



CAC staff and other industry volunteers before the walk, preparing to hand out produce items to walkers

## City of Hope Food Industry Circle Yields Win-Win-Win Benefits

**T**he Food Industry Circle (FIC) program offers a way for the grocery and produce industries to contribute to the City of Hope, an innovative cancer center focused on rapidly transforming scientific discoveries into better treatments and better prevention strategies for cancer as well as other life-threatening diseases.

Under the FIC program, the California Avocado Commission creates initiatives to drive California avocado demand at retail. This year's program was designed to garner late season retail commitment to California avocados.

The FIC consists of more than 1,100 leading retailers, suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, brokers and commodity boards, including CAC. This group, which is one of the largest industry volunteer pillars of support for the City of Hope, has raised more than \$145 million in support funds while connecting industry members through networking events,

auctions and product partnerships.

"City of Hope is ranked as one of the nation's leading hospitals in cancer research and treatment," states Jan DeLyster, CAC vice president of marketing, "and in addition to providing support for their ongoing innovations, the FIC cements relationships with many of our participating retailer partners and offers promotional opportunities featuring California avocados that generate funds in support of City of Hope research."

CAC's annual FIC Retailer Incentive Program was designed to do just that. During the months of September and October, CAC donated \$5 per store for FIC retailers who featured the *Hand Grown in California* logo or "California avocados" in their weekly ads. These donations, which are made on behalf of the supporting retailer, provide an incentive for key retailers to stay in California avocados during the late season. This program delivered value to the Califor-

nia grower by keeping retailers in California avocados and resulted in funds to the City of Hope.

“We’ve garnered some great ad mentions and placements as a result,” said Connie Stukenberg, CAC retail marketing director for the Southwest. “It’s truly a win-win situation resulting in timely retail promotion of California avocados and contributions to research of catastrophic diseases at the City of Hope.”

More than \$8,100 was donated to City of Hope as part of the FIC Retailer Incentive Program in 2013 because of retailers such as Albertsons, Ralphs, Stater Bros. and Gelson’s featuring and promoting California avocados in September-October. Results are verified through CAC’s third-party ad-tracking service.

Additionally, to support the 2013 Morro Bay Avocado



Sample retailer display (Ralphs) in support of the Morro Bay Avocado Festival FIC Retailer Incentive Program



Stater Bros. weekly ad featuring the Hand Grown in California ad as part of the FIC Retailer Incentive Program in 2013



Albertsons weekly ad as part of the FIC Retailer Incentive Program in 2013

CAC staff attends the walk annually, rain or shine, at the City of Hope’s facilities in Duarte, Calif. The Commission’s efforts go beyond the walk, however, with staff members donating to the City of Hope as well as volunteering to man booths and hand out fruits and vegetables as part of its involvement in “Team Produce,” which is an enthusiastic group of more than 120 Los Angeles-area produce industry employees. Team Produce suppliers and retailers donated about \$92,000 worth of produce, which some CAC staff members assisted in handing out to the walkers. In total in 2013, Team Produce proudly donated more than \$7,500 in support of the walk, with sponsors contributing an additional \$50,000. 🥑

festival, CAC incentivized participating retailers in the region to feature creative displays showcasing California avocados while promoting the upcoming festival. Retailers were offered \$200 per store to participate.

The Walk for Hope event is the City of Hope’s coast-to-coast awareness initiative for women’s cancers. Drawing from individuals and businesses alike, the event not only raises funds for the fight against women’s cancers, it also promotes regular exercise, which can cut cancer risk and help women with these diseases enjoy longer, healthier lives.

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