

Targeted Online Retail Programs Drive Awareness of California Avocado Availability

One of the most common questions the California Avocado Commission (CAC) receives from its online fans is, “Where can I find California avocados?” To answer that question, the Commission has developed an online marketing strategy that increases awareness of the California avocado season and notifies targeted consumers of the availability of California avocados at CAC’s partner retail chains.

Online marketing allows CAC to reach its target consumer with contextually relevant messaging about local availability, and offers several advantages for CAC’s retail partners that encourage increased sales while building account loyalty. The programs can be targeted by specific demographics, interests, locations or other criteria based on the key account’s objectives and strategies. Working with customers where CAC’s target consumer shops is a powerful method of advertising not previously available with other forms of media, and is the sweet spot CAC seeks when developing customized promotions for its retail partners.

In addition, the campaigns are easily monitored and results can be catalogued to measure social media channel lift. Zac Benedict, CAC’s online marketing director, commented on the increasing popularity of online channels that is driving online retailer marketing: “CAC’s retail partners are seeing the value of focusing on online promotions and are eager to get started with customized activations. CAC has received enthusiastic responses from our partners for assisting with advertising to their customers as this communication not only drives sales, but also helps build the retailer’s online audiences.”

To help consumers find fresh California avocados, the Commission has added a new feature to CaliforniaAvocado.com — a store locator that lists partner retail chains carrying California avocados, with links to find their nearest locations. The locator is available now at: CaliforniaAvocado.com/store-locator.

To ensure the Commission’s online retail promotions provide the most value and are reaching consumers in markets where California avocados are available, CAC seeks the input



Digital banners remind shoppers to purchase California avocados during peak season and encourage them to learn why California avocados are the premium choice.

of the retail marketing directors, the CAC Marketing Committee and meets with handlers prior to, during and after the California avocado season. Promotional launch dates are then confirmed by produce merchandising and procurement decision makers. Once the marketing programs are initiated, the Commission communicates with its retail partners throughout the season to tweak the communications and their timing as needed.

Online retail programs have a broad reach — allowing CAC and its retail partners to engage with consumers wherever they are — but the beauty of online marketing is the ability to fine-tune that broad reach and target specific audiences on an ongoing basis. To do so, the Commission reviews a blend of behavioral and location data to reach consumers at the right time. Social media promotions are targeted to a zip code and a three-mile radius around retail locations. The messaging of specific digital promotions appears on the mobile devices of



Costco encouraged its Facebook fans to “Take your avocado toast to the next level with three recipes from California Avocados.”

consumers who have opted for location-based communications targeted to where the consumer is — near the retail location, within the retail location or having left the retail location.

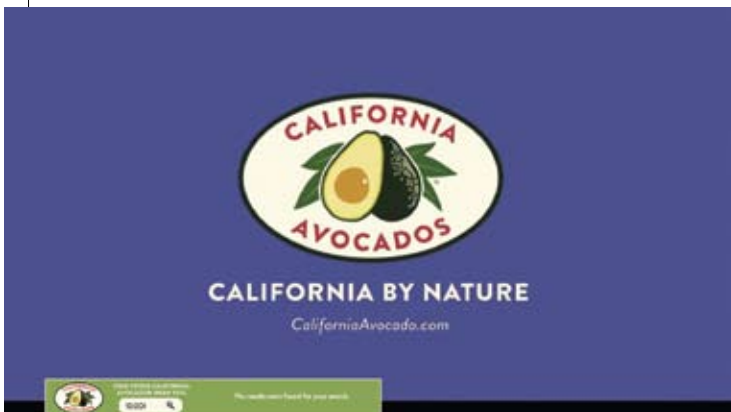
As early as January, and throughout the California avocado season, CAC’s retail partners shared recipes, digital videos with store locator overlays, banners and California avocado nutrition information on their social media platforms to generate excitement about the availability of California avocados. For example, Mollie Stone’s Facebook page provided fans with a variety of California avocado recipes; showcased a video demonstrating how to prepare an *Ahi Poke Bowl with California Avocados* (while reminding fans the fruit is “now in season”); and shared The Scoop’s blog post announcing the new Cali-

fornia avocado serving size.

Retailers crafted Facebook posts that packed a powerful punch — engaging customers by providing them with useful information and seeking their input. With just one playful Facebook post, Ralphs provided fans with a *California Avocado Grilled Lime Chicken* recipe, reminded customers of California avocados’ seasonal availability and asked fans to share their favorite way to eat the fruit. Retailers like Stater Bros. also helped drive traffic to the CaliforniaAvocado.com website

by sharing eye-catching images of a California-avocado dish and then directly linking to the recipe on the Commission’s consumer website.

So far this season, through May, retail partners participating in CAC’s social media programs also included Albertsons, Costco, Gelson’s, Lucky, New Seasons Market, Pavilions, Raley’s, Ralphs, Sam’s Club, Save Mart, Schnucks and Vons. As of the end of May, the California avocado retailer social media initiatives garnered approximately 20 million impressions. 🥑



The Commission provides retail partners with digital videos with store locator overlays that make it easy for consumers to find California avocados at a nearby location.



Digital banners serve a dual purpose — building awareness of the California avocado season and providing a store locator for fans.