

Blogger Outreach Generates Millions of Impressions

Today, a whole new culinary community exists online fueled by consumers' growing interest in collecting, sharing and discussing recipes. One portion of that community consists of increasingly popular food-focused blogs and the fans who read and share the blog posts. Another portion of that community consists of social media sites — Pinterest, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter — that allow consumers to search for and share their love of particular brands, products and recipes. Together, blogs and social media sites have become today's new "cookbooks." With one tap of a finger, Americans are choosing tonight's dinner, tomorrow's bake sale recipe and this weekend's backyard BBQ side dishes.

Recognizing the potential of this new online culinary community, the California Avocado Commission developed the blogger outreach program to help differentiate California-grown fruit from other avocados in the marketplace and increase awareness and demand for California avocados in season. To harness the power of bloggers' credibility, CAC builds and maintains relationships with key blogger influencers through events, sponsorships, partnerships and product immersion. The Commission educates bloggers about California avocados' premium quality, its spring – fall season and its unique freshness resulting from the fruit being grown close to market. CAC also encourages bloggers to share their love for California avocados and develop their own unique creations with the fruit, which they can then share with their readers.

Events

Events are an effective way to educate bloggers about California avocados while inspiring them to write about the fruit. In 2014, CAC hosted a Grove Tour, allowing influential media and bloggers to gain a better understanding of the distinctive qualities and consistent reliability of California avocados.

During the one-day event, guests had the opportunity to tour an avocado nursery, meet California avocado growers, enjoy a California avocado-centric lunch and visit an avocado packing house. The event was a huge success, garnering 115 tweets, 7 Facebook posts, 24 Instagram posts



and 5 blog posts, which resulted in more than 1.5 million impressions.

In addition, to help promote June as California Avocado Month, CAC partnered with artisan chef Lisa Schroeder to host a media event at her restaurant, Mother's Bistro & Bar. During the event, 15 bloggers were treated to a multi-course dinner that showcased the versatility of California avocados — ranging from an avocado daiquiri and macaroni and cheese to avocado key lime pie. Chef Schroeder also provided California avocado cooking tips and information about the fruit and answered questions from attendees. During the dinner and following the event, 85 social media posts and online stories were secured, resulting in nearly 95,000 impressions.



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Partnerships with Bloggers

In recent years, CAC has built relationships with a number of prominent bloggers and continuously works to engage with them not only on social media, but in person through events and sponsorships. These one-on-one connections contribute to lasting relationships with bloggers who are true fans and ambassadors of California avocados. CAC has partnered with six bloggers, appointing them as ongoing ambassadors for the premium fruit. These bloggers provide monthly posts for CAC's "The Scoop" blog, each featuring new California avocado-centric recipes.

During the season, CAC continues to connect with new bloggers during key time frames, such as California Avocado Month and American Summer Holidays. These influential bloggers receive shipments of California avocados to inspire them to write about, promote and create amazing recipe posts and social media promotion about California avocados. Throughout the season, this outreach generated 18 blog posts, 24 tweets and 11 Instagram posts, resulting in more than 600,000 impressions.

Sponsorships

CAC also is able to reach a wider group of bloggers by

sponsoring conferences and workshops. This year, CAC sponsored Eat Write Retreat — a three-day conference for food bloggers. As part of the sponsorship, CAC hosted a booth during the opening night meet-and-greet, coordinated a California Avocado Toast Challenge and hosted a California avocado-centric dinner at Supper Restaurant, with a special menu developed by chef Mitch Prenskey. CAC representatives also participated in the entire weekend of events, allowing them to create and solidify their relationships with the blogger attendees. The event inspired 128 tweets, 9 Facebook posts, 47 Instagram posts and 12 blog posts, which garnered more than 300,000 impressions.

Additionally, CAC sponsored FitBlogger, a conference for bloggers interested in fitness, wellness, good food and a healthy lifestyle. This was CAC's first foray into outreach with fitness and lifestyle bloggers, and it was a resounding success. During the conference, chef and CAC Registered Dietitian (RD) Ambassador Michelle Dudash led CAC's wellness session, "Cutting Edge Culinary: California Avocados as a Fat Replacer, Flavor and Color Enhancer, and Nutritional Booster." During the conference, CAC hosted a Twitter contest, encouraging attendees to share their favorite ways to enjoy California avocados. Attendees loved the

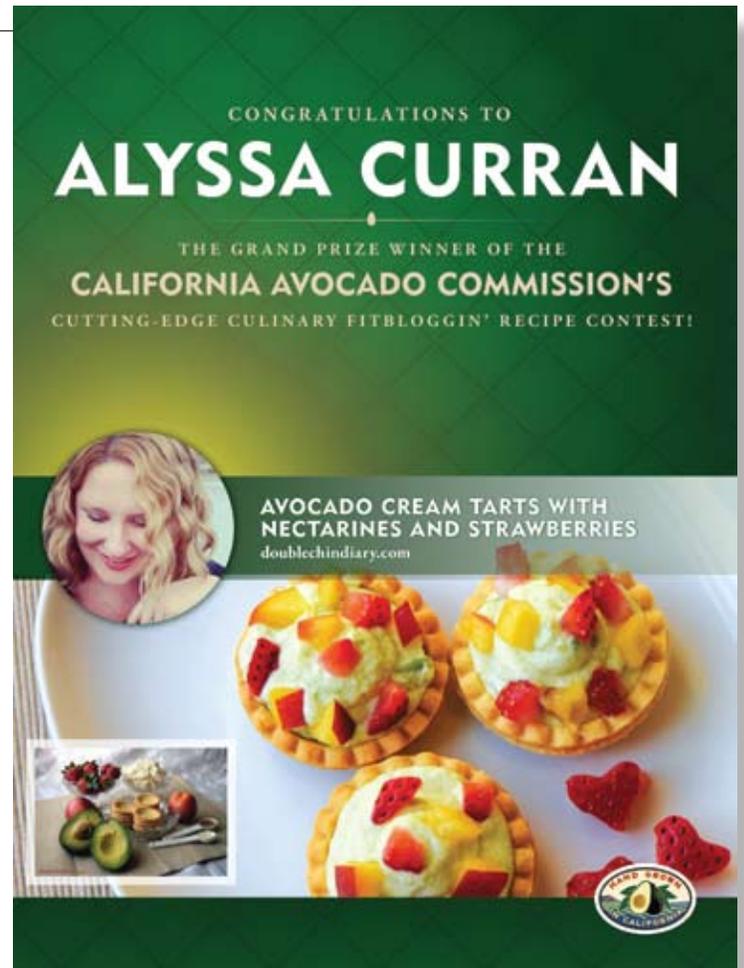
healthy recipes and snacks at the CAC booth. The event garnered 170 social media posts, resulting in nearly 375,000 impressions.

Recipe Contests

With smartphones and tablets, recipes are readily available for consumers at the tap of the screen. So consumers are frequently looking to blogs for recipe inspiration. Understanding the influence bloggers have on consumers' menus, CAC partnered with blogger group The Recipe Redux to conduct a recipe development challenge. Founded by registered dietitians whose recipe-focused blogs emphasize healthy food preparation, The Recipe Redux hosts monthly recipe challenges to inspire healthy eating and a love for food.

Top food and nutrition bloggers from across the country were challenged to develop the perfect summer get-together dish featuring California avocados. Participants also included a post with the recipe on their respective blogs and shared it on their social media channels. CAC provided fresh California avocados to all participants for inspiration. In total, 63 recipes featuring California avocados were submitted. Each was judged on taste, simplicity, dish appearance/photo quality, nutritious attributes and creativity. As a result, new recipes featuring California avocados were created and shared, encouraging the bloggers' followers to recreate these dishes with the fruit and to purchase California avocados. The contest earned a total of 399,446 impressions for California avocados through more than 60 blog posts and more than 150 social media posts.

Lastly, as part of CAC's sponsorship of FitBloggin', CAC activated a "Cutting Edge Culinary Recipe Contest" prior to the conference to secure California avocado-branded content across bloggers' social media channels and to drive



excitement for CAC's wellness session. FitBloggin' attendees were encouraged to submit their favorite California avocado-centric snack recipe(s) for a chance to have their recipe featured during CAC's wellness session with RD Ambassador Michelle Dudash. The winning recipe was California Avocado Cream Tarts with Nectarines and Strawberries developed by blogger Alyssa Curran of Double Chin Diaries.

Results

CAC's blogger outreach program has resulted in positive culinary blogger coverage of California avocados that has reached millions of consumers via blogs, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. CAC has forged relationships with hundreds of bloggers through events, sponsorships and ambassadorships, securing 943 social media posts, reaching more than 5.4 million readers. As this program continues to flourish and social media channels grow and change at a rapid pace, CAC will continue to evaluate and leverage the influence of bloggers to tell positive stories about California avocados. 🥑

