits and visitors spent 5% more time on the site.

Capitalizing on the trust consumers place in retail dietitians and bloggers, the Living Well Brand Advocates program secured 2.2 million impressions. Custom retail programs, including retail dietitian content, garnered 14.2 million digital and traditional media activations.

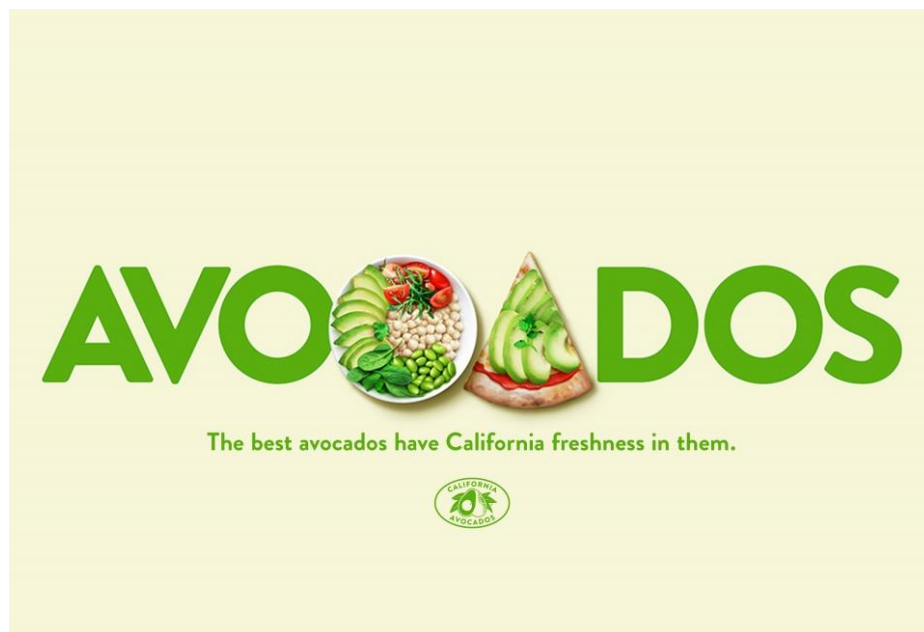
Throughout the year the Commission worked on creating an online California avocado merchandise shop designed to increase brand awareness and engagement, especially with the social media audience during the off-season. This included developing the business model, designing the website and merchandise, sourcing the products and arranging for product fulfillment. Shop.CaliforniaAvocado.com was launched in September and generated a substantial amount of public relations buzz with a total of 45 million impressions. Due to the volatile situation on social media at the time, CAC delayed promoting the site until late November.

On the retail front, CAC encouraged California avocado sales utilizing customized promotions with participating retailers including Albertsons/Vons/Pavilions, Bristol Farms, Costco, Gelson's, H.E.B., Hy-Vee, Kroger, Mollie Stone's, Northwest Grocers, Organically Grown Company (PCC Markets, New Season Market, Newport Stores, Metropolitan Markets), Raley's/Bel Air/Nob Hill, Sam's Club, The Fresh Market and Walmart as well as export promotions in South Korea.

The Commission also assisted targeted foodservice chain partners with facing the challenge of COVID protocols that eliminated or limited dine-in service. The programs encouraged diners to enjoy menu items featuring fresh California avocados. The marketing team secured eight new foodservice promotions at Erik's Delicafe, Ike's Love & Sandwiches, Islands Restaurants, Mixt, Norm's Restaurants, Sharky's Woodfired Mexican Grill, Super Duper Burger and Wahoo's Fish Taco. Del Taco, Flame Broiler, Habit Burger and Rubio's Coastal Grill, all returning chain partners, also ran California avocado promotions during the season. The team contacted 70 chains, building relations for 2020-21 and beyond.

Digital and print advertising in the retail trade sector resulted in nearly 28.7 million impressions and an additional 2.4 million in the foodservice sector. Retail PR secured 9.9 million positive impressions, with foodservice impressions at 4.9 million, a 700% plus improvement upon the program goal.

Despite challenges presented by a pandemic and social unrest the Commission successfully engaged with consumers by sharing information and messaging that was relevant and sensitive to their changing needs and circumstances. In a similar fashion, CAC adapted its customer promotions to help support retail and foodservice partners during a tumultuous time while simultaneously keeping California avocados top of mind throughout the season.



The new consumer advertising campaign "the best avocados have California in them" featured a variety of ads and was extended to fit trade advertising as well.

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 Newsline* Avocado Prices – December 29, 2020

	Conventional #1	Organic #1
California Hass	(Field Price Per Lb)	(Field Price Per Lb)
#32's		
36's		
40's		
48's	Insufficient Volume to Quote	
60's		
70's		
84's		

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

California Avocado Commission Weekly Volume Summary (Pounds)

	Week Ending 12/27/2020	Season-to-Date (since 11/01/2020)	2020 Year to Date
Hass	0	6,334,616	364,943,922
Lamb	0	0	11,169,186
Other (Greens)	0	29,366	1,628,786
California Total	0	6,363,982	377,741,894
Florida	70,675	3,903,240	32,349,625
Chile	0	0	2,445,132
Mexico	44,512,484	388,845,218	2,200,327,091
Peru	0	0	184,299,619
Other (Imports)	830,000	7,700,000	47,490,000
Import Total	45,342,484	396,545,218	2,434,561,842
USA Total	45,413,159	406,812,440	2,844,653,361

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

As we reported in the last GreenSheet the 2021 pre-season California crop estimate, compiled using the results of handler surveys completed in early-December, is 317 million pounds (all varieties). The pre-season estimate of 317 million pounds breaks down as follows:

- Hass - 305 million pounds
- Lamb - 9 million pounds
- Gem – 2 million pounds
- Other - 1 million pounds

Looking at the first quarter of 2021, weekly projections indicate modest harvest in the first part of the year, with only 11-13 percent expected to go to market through week ending 3/28/21, and the majority of that volume not projected to be harvested until March. As seen in the table below, the handler forecast projects about two percent more fruit will be harvested in the first quarter versus the 4-year average projections. It is important to keep in mind that these projections are nearing a month old and current market conditions will likely dictate how much of the California crop will actually be harvested in the early part of the year. CAC will continue discussions with industry members and update harvest projections after the Big Game in February, however as growers prepare for the start of the season, the Commission recommends that growers communicate with their handlers and grove managers on a regular basis to plan their harvest strategy.

2021 California Crop Weekly Harvest Projection 4-Year Historical vs. AMRIC Handler Forecast All Varieties		
Week Ending	4-Year Historical Forecast	AMRIC Handler Forecast
		Dec 2020 Update
10-Jan	69,000	56,000
17-Jan	434,000	361,900
24-Jan	965,400	793,400
31-Jan	1,926,800	1,566,000
7-Feb	2,202,100	2,567,600
14-Feb	1,601,200	1,878,300
21-Feb	2,346,000	2,757,000
28-Feb	3,998,900	4,696,500
7-Mar	5,414,600	6,751,600
14-Mar	5,832,100	7,274,700
21-Mar	5,812,600	7,249,900
28-Mar	4,253,400	5,307,200
1st QTR SubTotal	34,856,100	41,260,100

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

(January 1 – January 23)

Summary- A *La Niña* pattern is expected to persist through Jan 2021. It continues in February, although a little weaker. For California, this argues for drier than normal in the central and south portions, and wetter than normal in N California from late Jan - Feb. Heaviest rainfall will tend to focus Mendocino County north, and in the Pacific Northwest states. Occasionally, zonal flow conditions (wet west flow) periods occur, and produce rains into Central and Southern California, Nevada and Arizona.

Activity of Fronts - We will see more frequent frontal passages into northern California, Oregon and Washington with rains, and a tendency for higher than normal snow levels, while dry and warm periods persist or recur in Southern California. Despite the tendency for warm dry upper high pressure, there is a chance for a few arctic surges to develop, with the usual frost/freeze events into S California and San Joaquin Valley. These are most likely in mid to late Jan and Feb.

La Niñas and Precipitation Trend – *La Niñas* produce the best support environment for atmospheric rivers into northern California and Oregon, with main focus into coastal areas of the Pacific Northwest. The northern Rockies and Great Basin also see above normal precipitation, but with persistently high snow levels for N and Central California (Sierras). Although more seasonable conditions for rain develop in NW California, the long term seasonal trend for Southern California will tend to be drier than normal. As dry cold fronts come through, there is risk of cold Santa Anas, with damaging winds. In Southern California, *La Niñas* tend to have long fire seasons, and intermittent recurrence of fire conditions during the winter months (Jan, Feb).

Current Most Likely Precipitation Dates (from our CFSDaily product out 30 days): Showers Dec 31. Wet on Jan 2. Rains Jan 3. Periods of rain Jan 4, 5-7, 8, . Rains Jan 16-17. Rainy Jan 21-23, and 28.

In S California - Most Likely Precipitation Dates: Jan 4, 5-7, 8, 15-17, and 23-25.

SOCAL Santa Anas and Freezes - The main issue for SOCAL is the recurrent downslope/offshore wind events of Santa Anas. January continues to look significantly dry. With that dryness often occurs Santa Ana winds. The cold Santa Anas of winter often associate with strong damaging winds and cold events. Freezes and wetbulb freezes (wetbulb temperature below 32, often occur in cold Santa Ana events. Hard freezes (temperature 29 or lower) can occur on dry clear nights if wind speeds decrease to calm in valley areas overnight.

The NORCAL Coast Precipitation - (Mendocino County north) and Cascades from Mt Lassen northward have a good chance for below normal precipitation in January. February appears to have above normal precipitation for NW California, and otherwise near normal precipitation for northcentral and remainder of N California. Temperatures also appear near or above normal for the most part.

La Niña seasons are not favorable for subtropical jet stream formation, or significant rains into SOCAL. However, this winter, the anomalously warm SSTs continuing to the west of California and out into the central Pacific may contribute additional support for upper high pressure to persist across central and southern California in Feb.

The listing of dates normally included for hot and cold spells, and precipitation are based on our CFSDaily and CFSDailyAI forecast products, and present generally expected trends in precipitation (both products) and temperature (CFSDailyAI) to 4km. Our system gives some consideration of terrain and coastal influence. We consider the CFSv2 as one of the better ways to represent basic weather down in the sub-monthly time scale beyond the 15 day GFS or monthly maps from CFSv2 or NMME.

Southern California Deserts Outlook for Jan 1-30, 2021: Mostly warmer and drier than normal but with the usual risk of frost and cold periods. About normal occurrence of rains, although precipitation amounts may return to below normal.

A cold, windy showery period occurs during the first week of Jan. Otherwise, Jan 23-26 appear to be the best dates for showers and gusty winds, with cold weather in the southern and eastern Deserts.

*****Looking Ahead – Long Range Outlook Feb 1-Mar 31 with Comments for Apr-June*****

Showers Jan 23-26. Colder than normal 23-26 Jan in particular, with higher than normal incidence of freezes and frost in SOCAL during Feb and Mar 2021, both in southern and eastern deserts as well as SOCAL avocado/citrus areas.

...Jan 23-Feb 28, 2021 Highlights:...

A well defined *La Niña* is currently indicated for the early spring period. For precipitation in California this is unfavorable news. With colder than normal sea surface along the equator, the energy available to drive the westerlies in the central and eastern N Pacific will tend to continue well below normal. This supports predominantly weak westerlies in the southern storm track off southcentral and S California through this normally active period for late winter and early spring 2021. Continued seasonably wet or possibly above normal precipitation in Pacific Northwest states (Washington, Oregon and Idaho), and below normal precipitation, i.e. warmer and drier than normal in California. With the dry fall, this could be one of the driest Nov – Feb seasons we have seen in a long time. The period of late January through February.

Per the latest CFSDaily 45 day forecast product, rains are currently indicated by the model, but amounts are persistently small.

This pattern also argues for recurrent Santa Ana wind events the last week of Jan and early Feb. We will hang out a little hope for some rains in the Feb 10-18 time frame, which is normal, but the rains may turn out to be spotty and light, according to current guidance.

For Feb-Mar 2021, NMME guidance suggests: cooler than normal at the NORCAL coast with recurrent dry N wind events. Drier than normal conditions are indicated by CFSv2 for Feb. The statistically wet periods of Feb are 8-12 , 13-18 , and 26-28 – 4 Mar.

Feb 23-Mar 23...the pattern is basically unchanged. Strong *La Niña* conditions persist along the equatorial central and east Pacific, and below normal energy to drive the southern branch of the westerlies again.

For SOCAL in Feb, due to La Nina, it may be difficult to realize precipitation approaching normal. There is no definable trend, other than below normal precipitation at this time.

April-May-June 2021... continue drier than normal in the current CFSv2 model simulation. Under these conditions, we would suggest an early start to the 2021 fire season. In fact, the North American Multi-Model Ensemble shows above normal sea surface temperatures in April-June in the midlatitude eastern N Pacific, and associated drier and warmer than normal conditions for May-June. June currently looks unusually warm with a warm anomaly for surface temperature in N California forest areas at the start of fire season.

Alan Fox...Fox Weather, LLC

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