

# The GREENSHEET

CALIFORNIA AVOCADO INDUSTRY NEWS

Volume 29 | Issue 7 | February 27, 2013

## IN THIS ISSUE, YOU'LL FIND:

- [The Commission Will Once Again Hold Board Meetings in the Field](#)
- [A Reminder Regarding Avocado Theft Prevention](#)
- [Pesticide Resistance Meeting for PCAs](#)
- [Nursery Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer Meeting Summary](#)
- [Immigration Reform Update](#)
- [Refreshed "How to Choose and Use" Section on CaliforniaAvocado.com](#)
- [National Grocers Association Show – Where Independent Retailers Gather](#)
- [Mollie Stone's Kicks off California Avocado Season with "Big Game" Promotion](#)
- [Social Media Fans Love California Avocados on Valentine's Day](#)
- [Market Trends](#)
- [Weather Outlook](#)

## Calendar

For a listing of industry events and dates for the coming year, please visit:  
<http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/upcoming-meetings-events/>

### Pesticide Resistance Meetings for PCAs

- The meetings discussed in [the article below](#) are **FOR PCAs ONLY**.

**March 20, 2013**, Time TBD, CAC Finance Committee Meeting, *Pala Mesa Resort, 2001 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028*

**March 21, 2013**, Time TBD, CAC Board Meeting, *Pala Mesa Resort, 2001 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028*

### The Commission Will Once Again Hold Board Meetings in the Field



In 2012 the California Avocado Commission conducted board meetings in field locations the first time ever. At its January meeting, the CAC Board of Directors voted for continuation of this idea in 2013 and approved holding regularly scheduled board meetings in two off-site field locations. The purpose of the two field meetings, to be held in March (Fallbrook) and May (Ventura), is to provide California avocado industry stakeholders with the opportunity to attend and observe board meetings that would typically take place at the Commission's office in Irvine, California. The Commission heads South first, and will hold its

March 21, 2013 meeting in the "Sun Room" at the Pala Mesa Resort at 2001 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028. Further meeting details, including a detailed agenda, will be available on March 8, 2013 by visiting <http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/agendas-and-minutes>. Please note that there is no RSVP required to attend these meetings. If you have any questions regarding this event, please contact April Aymami at [aaymami@avocado.org](mailto:aaymami@avocado.org) or (949) 341-1955 ext. 118.

## A Reminder Regarding Avocado Theft Prevention

As we begin the California Avocado season, the California Avocado Commission has already begun to receive calls and emails reporting avocado theft. It seems about this time of year, every year, as the fruit begins to size and retail prices begin their upward trend, avocados become increasingly attractive to thieves. History has shown that theft can occur at anytime and to anyone, however taking proper prevention measures to secure your grove continues to prove the best line of defense. Below are a few theft prevention tips provided by the San Diego County Sheriff's Department:

- Ranch and farm owners should post signs indicating "No Trespassing," and "Private Property" areas in order to advise potential thieves that you will prosecute if they are caught on your property. **The Commission can provide Anti-Theft signs for no charge to avocado growers of record who complete and submit a [theft sign request form](#).**
- Report thefts or suspicious activities to your local law enforcement agency in order to maintain any evidence that might be left at the scene. (It is very important to preserve the crime scene if a crime has taken place.)
- Farm and Ranch owners should thoroughly screen job applicants and check their references.
- Ranch and farm workers should watch for unusual behavior by fellow employees, such as staying especially late, arriving unusually early or accessing files and information outside their areas of responsibility.
- Workers should take note of unescorted visitors on the property, and report suspicious activities to their employer immediately.
- Surveillance equipment, motion detectors, audible alarms, dogs or geese are great deterrents. They can alert on site personnel of movement and other activities.
- An Owner Applied Number or other identifying number should be applied to as much equipment as possible so that it can be traced back to the owner.
- Partner with law enforcement to become a pro-active crime prevention advocate.

For further information regarding avocado theft prevention, please visit <http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/avocado-theft-prevention/>.

## Pesticide Resistance Meeting for PCAs

The California Avocado Commission and Dr. Joe Morse, UC Riverside Professor of Entomology, in cooperation with UC Cooperative Extension, will be holding two seminars for PCAs on March 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. The seminars will review the principles of pesticide resistance management, and how to develop an effective avocado pest control program based on these principles. The seminars will be held in the north on Tuesday March 5th at the Ventura County Cooperative Extension office from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and in the south on Thursday March 7th in San Diego County Cooperative Extension office from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. If you're a PCA interested in attending one of these seminars and have not yet received a notice with full meeting details, please contact Tim Spann at [tspann@avocado.org](mailto:tspann@avocado.org).

## Nursery Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer Meeting Summary

A meeting about the polyphagous shot hole borer and fusarium dieback was held at the Huntington Botanical Gardens on February 21 for the nursery and landscape industry. The meeting was organized by Dr. John Kabashima, Environmental Horticulture Farm Advisor for Los Angeles and Orange Counties and was sponsored, in part, by CAC. Speakers were invited from the regulatory (CDFA and L.A. County Ag Commissioner) and research communities. The meeting was well-attended by more than 50 people, and CAC was well-represented by Chairman Ed McFadden, and CAC staff members Jonathan Dixon and Tim Spann.

John Kabashima began the program with a brief presentation about how exotic pests are introduced into California and what can be done about them once they are here. He stressed the interconnectedness of the urban landscape, nursery industry, natural forest, commercial avocado growers, and regulatory agencies. When these groups work together, they can successfully control and restrict the spread of exotic pests. He cited the example of the successful program for the glassy winged sharpshooter, which has prevented its spread into northern California despite millions of plants being shipped from southern California nurseries. John also acknowledged the leadership of CAC on early funding of PSHB/Fusarium dieback research, and stressed that the other commodities and agencies affected need to get onboard so this challenge can be met head on.

Josh Kress, CDFA Nursery Services, and Dr. Jason Leathers, CDFA Pest Exclusion Branch, spoke about the regulations that are in place to inspect nurseries and how exotic pests, such as PSHB, are handled when they are discovered. CDFA's rules govern the sanitation of nursery crops and their inspections, which are conducted through the local county Ag commissioner offices. In November, CDFA issued a nursery advisory to all county Ag commissioners about PSHB for distribution to their inspectors to help them in identifying this pest. They also indicated that PSHB is a 'Q' rated pest in CDFA's rating system. (CDFA is changing its rating system, and PSHB will likely become an 'A' rated pest in the revised system.) This means that all nursery stock must be free of the pest in order for shipping certificates to be issued. CDFA has also been working with the USDA on an assessment of PSHB, and it rated as an 'actionable' pest, which means that imports can be rejected or subjected to fumigation if they are found to be infested. However, they also warned that this ranking could possibly lead to domestic quarantines to limit the spread within the U.S.

Dr. Jerry Turney and Dr. Gevork Arkelian, L.A. County Ag Commissioner's Office, echoed much of what was said by the CDFA representatives, but focused on what is being done locally. Jerry indicated that two plants infected with the *Fusarium* sp. had been found in a commercial nursery in L.A. County, but the beetle was not found on those plants. His office ordered the plants to be destroyed, and he indicated that the *Fusarium* sp. is also a 'Q' rated organism by CDFA, not just the beetle. Both Jerry and Gevork stressed the need to eradicate castor bean, a favorite host of PSHB, from around commercial nurseries and they are working with their inspectors to spread this message and educate nursery owners.

## Immigration Reform Update

There has been a flurry of news reports on immigration reform efforts since early January, 2013. It started with the Gang of 8, a group of four democratic and four republican senators, holding a press conference to announce their bipartisan proposal and commitment for an immigration reform bill in 2013. The press conference caught everyone by surprise, until it was realized that President Obama was scheduled to hold a press conference on the following day in Las Vegas where he would announce his commitment for comprehensive immigration reform. Ken Melban, CAC Director Issues Management, traveled to Washington DC the week of February 11, 2013 to meet with congressional members on this critical issue. Melban met with members from both parties, and while publicly all are hopeful an immigration reform bill that addresses the need for an agricultural workers program will be passed, in private those same high aspirations are greatly tempered. “In meeting after meeting the attitude is that this effort for immigration reform legislation, while critical to both parties, is going to be very difficult to pass,” said Melban. As always is the case, the devil is in the details, and one of the largest stumbling blocks is on the question of citizenship – in general democrats support a pathway to citizenship and republicans are less supportive based on the tremendous amount of opposition they hear from their constituents. In addition, the President’s proposal, which was “leaked” to the press in the middle of February, does not include a guest worker program component, critical for republican support. While there are positive reports coming out from Washington DC that both parties are genuinely working towards a solution on immigration reform, in looking more closely it appears, unfortunately, that once again it is politics as usual. CAC will stay engaged on the immigration reform issue and provide updates as necessary.



*Melban with newly elected Congresswoman Julia Brownley of the 26<sup>th</sup> District (Ventura County area)*

## Refreshed “How to Choose and Use” Section on CaliforniaAvocado.com

***This article is about*** California Avocado Commission (CAC) updating its “How to Choose and Use” section on CaliforniaAvocado.com.

***How this information/activity helps California avocado growers:*** By improving the information we provide for consumers about choosing and using avocados CAC encourages shopper demand for California avocados. This information —and optimizing the content for search—also helps position CAC as the premium avocado authority and resource.



The California Avocado Commission (CAC) updated its educational “How to Choose and Use” section on

CaliforniaAvocado.com in early February to include new photography, an animated photo demonstration of how to cut and peel an avocado and new content relevant to consumer search queries.

Details of the update include:

- An all new list of page contents at the top of the page—users can now easily jump to the section they’re searching for
- An all new section on “California Avocado Nutrition,” including instructions for making the most of the nutritional benefits of avocados
- All new photography, including an animated demonstration
- Updated instructions on “How to Cut and Peel California Avocados”
- New callouts and links to nutritional benefits and other “learn more” information

The goal of the update is to improve the overall user experience and help consumers find what they are looking for—whether they are searching in Google or browsing through the CaliforniaAvocado.com website.

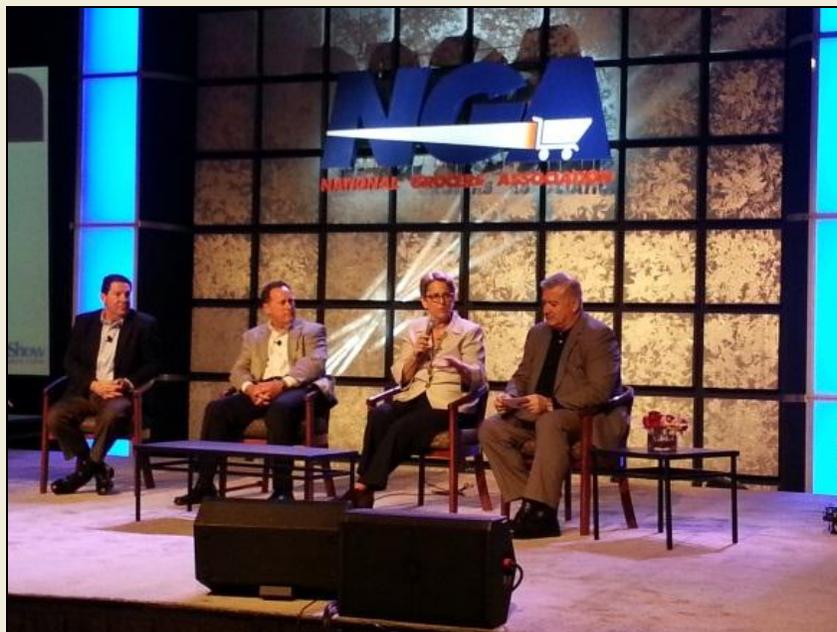
Check out the new and improved section at: [californiaavocado.com/how-to-choose-and-use/](http://californiaavocado.com/how-to-choose-and-use/)

## National Grocers Association Show – Where Independent Retailers Gather

*This article is about the annual National Grocers Association (NGA) Show.*

**How this information/activity helps California avocado growers:** *At the NGA event the California Avocado Commission (CAC) is given the opportunity to interact with independent retailers from across the country, and provide them with crop information, marketing plans and California avocado point-of-sale.*

The National Grocers Association show was held at the Mirage in Las Vegas, Nevada from February 10-12. Nearly 2,500 grocery industry executives, independent retailers, wholesalers and industry vendors attended, providing an excellent opportunity for networking.



*During one of the Breakfast Sessions, four panelists including CAC Vice President of Marketing, Jan DeLyser and executives from Domex Superfresh Growers, Nash Finch Company and Milam’s Markets discussed consumer, marketplace and environmental trends*

CAC was part of the Produce Marketing Association’s Produce Pavilion and exhibited during the expo. CAC staff connected with retailers and wholesalers and presented marketing programs and point-of-sale materials designed to drive sales of California avocados. The expo also provided the opportunity to explain the freshness and “premium-ness” of California avocados and the value of carrying them at retail.



*David Cruz, Marketing Development Manager presents information on CAC’s 4<sup>th</sup> of July initiatives and the 2013 Advertising & Display contests to Tom Wheeler, Director of Produce Operations for San Francisco area-based Mollie Stone’s Markets.*

### **Mollie Stone’s Kicks off California Avocado Season with “Big Game” Promotion**

***This article is about*** Mollie Stone’s (a San Francisco area retailer) “Big Game” displays of California avocados.

***How this information/activity helps California avocado growers:*** Retail displays featuring California avocados and signage promote the availability of California avocados and encourage sales.



California avocado season got off to an early start in Northern California with a “Big Game” (national football championship game on February 3<sup>rd</sup>) display featuring California avocados and other produce items for football party entertaining. The California Avocado Commission (CAC) arranged for California avocado bins to be in each of the nine Mollie Stone’s stores in time for shoppers to load up for the game.



CAC also provided geo-targeted social media support for the promotion. CAC secured permission to share a photo sent in from Mollie Stone’s that included the California Avocado display bin in a Big Game-themed display. CAC then sent posts to California Avocado fans on Facebook who live in cities around Mollie Stone’s stores including Burlingame, Greenbrae, Palo Alto, San Bruno, San Francisco, San Mateo and Sausalito, advising them that they could find the fruit at Mollie Stone’s. In addition a Twitter message went out to CAC’s nearly 5,000 followers.

## Social Media Fans Love California Avocados on Valentine’s Day

**This article is about** CAC’s Valentine’s Day social media presence

**How this information/activity helps California avocado growers:** Relevant social media posts and Tweets create consumer awareness of the upcoming California avocado season.

This past Valentine’s Day the California Avocado Commission (CAC) leveraged its advertising partnership with *America’s Test Kitchen* and its *CooksIllustrated.com* to engage consumers online about the upcoming California avocado season.

In celebration of Valentine’s Day, CAC put together an outreach initiative to generate engagement for California Avocados and the upcoming season.

CAC utilized a Twitter® contest encouraging fans to tweet about their love of California avocados by sharing “An Ode to California Avocados” on the popular social network:



Contest winners were awarded subscriptions to *CooksIllustrated.com*.



CAC also created a sharable graphic for Facebook®, which was shared 171 times. The graphic included a call to action to start looking for California avocados in stores soon. The Facebook and Twitter activity provided positive exposure for California avocados and created awareness of the upcoming season amongst fans and their personal networks online.

CAC will be kicking off the season with other online initiatives as early as mid-march. Facebook® advertising within California with a “look for them in stores” theme has already begun.

Stay tuned for updates!

## California Market Trends

To view all market trend graphs, including “Avocado Volume Summary,” “Weekly Price Range” and “U.S. Avocado Supply,” please visit: <http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/market-information/>.

<b>California Avocado Commission Weekly Volume Summary (pounds)</b>			
	Week Ending 2/24/2013	Season-to-Date (since 11/1/12)	2013 Year to Date
Hass	2,170,050	11,198,265	9,839,143
Lamb	0	0	0
Other (Greens)	57,942	794,094	735,153
<b>California Total</b>	<b>2,227,992</b>	<b>11,992,359</b>	<b>10,574,296</b>
Florida	190,575	13,267,265	3,662,120
Chile	333,668	22,731,637	6,029,213
Mexico	29,044,140	480,390,374	249,595,290
Other (Imports)	970,000	17,590,000	8,580,000
<b>Import Total</b>	<b>30,347,808</b>	<b>520,712,011</b>	<b>264,204,503</b>
<b>USA Total</b>	<b>32,766,375</b>	<b>545,971,635</b>	<b>278,440,919</b>
Source(s):	California = CAC (AMRIC)		
	Florida = Florida Avocado Admin Committee		
	Chile = Comite de Paltas, Chile		
	Mexico = APEAM		
	Other Imports = HAB and USDA AMS website		

California Avocado Society				2/25/2013
Weekly Newsline* Avocado Prices				
	FOB price	Field price	Retail price	Last Year FOB
California Hass	(25# carton)	(per pound)	(per each)	(25# carton)
#2's	10.00-15.00	0.20-0.40		12.00-22.00
32's-36's	19.00-22.00	0.56-0.68		30.00-31.00
40's	21.00-22.00	0.64-0.68	1.29	29.00-31.00
48's	22.00-24.00	0.68-0.76	0.99	29.00-31.00
60's	18.00-21.00	0.52-0.64		27.00-29.00
70's	16.00-17.00	0.44-0.48		18.00-19.00
84's	14.00-15.00	0.41-0.45		15.00-17.00
Mexican Hass				
All Sizes	12.00-18.00	N/A	2/0.99-1.49	15.00-30.00
Chilean Hass				
All Sizes	13.00-19.00	N/A	5/3.99	14.00-29.00
Peruvian Hass				
All Sizes	N/A			
*To subscribe to The Weekly Newsline please contact California Avocado Society at (951) 225-9102 or <a href="http://www.californiaavocadosociety.org">www.californiaavocadosociety.org</a>				

## Weather: 30-Day Outlook For California's Coastal & Valley Areas

Synopsis... Troughs will dominate the weather over California and the Great Basin. We will continue to have freezes in the valleys of California, to include southern California. For the long term trend, we will continue with weak *La Niña* conditions, and the main forcing factors support cold and mostly dry conditions in California. The exception to this will be an occasional front that brings snow to the Sierra Nevadas, showers to central and northern California, or an upper low that manages to reach southern California.

As of February 25, the snowpack water equivalent in northern California was 60% to 73% of normal and only 51% to 61% of the April first 30-year average.

**In the Near Term - March 1-15...** We will continue to have a pattern of sparse rainfall. Temperatures will continue to be below normal during the first half of March. The freeze damage risk is lower during this period than it will be later in the middle of spring (late March and April) if the current trend continues. For temperatures, there appears to be a general trend towards warmer conditions during the first part of March -- or at least fewer extreme cold events.

Rain is unlikely for southern California unless a cutoff low happens to develop. There is no support in the sea surface temperature field for development of cutoff lows. This is not good news as we approach the end of the wet season. Additionally, cutoff lows that normally develop in March, instead of containing rain, are more likely to contain only colder airmasses, and therefore a higher risk of freezes.

**March 16-31...** With cold sea surface temperatures off the coast, there is support for continued troughs which can either produce rains or colder than normal conditions. As we approach the end of the normal rainy season, we are faced with the unfortunate combination of colder and drier than normal conditions. Cold fronts will bring sparse showers here and there, but wellorganized rain events are unlikely.

Even during the periods without cold frontal activity, we still only expect high temperatures to be near normal while nights remain colder than normal. Although a few upslope snow events are still likely in the Sierra Nevadas, we do not look for a significant recharge of the snowpack.

Unusual freeze events in late March are not out of the question, but become less likely as the days become longer and the nights shorter. The main issue appears now to be the frequency of freeze events and also wetbulb freezes due to dry airmasses. We often see an increase in troughs and rainy periods in mid March. This year, however, it will be difficult to realize close to normal rain amounts. Within this period, freezes appear most likely during the third and fourth weeks of March.

**March 16-31.....Southern California Avocado Region...** At this time we do not see support for an increase in fronts and lows coming through southern California. Instead, we expect subnormal rainfall in March due to a lack of overall moisture upstream from California.

**Seasonal Outlook/El Niño Update... (April 1 - June 1)** *La Nina* conditions (colder than normal sea surface temperatures in the east equatorial Pacific) will continue. For this part of the season, *La Nina* usually associates with colder and drier than normal conditions.

Latest guidance from NOAA's Climate Forecast System (CFS) still suggests troughing along the west coast during April and a decrease in troughing during May. We expect the development of cutoff lows at times during this period but without the return of a well developed storm series into central and southern California. The sea surface temperature anomaly patterns now in place support a weaker than normal storm track and drier than normal airmasses from the west and northwest. The lack of energy in the storm track usually translates to more frequent occurrence of erratically moving cutoff lows and weak troughs that produce frosts and colder than normal conditions. For southern California, this will tend to produce recurrent lows but with rainfall well below normal in southern California.

...Alan Fox, Fox Weather LLC...