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Calendar

For a listing of industry events and dates for the coming year, please visit:

<http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/commission/calendar>

California Small Farmer Conference

March 8-10

March 8

Time: 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Location: Marriott Mission Valley, San Diego, CA

March 9

Time: 8:00 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Location: Marriott Mission Valley, San Diego, CA

March 10

Time: 7:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Location: Marriott Mission Valley, San Diego, CA

Governance Committee Meeting

March 10

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Location: CAC Santa Paula Field Office, 705 E. Main Street, Suite A, Santa Paula, CA

Public Hearing on Proposed Increases in City of Santa Barbara Water Rates

March 10

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: City of Santa Barbara Council Chambers, City Hall 735 Anacapa Street, Santa Barbara, CA

PSHB Grower Outreach Meeting

March 24

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Location: California Center for the Arts, 340 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido, CA

Fusarium Dieback and Phytophthora Root Rot Field Day

March 25

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Pine Tree Ranch, 19455 E. Telegraph Road, Santa Paula, CA

CAC Annual Meeting

April 14-16

April 14

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Location: Grand Tradition Estate & Gardens (220 Grand Tradition Way Fallbrook, CA 92028)

April 15

Time: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Location: Museum of Ventura County (100 E. Main St. Ventura, CA 93001)

April 16

Time: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Location: SLO County Farm Bureau (4875 Morabito Place San Luis Obispo, CA 93401)

CAC Board Meeting

April 14

Time: 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Location: Grand Tradition Estate (220 Grand Tradition Way, Fallbrook, CA)

CAC to Host Hands-on Fusarium Dieback and Phytophthora Root Rot Field Day at Pine Tree Ranch

California avocado growers are invited to attend the California Avocado Commission's (CAC's) Fusarium Dieback and *Phytophthora* Root Rot Field Day session scheduled for March 25, 2015 from 10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The session will be held at CAC's demonstration grove at Pine Tree Ranch, 19455 E. Telegraph Road, Santa Paula, CA, 93060.

During the session, Dr. Tim Miles, USDA ARS Salinas, will discuss rapid molecular tools to detect *Phytophthora* root rot in the field and in the lab.

Dr. Akif Eskalen, Plant Pathologist UC Riverside, will update growers on field fungicide and biocontrol experiments for combating fusarium dieback disease associated with the polyphagous shot hole borer (PSHB). He will also discuss possible treatments for protecting pruning wounds from fusarium dieback.

The researcher presentations will be followed by a field demonstration and discussion of the proper method of phosphorous acid injection for *Phytophthora* control.

PSHB Update February 25

The Commission continues to deploy traps and lures for polyphagous shot hole borer (PSHB) monitoring in the major avocado growing regions. The infestation is currently limited to Northern San Diego County, where thirteen groves have confirmed PSHB. Those groves have a total acreage of about 1,000 acres, but not all of the acreage is infested. To date over 100 traps have been set-up in avocado groves in Southern California to serve as an early warning system should the beetle spread. In addition, traps with lures have been deployed in other avocado production areas to serve as sentinels. Ventura County now has 24 traps in place and another five are in San Luis Obispo County, and soon traps will be located in Santa Barbara County.

These traps are strategically placed in locations that have a higher susceptibility for the introduction of the PSHB, such as campgrounds, nurseries and green-waste facilities. There are also a few traps within avocado groves. Considering the high number of PSHB hosts, it is believed that movement of firewood and other plant materials from infested areas into non-infested areas presents the greatest risk. Most of the major handlers have set-up traps at their facilities as an additional safeguard.

Traps within the infested groves have shown some significant increases in beetle captures when the temperatures warmed. During January as UCR researchers monitored fifteen traps the average total number of beetles was around 100. In early February, though, when temperatures warmed those same fifteen traps had over 1,000 combined beetles in one day. This data is preliminary, but it suggests how rapidly the beetle activity may increase as summer temperatures begin to occur. Accordingly, it is imperative that growers who are located within a few miles of infested groves remain vigilant in their monitoring for PSHB, especially with spring and summer fast approaching.

Updated distribution maps showing current infestations along with trap locations may be viewed below or at the following links:

- [Southern California Distribution Map, Updated February 2015](#)
- [San Diego County Distribution Map, Updated February 2015](#)

Additional information regarding how to identify signs of PSHB may be found here: <http://www.eskalenlab.ucr.edu/>.

The Commission, prior to the start of harvest, worked with handlers to develop protocols for harvest and transportation practices to mitigate possible risk of PSHB spread, and these protocols may be viewed here:

<http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/sites/default/files/documents/PSHB-Harvest-Protocols-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

Finally, a grower meeting has been scheduled for March 24th, 2015, from 9-11 am in Escondido. UC Riverside researchers and Commission staff will provide an update on field trials evaluating possible curative and/or prophylactic pesticides and fungicides. The meeting will be held at the California Center for the Arts, 340 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido, CA 92025.

Informational Meetings Scheduled to Discuss City of Santa Barbara Proposed Water Rate Increases and Desalination Project

The City of Santa Barbara is currently reviewing proposed water rate increases and will hold an informational public meeting on Thursday, February 26 for interested parties. The session will consist of a presentation, followed by a question and answer period concerning the following:

- Current drought conditions
- The City's water supplies and its Water Shortage Plan
- Upcoming desalination timeline
- Conservation opportunities
- Proposed water rates

Adoption of proposed water rates is tentatively scheduled for March 17, 2015, with new rates effective beginning July 1, 2015, and if passed could result in an increase of more than 50 percent for agricultural users within the City of Santa Barbara's water district. With that said, growers that could be affected by the potential rate increase are encouraged to stay informed by attending the following upcoming informational meeting:

[Public Information Meeting on Drought, Desalination and Proposed Water Rates](#)

- **Thursday, February 26, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.**
- **City of Santa Barbara Council Chambers**
- **735 Anacapa Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101**

If you are unable to attend the February 26th meeting, the City has made the video recording of the February 18th public informational meeting available [online](#).

Growers wishing to protest the proposed water rate increases may do so either in writing or in-person. If you wish to protest in writing, please deliver your written and signed protest, including your name and service address, to the City Clerk of Santa Barbara at 735 Anacapa Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, prior to the City Council's consideration of this item on March 10, 2015. To make an in-person protest, growers should plan to attend the following public hearing:

Public Hearing on Proposed Increases in City of Santa Barbara Water Rates for FY 2016

- **Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at 2:00 p.m.**
- **City of Santa Barbara Council Chambers, City Hall**
- **735 Anacapa Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101**

Please review the links below for further information regarding the proposed water rate changes and desalination project:

- [Summary of Proposed Water Rate Changes](#)
- [Rate Notice for Proposed Water Rates](#)
- [Breakdown of Desal Component of Proposed Rates](#)
- [Water Rate Calculator for Proposed Water Rates](#)

For more information please visit www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/water or contact Madeline Ward, Acting Water Conservation Coordinator at 805.897.2672 or MaWard@SantaBarbaraCA.gov.

Sustainable and Organic Production Seminar

On April 16, 2015, the California Association of Pest Control Advisers, San Diego County Chapter California Association of Pest Control Advisers and the Organic Fertilizer Association of California will host an all-day sustainable and organic production seminar at the Lakehouse Hotel and Resort, 2015 La Bonita Drive, San Marcos, California. The event will take place from 8:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

The seminar will include updates from the San Diego ag commissioner, exhibits and a panel of local growers discussing the challenges of fertility and pest control in sustainable and organic production systems. The agenda includes:

- Elements of IPM for Sustainable Ag Production
- The Role of Micronutrients in Disease Control in Organic Systems
- Compost and Good Soil/Plant Health
- Weed Seedbank Management to Reduce Weed Pressure

- Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation's Role in Sustainable/Organic
- Importance of Soil Health and the Role of Crop Consultants
- Good Plant Nutrition Equals Healthy Plants
- Sustainable and Organic Production in Urban Landscapes
- County Ag Commissioner Regulatory Update
- Challenges of Managing Pest Control and Soil Health in Sustainable Organic Farming

[Online registration](#) is available and closes on April 2. The cost is \$60 for members and non-members and \$25 for students. Certified crop advisers can earn six hours of Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

For more information and a complete agenda, visit the [seminar website](#) or contact Steven Beckley at 916.539.4107 or sbeckley@aol.com.

CAC Blog at the Forefront of Delivering Content to Avocado Fans

Since its launch in March 2014, the California Avocado Commission's (CAC) blog — The Scoop — has played a key role in driving an increasing amount of traffic to CAC's CaliforniaAvocado.com website. The importance of this cannot be overstated in an era in which online competition for viewership is increasing on a daily basis.

The Scoop not only provides the Commission with the opportunity to address commonly searched avocado topics, but to differentiate California avocados and drive consumer interest in the fruit when in season. Key performance indicators demonstrate that CAC's topic research and blog content are meeting the demands of consumers. In January, the blog reported an all-time high of more than 55,100 page views; the previous record was set in August 2014 with slightly more than 31,300 page views. The blog has posted a 76 percent increase in total views over August 2014 and in January 69 percent of traffic was generated from organic sources.

The top posts of all time are as follows:

- [Drink Your Avocados: 4 Breakfast Smoothie Recipes](#) (43,000 page views)
- [How to Ripen an Avocado — The Definitive Guide](#) (21,000 page views)
- [Cinco de Mayo Contest: What's Your Guacamole Style?](#) (14,000 page views)
- [Pickling and Preserving Avocados](#) (11,000 page views)
- [American Recipe Contest Winners — 2014](#) (10,000 page views)

The Scoop is shaping the manner in which CAC communicates with target consumers and the blog will remain at the forefront of delivering relevant and interesting content to them.



THE SCOOP

TIPS, RECIPES AND MORE FROM THE CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION

RECIPES COOKING TIPS ENTERTAINING NUTRITION EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE GROVES

You are here: [Home](#) / [Everyday Life](#) / Crop update: Early California Avocado Availability

CROP UPDATE: EARLY CALIFORNIA AVOCADO AVAILABILITY

January 26, 2015 by Zac Benedict



Good news! Some California Avocado growers have started to pick because their avocados are reaching their sizes; that means a limited supply of California Avocados may be making their way to a grocery store near you!

It looks like availability is limited to California at this point though. Typically you do not see widespread availability of our avocados until March or April when the harvest volume increases in California, but some stores are switching or have already switched to California Avocados!

Here is a list of retailers that we've heard may have California Avocados right now. Keep in mind, because it is very early in the California Avocado season, availability could change/limit.

The Scoop visitors spend an average of 2:13 minutes on the blog.

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RECIPE NEWSLETTER

California Avocado news served fresh monthly

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Tracking Study Provides Insights into Regional Avocado Purchasing Behaviors and Attitudes

The [Hass Avocado Board \(HAB\) 2014 Tracking Study](#) provides valuable insights into regional differences in attitudes and purchasing behaviors of avocados. The study, conducted in the continental U.S. in spring 2014, helps avocado marketers understand current consumer attitudes and allows them to better target opportunities to drive avocado sales.

According to the study, avocado total U.S. household penetration is 63 percent with California reporting the highest penetration of all regions at 89 percent.

<u>REGION</u>	<u>Household Penetration</u>
California	89%
West (AZ, NM, CO, UT, NV, OR, WA, ID, MT, WY)	79%
Plains (KS, NE, SD, ND, IA, MO, MN)	51%

South Central (TX, OK, LA, MS) 82%

Great Lakes (WI, IL, OH, IN, MI) 62%

Mid South (KY, TN, WV, VA, MD, NC, DE) 53%

Southeast (FL, SC, GA, AL, AR) 59%

Northeast (PA, NJ, NY, CT, RI, MA, ME, VT, NH) 64%

The 2,400 respondents indicated that the top three drivers for purchasing avocados are as follows: the fruit is “good for you” (75 percent), provides nutritional benefits (72 percent) and they like the taste (71 percent). Other key drivers were quality, variety of uses for the avocado and ripeness.

Those surveyed also noted that compared to many other fruits and vegetables, they feel avocados are considered the same or healthier than carrots, broccoli, tomatoes, spinach, green beans, blueberries, apples, oranges, bananas and strawberries.

Ultimately, the HAB 2014 Tracking Study provides important insights into consumer behaviors that can help growers and avocado marketers create responsive marketing plans.

The entire HAB 2014 Tracking Study can be found online by clicking [here](#).



The HAB study indicates that over time consumers increasingly associate nutritional attributes with avocados.

California Avocados Receive Top Billing at Major Retail Celebration

Nearly 500 retailers, wholesalers, foodservice operators and suppliers at the Fresh Produce and Floral Council (FPFC) Dinner Dance enjoyed live music sponsored by the California Avocado Commission (CAC) at the 50-year anniversary celebration held on January 24. The sponsorship, which provided CAC with top billing at the event, included California avocado messaging in the invitation, event program and signage.

CAC Vice President of Marketing Jan DeLyser and CAC Retail Marketing Director Connie Stukenberg attended the event, networking with key retail decision makers at the Langham Hotel in Pasadena. They also played host to Mark Carroll, senior director of produce/floral purchasing and merchandising, Gelson's Markets, and his wife Diane.



CAC FPFC dinner dance table.

California Market Trends

To view all market trend graphs, including "Weekly Volume Summary," "Weekly Avocado Prices" and "U.S. Avocado Supply," please visit: <http://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/industry/market-statistics>.

California Avocado Commission Weekly Volume Summary (pounds)			
	Week Ending 2/22/2015	Season-to-Date (since 11/1/14)	2015 Year to Date
Hass	3,544,271	20,744,624	20,616,978
Lamb	0	0	0
Other (Greens)	63,702	592,338	501,894
California Total	3,607,973	21,336,962	21,118,872
Florida	115,885	12,089,220	3,728,780
Chile	533,213	10,390,361	5,634,248
Mexico	37,606,317	536,172,594	292,405,908
Other (Imports)	1,200,000	22,400,000	10,470,000
Import Total	39,339,530	568,962,955	308,510,156
USA Total	43,063,388	602,389,137	333,357,808
Source(s):	California = CAC (AMRIC)		
	Florida = Florida Avocado Admin Committee		
	Chile = Comite de Paltas, Chile		
	Mexico = APEAM		
	Other Imports = USDA AMS website		

California Avocado Society Weekly Newsline* Avocado Prices 2/23/2015

	FOB Price	Field Price	Retail Price	Last Year FOB
California Hass	(25# carton)	(per pound)	(per each)	(25# carton)
#2's	12.00-25.00	0.32-0.80		11.00-28.00
32's-36's	35.00-38.00	1.20-1.32		31.00-33.00
40's	35.00-38.00	1.20-1.32	1.99	32.00-33.00
48's	35.00-38.00	1.20-1.32	1.49	32.00-33.00
60's	27.00-29.00	0.88-0.96	0.99	29.00-30.00
70's	23.00-24.00	0.72-0.76	4/3.99	24.00-25.00
84's	16.00-17.00	0.50-0.55	0.69	16.00-17.00
Mexican Hass				
All Sizes	14.00-37.00	N/A	2/0.99-1.99	15.00-32.00
Chilean Hass				
All Sizes	14.00-36.00	N/A	5/5.99	14.00-31.00
Peruvian Hass				
All Sizes	N/A	N/A		

*To subscribe to the Weekly Newsline, please contact the California Avocado Society at (951) 225-9102 or www.CaliforniaAvocadoSociety.org.

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

Synopsis - The sea surface temperature anomaly pattern supports troughing out at 140-145W -- well to the west of California. The *El Niño* influence provides some source of energy for the southern branch of the westerlies. This subtropical jet stream directs and carries troughs towards southern California. However, due to the strong high pressure system off the coast, the primary influence of this southern jet is to induce development of cutoff lows near Baja and northwest Mexico. This is still pretty much a dry pattern for California despite more rain events. As the cutoff lows develop, which they will again in March, they will tend to move and develop erratically.

The NWS 8-14-day outlook for March 3-9 is dry for California and characterized by dry northwest flow, a tendency for warm dry days despite cold nights, and high pressure predominating aloft. While initially cold, there will be warmer periods at times, especially in the coastal zone. Although there is plenty of activity in the southern branch of the westerlies, troughs that approach California will encounter a lack of available energy as they approach the coast, 'run out of steam', and produce weak flow patterns and cutoff lows.

In the avocado areas, rains are expected from the 27th to the 1st. Watch for some frosts on the 2nd to the 4th, followed by the possibility of Santa Ana winds. Some minimal frosts are possible on the mornings of the 7th to the 9th despite warm days. Due to the warm sea surface temperatures and lateness of the season, it will be difficult to realize a significant freeze.

Summary – March 10 to 24... Warmer than normal sea surface temperatures near the coast of California, and out to the west about 700 miles, will continue to support upper high pressure near the California coast. Offshore flow events will tend to return when upper lows develop to the west of southern California. Despite the occurrence of troughs moving through California, rainfall will continue to be sparse.

In the avocado regions, we expect rains on the 10th to 11th. This would most likely be followed by a dry period through the 19th or 20th. The sizes of rainbands and showers will be small, and many areas will receive minimal rain.

Seasonal Outlook/*El Niño* Update – March 25 to May 31... Water supply is the continuing issue. Currently, we face the combined problems of below normal seasonal rainfall and a minimal snowpack in the Sierras. While February may be a little better than January

for rain and snow in central and northern California, this is of minimal help for the state water supply. The total snowpack size and resulting water storage are not robust because snow occurs at higher elevations than normal in the Sierras.

For the avocado growing areas, we expect weak cutoff lows occasionally developing. There are not sufficient indicators for rains of significance to develop in southern California during this latter part of the rainy season despite the hope provided by CFS2 for coastal southern California.

There are no significant deviations above or below normal for rainfall indicated for May. We assume conditions will be warmer than normal due to the warm sea surface temperatures that are expected to continue near southern California. In general, we expect mild conditions to occur. The risk of frost in March is expected to be below normal.

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