

2017 Avocado Tracking Study Highlights

For more than 20 years, the California Avocado Commission (CAC) has used consumer tracking studies to measure consumer preferences, attitudes and usage. CAC's 2017 *Avocado Tracking Study* was conducted by an independent research firm, Temra Wald Consulting. In August and September nearly 2,000 adult avocado purchasers responded to CAC's 20-minute online survey, providing valuable information that will inform CAC's 2018 marketing campaign.

Because of the limited crop volume in 2017 and its overwhelming distribution in the West, an augmented sample of respondents from California was utilized to delve into where consumers from the Golden State shopped. The study also measured opinions across the country and is a large enough sample to measure differences by region. The data below reference the measures for CAC's targeted advertising markets (Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco/San Jose, Sacramento, Phoenix, Portland, Seattle, Denver and Salt Lake City). This year the sample included younger millennials ages 18 to 24.

REGION PREFERENCE

California is still the preferred growing region, by a large margin, and Mexico may be leveling off.

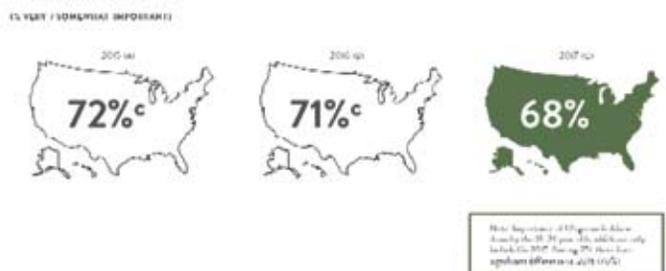


Importance of U.S. Grown Is Highly Important

More than two-thirds of target market avocado shoppers say that it is somewhat or very important for the avocados they buy to be grown in the United States. For shoppers 25 years and older, importance of U.S. grown has remained constant for several years. Consumers 18 to 24 do not consider U.S. grown to be as important as the rest of the sample, deflating the overall rating this year.

IMPORTANCE OF US GROWN

US grown continues to be highly important, but may have plateaued.

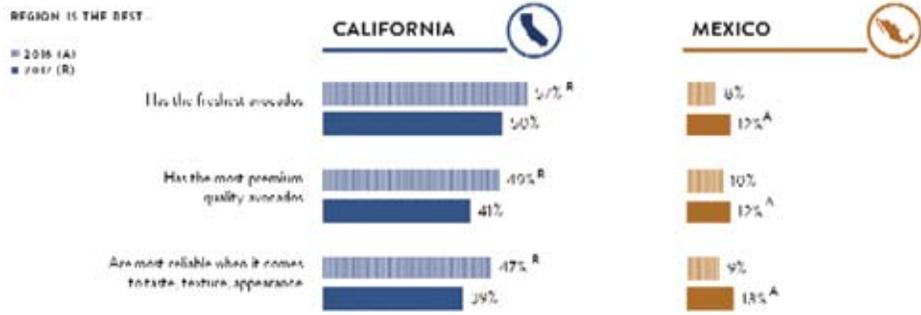


California Still the Preferred Growing Region

In 2017, the Commission's marketing budget was significantly smaller, commensurate with the smaller volume of the crop. Nevertheless, by a large margin California is still consumers' preferred avocado growing region. Shoppers who have no preference remained stable at 13 percent.

PRODUCT PERCEPTIONS

California Avocados continue to stand out as the best. However, their perceived superiority is not as strong as last year.



Added in 2017: Look most appetizing after being cut (CA:85%, MX:14%, All perform the same:8%)

Only significant declines shown for CA. All other increases are comparable to last year.

Base: Avocado eaters in regions 2016 (n=747), 2017 (n=781)
Q21.1 on each phrase below, please choose the region that most describes the phrase.

Summer Consumption of Avocados

Avocado shoppers continue to associate California avocados most with summer and also associate them with American summer holidays. They reported being more likely to serve avocados in the summer in a wide range of dishes, including guacamole, bread/toast, sandwiches, burgers, potato salad and fruit salad. The Commission's 2018 marketing plan builds on this information, promoting more recipe ideas for California avocados in season.

California Avocados Perceived as Most Premium

More than half of avocado shoppers continue to rate California avocados as the most premium. However, the rating declined versus 2016. Ratings for most attributes, such as taste and food safety, held steady versus the prior year. Marks for California avocado freshness, premium quality, and reliability of taste, texture and appearance were lower than the prior year, but are still significantly higher than the nearest competitor. Thirty-five percent of respondents say that California avocados look the most appetizing after being cut, while 31 percent say all avocados perform the same.

Diving Deeper in the Target Market

This year's tracking study took a much deeper look at consumers in California, providing the CAC marketing team with detailed information about shopper perceptions based on where they shop. This information will be used with retailers to further customize marketing programs.

The 2017 California Avocado Tracking Study identified some opportunities for CAC to act to positively impact consumer attitudes about California avocados. The study also affirmed that California avocados continue to hold an enviable place in consumer opinion. Competitors hold the lion share of the market and spend significantly more to market their brand, yet California is the brand of avocados that most avocado shoppers revere. 🥑

COMPARED TO LAST SUMMER A LOT/ A LITTLE MORE LIKELY TO SERVE...



Base: Total Target Market 2015 (n=677), 2016 (n=608), 2017 (n=600)
Q21. Compared to last summer, how likely are you to serve avocados in the following ways?
Q20. Will it be the following first time this year you cook using this summer?

Editor's Note: In the charts on these two pages, significant differences are denoted by upper and lower-case letters at the 95 percent and 90 percent levels, respectively.