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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>

Farm Service Agency Office Hours to Assist Growers Affected by Wildfires and Mudslides (Additional Dates Recently Added)

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.](#)

March 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29

March 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

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

Pine Tree Ranch Field Day: Focus on Food Safety

Beginning in 2019, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), acting as enforcement agents for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, will commence random farm compliance inspections. To help California avocado growers prepare for these random inspections, the California Avocado Commission is holding a field day at our Pine Tree Ranch demonstration grove to provide growers an understanding on Produce Safety Rule implementation requirements. [More information available here.](#)

March 7

March 7

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Pine Tree Ranch, 19455 E. Telegraph Road, Santa Paula, CA

AgSafe Labor Laws and Regulations Workshop

AgSafe will host a series of daylong workshops concerning agricultural laws and regulations. The workshops will be offered in both English and Spanish. Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

March 14

March 14

Time: 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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

Pesticide Safety Instructor Training Workshop

The UC IPM and AgSafe are offering a series of Pesticide Safety Instruction Training workshops designed for ag supervisors, growers, farm labor contractors, safety managers and safety trainers. Those who complete this training will become qualified to provide pesticide safety training to fieldworkers and pesticide handlers. Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

March 20

March 20

Time: 7:45 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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

Ventura County Spray Safe Seminar

Members of the California avocado industry interested in learning more about preventing pesticide-exposure incidents are encouraged to attend the free Ventura County Spray Safe event. Registration required. [More information available here.](#)

March 20

March 20

Time: 7:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Location: Agriculture Building (Santa Cruz Hall), Ventura County Fairgrounds, 10 West Harbor Boulevard, Ventura, CA

California Avocado Commission 2018 Annual Meeting

The meetings will cover important updates concerning the Commission and the avocado industry, and input from industry stakeholders is highly encouraged. No RSVPs are required. [More information available here.](#)

March 20, 21 & 22

March 20

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Location: South Coast Winery, 34843 Rancho California Road, Temecula, CA

March 21

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Location: Ventura Museum, 100 East Main Street, Ventura, CA

March 22

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

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

AB 450 – What it Means to Your Operations

The following article is courtesy of the [Saqui Law Group](#).

As the Saqui Law Group has reported [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#), AB 450, the “Immigrant Worker Protection Act,” changes how employers are to deal with audits by immigration enforcement agents. Below, you’ll find a more detailed breakdown on notices that must be posted after having received a valid Notice of Inspection (“[NOI](#)”). This information was put together by Rob Roy of the Ventura County Agricultural Association, with whom the Saqui Law Group works closely.

If you are presented with a valid NOI, you must post a notice at the worksite in language the employer normally uses to communicate employment-related information to employees, within seventy-two (72) hours of receiving a NOI, communicating the following information to employees:

- The Immigration Agency, identified by name, has issued a NOI (a copy of which must also be posted also be posted at the same time) and will conduct inspections of I-9 Forms or other employment records.
- The date that the employer received the NOI.
- The “nature of the inspection” to the extent known.
- A copy of the NOI of I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification forms for the inspection to be conducted.
- Provide written notice to the employee’s authorized representative (usually a collective bargaining representative or union), if any, within seventy-two (72) hours of the Immigration Agency’s issuance of a NOI.
- Provide, upon reasonable request, affected employees with a copy of the NOI of I-9 employment eligibility verification forms.

Under AB 450, once the Immigration Agency notifies your business of the deficiencies, you are required to provide a second notice to all “affected employees” concerning the deficiencies noted. The Notice must relate to the affected employee only and shall be delivered by hand at the workplace if possible and, if hand-delivery is not possible, by mail and email, if the email address of the employee is known, and to the employees authorized representative, if any. According to AB 450, personalized notification to the affected employee must contain the following information:

- A description of any and all deficiencies or other items identified in the written immigration inspection results notice related to the affected employee.
- The time period for correcting any potential deficiencies identified by the Immigration Agency.
- The time and date with any meeting with employer to correct any identified deficiencies.
- Notice that the employee has a right to representation during any meeting schedule with the employer.

An “affected employee” is defined as “an employee identified by the Immigration Agency inspection results to be an employee who may lack work authorization, or an employee whose work authorization documents have been identified by the Immigration Agency inspection to have deficiencies.”

An employer who fails to provide the above notices as required by AB 450 may be subject to a civil penalty of \$2,000 up to \$5,000 for a first violation and \$5,000 up to \$10,000 for each subsequent violation. It is not clear from the statute as to whether this applies to a single audit or for each employee who has not received proper notification under the statute.

The Saqui Law Group is also attaching sample [employee notification documents](#) prepared by Mr. Roy as well as a blank version of a [federal search warrant](#). Additionally, to hear Michael Saqui discuss what to do when ICE shows up, check out the most recent episode of the Saqui Law Group podcast [here](#).

Farm Bureau Article Discusses the Role of Avocado Groves in Fighting Fires

Ag Alert, the weekly newspaper of the California Farm Bureau Federation, recently published a [commentary](#) by John Krist, chief executive officer of the Farm Bureau of Ventura County, concerning the role avocado groves and orchards played during the Thomas Fire. Krist, who toured fire-damaged California avocado groves with the California Avocado Commission and California Secretary of Agriculture Karen Ross thanked the “skilled and brave firefighters” who were

willing to endanger themselves while protecting others. He then went on to note there was an additional reason specific communities avoided disaster: “a wide buffer of fire-resistant, irrigated avocado and citrus orchards.”

In his piece, Krist acknowledges the efforts of farm employees, managers and owners whose battles to save their livelihood in turn saved residential neighborhoods — detailing their efforts: cutting firebreaks, manning water hoses, damping out spot fires. While neighborhoods abutting orchards and groves fared well during the Thomas Fire, those near brush-covered hillsides did not. He ends by encouraging his readers to “thank a farmworker [and] thank a farmer.”

You can read the entire article [online](#).

Reminder - Pine Tree Ranch Field Day: Focus on Food Safety

The Produce Safety Rule of the Food Safety Modernization Act became effective on January 26, 2018 for farms that produce more than \$500,000 in average annual produce sales during the previous three-year period. All remaining farms will be phased in over the next two years (details below). Beginning in 2019, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), acting as enforcement agents for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, will commence random farm compliance inspections.

To help California avocado growers prepare for these random inspections, the California Avocado Commission is holding a field day at our Pine Tree Ranch demonstration grove, located at 19455 E. Telegraph Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060, on Wednesday, March 7, 2018 from 9:00 am – 11:00 am, to provide growers an understanding on Produce Safety Rule implementation requirements. CDFA staff will be present and walk growers through an On-Farm Readiness Review at Pine Tree Ranch so you know what to expect if your operation is selected for inspection.

Deadlines for all producers are as follows:

- January 26, 2020 deadline for very small businesses — more than \$25,000 but no more than \$250,000 in average annual produce sales during the previous three-year period
- January 26, 2019 deadline for small businesses — more than \$250,000 but no more than \$500,000 in average annual produce sales during the previous three-year period
- January 26, 2018 deadline for all other farms

Farm Service Agency Opens Temporary Santa Paula Office for Those Affected by Fire and Mudslides (Additional Dates Recently Added)

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. Due to demand, FSA will extend satellite office dates through the month of March at the Ventura Ag Commissioner Office.

Growers are encouraged to schedule an appointment by calling 805.928.9269 ext. 2, 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, March 1, 2018 10:00am - 2:00pm
- Thursday, March 8, 2018 10:00am - 2:00pm
- Thursday, March 15, 2018 10:00am - 2:00pm

- Thursday, March 22, 2018 10:00am - 2:00pm
- Thursday, March 29, 2018 10:00am - 2:00pm

Additional dates and hours will be added as needed.

Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Program Applications Now Available

San Diego County's agricultural conservation program — known as the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Program — compensates property owners for placing a perpetual easement on their property that limits future uses to agriculture. The program is designed to ensure that agricultural land is preserved.

PACE eligibility requirements are as follows:

- Property must have been actively farmed and/or ranched for a minimum of two years prior
- Property must have realized a density reduction as a result of the General Plan adopted by the Board on August 3, 2011
- Property must have had the ability to subdivide under the previous General Plan prior to August 3, 2011

For more information, view the [PACE Fact Sheet](#) and [PACE Guidelines](#).

Applications for the PACE program are available [online](#) and during business hours at the Planning and Development Services office located at 5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310, San Diego. Completed forms should be emailed to AgConservation@sdcounty.ca.gov.

The deadline for PACE applications is April 27, 2018.

Reminder - Fire Recovery Best Management Practices Program

The Ventura County Resource Conservation District (VCRCD) was awarded approximately \$152,000 in grant funding through the State Water Resources Control Board to purchase materials for erosion control purposes on fire-impacted lands within Ventura County. Landowners impacted by the Thomas Fire are able to apply for the materials they need to help mitigate fire-based erosion on their properties.

Materials include, but are not limited to:

- Silt fencing
- Jute netting
- Sandbags
- Filtrexx Siltsoxx
- Livestock fencing
- Native plants
- Seed
- Straw wattles
- Alternative water supplies (livestock)

The last day to apply for erosion control materials is March 19, 2018.

For more information, or to apply for the program, [click here](#).

Hit the Beach and Enjoy California Avocados at the Popup on the Pier Event

Fans of Smorgasburg LA, the year-round Sunday market in Downtown Los Angeles that features food from some of the city's most exciting vendors, will have the opportunity to taste the best of Smorgasburg LA on Westside turf — at the Santa Monica Pier. The second annual Popup on the Pier event will include more than 70 food vendors, as well as unique shopping opportunities

While at the pier, fans of California avocados can satisfy their cravings with a wide variety of California avocado treats ranging from crisp salads and warm dumplings to refreshing smoothies and lattes. The California Avocado Commission's (CAC) partner vendors will serve:

- *Raclette with California Avocado* at Cheezus
- *California Avocado Stuffed Scallion Pancake* at Chinese Laundry
- *Dukkah Crusted California Avocado Paratha Taco* at Goa Taco
- *Iced California Avocado Matcha Latte* at Offshore Tea
- *Nashville Hot Fried California Avocado* at Rooster Republic
- *California Avocado Spicy Crab Salad* at Sticky Rice on Wheels
- *Sweet Plantain Canoe with California Avocado Ceviche* at The Ricans
- *Serio Smoothie with California Avocado* at Todo Verde
- *California Avocado Halo Halo* at Wanderlust
- *California Avocado Mandu* at Workaholic

As a sponsor of the event, the Commission will have the opportunity to connect with highly influential super foodies in a beautiful location and showcase fresh California avocado dishes that demonstrate the versatility of the fruit. The Commission's custom branded photo booth also will give fans the chance to capture some of their favorite beachside moments.

Throughout the event, Tastemade will capture photos and footage of fans and the custom California avocado dishes. The footage will be used in videos and shared with California avocado fans on Tastemade's Facebook and Instagram social media channels.

California avocado growers are encouraged to attend Popup on the Pier to enjoy the sunshine, surf and their favorite Golden State fruit. The event will take place on March 10 from 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. in the area just east of Pacific Park, behind the carousel and Rusty's Surf Ranch. There is no charge for admission to this family-friendly event; food will be for sale throughout the venue.



California avocado grower Randy Axell tries out one of CAC's photo booth props.

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)

CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION WEEKLY VOLUME SUMMARY (POUNDS)

| | Week Ending 2/25/2018 | Season-to-Date (since 11/01/2017) | 2018 Year to Date |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Hass | 5,192,699 | 23,671,159 | 23,021,172 |
| Lamb | 0 | 6,754 | 6,754 |
| Other (Greens) | 25,795 | 775,891 | 490,012 |
| California Total | 5,218,494 | 24,453,804 | 23,517,938 |
| Florida | 12,265 | 356,895 | 124,740 |
| Chile | 0 | 11,638,216 | 1,511,965 |
| Mexico | 47,986,558 | 716,676,771 | 365,534,007 |
| Peru | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other (Imports) | 720,000 | 18,620,000 | 9,280,000 |
| Import Total | 48,706,558 | 746,934,987 | 376,325,972 |
| USA Total | 53,937,317 | 771,745,686 | 399,968,650 |

Sources:

California = CAC (AMRIC)

Florida = Florida Avocado Admin Committee

Chile = Comité de Paltas, Chile

Mexico = APEAM

Peru = ProHass

Other Imports = USDA AMS website

| | Organic #1 | Conventional #1 | Conventional #1 |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| California Hass | (Field Price Per Lb) | (Field Price Per Lb) | (Carton Price) |
| #32's | \$1.52-\$1.62 | \$1.24-\$1.38 | \$36.25-\$38.25 |
| 36's | \$1.52-\$1.62 | \$1.24-\$1.38 | \$36.25-\$38.25 |
| 40's | \$1.52-\$1.62 | \$1.24-\$1.38 | \$36.75-\$38.25 |
| 48's | \$1.54-\$1.68 | \$1.24-\$1.36 | \$36.75-\$39.25 |
| 60's | \$1.34-\$1.44 | \$1.02-\$1.10 | \$30.75-\$32.75 |
| 70's | \$1.04-\$1.18 | \$0.66-\$0.82 | \$20.75-\$25.75 |
| 84's | \$0.54-\$0.60 | \$0.46-\$0.54 | \$15.37-\$17.13 |

*To subscribe to the Weekly Newsline, 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 was heading into an inactive phase on Feb 26. This should discourage development of storms and active fronts into California during March 4-10.

Support continues in the mid-latitude Pacific sea surface temperature field, for high pressure just south of the Aleutians, and increased westerlies into the Pacific Northwest coast and N California during the first part of March.

The *El Niño* Southern Oscillation (ENSO) continues in the cool (*La Niña*) phase, but appears to be starting a transition to neutral ENSO conditions. The effect of this is to contribute minimal influence on the subtropical westerlies from the equatorially based ENSO pattern.

In the Near Term – March 1-15... In the southern California avocado growing areas, from San Luis Obispo County to San Diego County, rains are indicated for March 1-3, followed by a drier and warmer days, but cold nights with frosts/freezes about March 5-7. Warmer in general on March 8-9. Another period of rains is suggested by our CFSDailyAI system for March 11-15th with the best chance for rains in San Luis Obispo-Santa Barbara-Ventura Co's.

Summary – March 16-31... In the southern California avocado growing areas, from San Luis Obispo south, there will be some rains about March 16th and 18-19th, then near or a little below normal rainfall for the remainder of March. Temperatures are coldest on the 20-21st when frost/light freezes are possible in Ventura and Santa Barbara Co's cold spots. A significant warmup is indicated for March 25-31 in central and S California.

Seasonal Outlook / La Niña Update...April 1 – May 31... Latest solutions suggest above normal rainfall in NW California during the first part of April. Otherwise, near or a little below normal rainfall is suggested for April, with a turn to above normal temperatures.

Going forward into May, the main issue of concern, that will begin to develop in late April and May is unusually warm conditions in late April, followed by a hot May.

After the first week of April, SOCAL appears to turn warmer and drier than normal.

Warm and dry conditions in May continue onward through most of June according to latest CFSv2 and NMME results. When June is warmer than normal, extremely hot days, hottest of the whole year, are most likely to occur, in the SOCAL deserts due to high solar angle and long days.

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