

Trade Marketing Team Prepares for California Avocado Season

Retailers and foodservice operators play a critical role serving as the gatekeepers who determine whether their operation will carry California avocados in season, and, if so, how they will market the fruit to drive sales. To that end, each year the California Avocado Commission (CAC) launches a pre-season trade marketing initiative designed to demonstrate the value of carrying the California fruit, manage an account's transition to the California avocado season

and synchronize handler supply, retail promotional calendars and CAC's marketing activities.

To build excitement concerning the upcoming California avocado season, in October CAC's retail and foodservice teams met with key decision makers at the Produce Marketing Association (PMA) Fresh Summit in Atlanta, GA. CAC staff discussed 2016 crop projections, shared research and category sales data and showcased the Commission's 2016 marketing programs.



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The California Avocado Commission's retail and foodservice team demonstrate the value of California avocados while providing promotional support to drive sales of the fruit.



Jan Delyser, CAC vice president of marketing, and CAC RMD David Anderson discuss promotional plans with Walmart's Melissa Heinrich (right) at the PMA Fresh Summit.

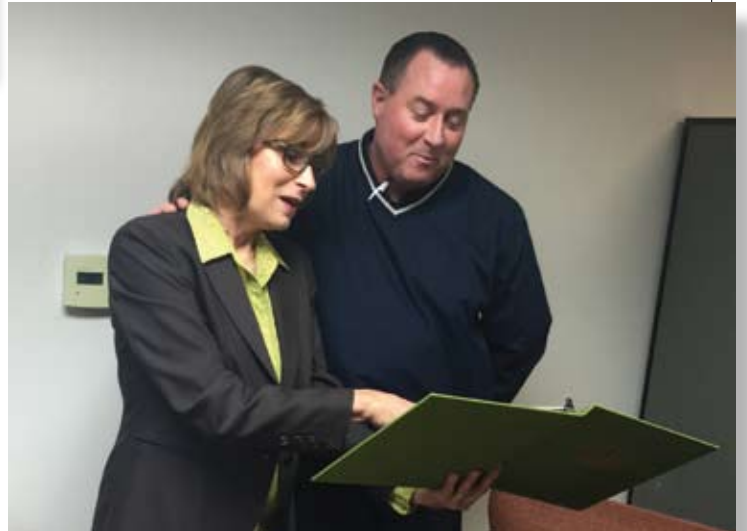
To ensure connectivity between CAC's marketing team, retailers, foodservice operators and handlers, in December 2015 CAC began meeting with handlers in Fallbrook, Temecula, Escondido, Bloomington, Oxnard, Ventura and Santa Paula. Discussions covered retail tiered account prioritization, foodservice account opportunities and an update on the California avocado label usage. To ensure California avocados are available in stores and foodservice locations when they are on promotions, they discussed the timing of account transitions to California avocados and reviewed sales coverage, retailer and regional data.

After the first of the year, the Commission's Retail Marketing Directors (RMDs) and foodservice team began meeting with targeted customers to discuss unique account strategies, promotional planning and execution for the California avocado season. Targeted foodservice operators have been scheduled for unique California avocado menu ideation strategy sessions for the upcoming 2016 season. Commission staff will continue to meet with specific customers to discuss performance-tracking data and adjust marketing and promotional strategies as needed.

In February, the Commission released one of its most important trade marketing tools – the Marketing Program Book. RMDs utilize this fact-filled book to clearly demonstrate to retailers the value of merchandising California avocados. The book also features a portfolio of the Commission's 2016 California avocado season marketing support. 🥑



Peggy McCormick and Chef Dave Wooley present California avocado menu ideas to Cheddars.



Connie Stukenberg, CAC retail marketing director, reviews data from the Marketing Program Book with John Savidan of Bristol Farms.



CAC's Marketing Program Book (sample page shown) uses data to show retailers the benefits of carrying California avocados in season.