

Commission's Public Relations Program Inspires Brand Loyalty Among Targeted Consumers, Foodservice Operators, Retailers and Industry Members

Throughout the year, the California Avocado Commission utilizes its public relations program to build awareness of the seasonal availability and premium quality of California avocados among targeted consumers, foodservice operators, retailers and industry members. PR outreach — which includes press and mat releases, media coverage, chef and influencer partnerships, and in-person events — intensifies leading into and during the California avocado season to encourage distribution of and demand for California avocados with targeted customers and consumers. By sharing engaging educational content and recipes that demonstrate the versatility of the fruit, the Commission's integrated PR campaigns help expand usage in recipes both at home and in restaurants. Further, third party news stories showcasing CAC messaging provide additional exposure for the California Avocados brand and complement direct advertising campaigns designed to build loyalty.

Consumer public relations

As of July 31, the Commission's consumer PR program secured more than 952 million news bureau impressions across online, print and broadcast media. Those impressions are the result of the Commission's proactive media outreach, responsiveness to media inquiries, concentrated efforts to build awareness around the fruit's seasonality and the celebration of the 10th anniversary of California Avocado Month.

As part of its efforts to build excitement around peak California avocado season, the Commission demonstrated the fruit's versatility by piquing consumer interest in on-trend charcuterie boards. To showcase the start of the season, CAC distributed a press release and mat release announcing its partnership with Los Angeles-based food stylist and charcuterie board expert Meg Quinn. Both releases included Quinn's two charcuterie board recipes and three dip recipes, all starring California avocados.



Regional publication Arcadia News was one of many publications to pick up the California Avocado Month mat release.



To celebrate the milestone anniversary of California Avocado Month, CAC distributed a press release and mat release promoting two new California avocado recipes developed by partner chef Nyeshia Arrington. As part of its proactive media outreach efforts, the Commission routinely leverages its chef partners to serve as spokespeople for media interviews. Thus, as part of the 10th anniversary celebrations, the Commission secured a media interview for Chef Arrington with Yahoo! Life where she discussed her partnership with the Commission, California Avocado Month and her favorite California avocado recipes and tips.

To position itself as an industry expert and reinforce messaging that California avocados are the premium choice, the Commission also responded and contributed to media stories—including those that examined the avocado shortage and Mexican avocado ban.

Foodservice public relations

Foodservice publications not only report facts but are considered media influencers in terms of trends and ideas, therefore by showcasing California avocados the Commission can encourage restaurants – ranging from independents to chains – to incorporate the seasonal fruit into their dishes. To inspire menu innovation, the Commission leveraged industry leaders and influencers to promote California avocado growers and their fresh, premium fruit in media pieces focused on local produce, California, and California style and cuisine. To reach a diverse audience, CAC concentrated its PR efforts on foodservice print and digital magazines and the publications’ newsletters and similar digital formats. From November 2021 through July 2022, more than 3.2 million impressions were garnered via the foodservice PR program.



The Avocado and Egg Wheat Berry Toast Nosh Box recipe was used in the Commission’s foodservice PR program.

Sharing a chef’s recipe for an item that is on an establishment’s menu is a powerful means of demonstrating to readers (including chefs and restaurant operators) that California avocados can successfully be added to any dish. Therefore, throughout the year the Commission’s foodservice team researches chefs and restaurants in targeted markets to discover who is featuring innovative dishes with fresh California avocados on seasonal menus. The team seeks unique menu items that go beyond salads, cold sandwiches and burgers – like hummus with avocados, grilled cheese sandwiches topped with avocado slices, avocado corn dogs, a cauliflower ceviche with avocado and so on.

To help spread the message about how California avocados add value to classic and on-trend dishes, the Commission then contacts the selected chef to request permission to share their recipes and credit them with the unique menu presentations. The recipe is then tested and photos of the prepared dish are taken in studio. The carefully selected recipe and photo, along with the name of the chef and restaurant, are then pitched to a publication when there is an opportunity to support the article with the operator’s successful California avocado menu item.

In many cases, a publication runs a digital slide show of dishes to accompany a topic, so CAC’s foodservice team offers photos from the Commission’s foodservice recipe collection that suit the article’s theme. For example, if a story or slide show is showcasing to-go lunch specials or plant-forward entrees, the team would offer recipes such as the California Avocado and Miso Ginger Soba Noodles or California Avocado and Egg Wheat Berry Toast Nosh Box.

The team also proactively pitches content ideas that



National Culinary Review’s two-page article about growing and harvesting California avocados featured grower Rachel Laenen.



The Commission showcased the California Avocado and Miso Ginger Soba Noodles recipe to inspire operators in its foodservice outreach.

expand the editor’s initial storyline and support the Commission’s strategies. As an example, if a publication is publishing an article on Mediterranean cuisine the Commission would share the *California Avocado Hummus* recipe and chef contact with the editor. As a result, the editor now has the opportunity to supplement the article with a complementary signature dish and the chef can share with readers how they utilize local produce, such as California avocados, to put a unique twist on menu items.

Another current foodservice trend is to write about where produce on the menu is grown. To meet that demand, CAC’s foodservice team set up media interviews with California avocado growers to bring their story to life. In some cases, their stories were featured as a sidebar article to draw additional interest.

Retail and industry public relations

For the retail and industry audiences, the Commission focuses its public relations efforts on topics of specific interest to these groups — for example, information concerning the California avocado crop, CAC advertising and promotions, California avocado growers, and Commission activities and news. From November 2021 through July 2022, the Commission generated more than 7.7 million impressions from coverage in retail, produce and agriculture-related print and digital newspapers, magazine, newsletters and podcasts.

The Commission proactively created and distributed press

California Avocado Commission Reveals 2022 Pre-Season Forecast; Jan DeLyser Discusses

IRVINE, CA - Demand for California avocados continues to grow, especially as the planning of Super Bowl snack spreads commence, and the California Avocado Commission has revealed that the category is gearing up for even more growth. The commission's 2022 pre-season forecast for California avocados projects a nearly 15 percent increase over the last fiscal year, **predicting a 306-million-pound crop.**

"California avocado growers welcomed rains in December and January because they moved the region from severe drought to moderate drought conditions, and rain usually has a positive impact on tree health and avocado sizing," said Jan DeLyser, Vice President of Marketing. "We're expecting a good mix of sizes to support a variety of customer needs."

An excerpt from one of the retail PR stories. Article published by AndNowUKnow.

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California Avocado Commission details marketing plans



04.19.2022 By Andy Nelson



IRVINE, CALIF. – The California Avocado Commission is extending its successful advertising campaign, “The best avocados have California in them.”

This season’s ads feature visuals that point to the “CA” in the middle of the word “avocados,” and audio and other ads that call out the play on words in their taglines. Consumer media is targeted to avocado shoppers in California and the West who are willing to pay more for premium brands and to avocado “super-users,” “mega-users” and “ultra-users.”

“Consumer research has shown that the campaign is very effective at building awareness for the California avocado season and maintaining brand preference among targeted consumers,” said Jan DeLyser, the commission’s vice president of marketing.

This season’s consumer media began in March and continues through August. Customer-specific programs run throughout the season and will continue as the season winds down.

Social media and search advertising will continue to run year-round to maintain brand awareness and consumer engagement. Using a creative mix of advertising vehicles, the California avocado media plan will achieve more than 257 million impressions this season.

The California avocado ads are being shown on video streaming via channels such as Hulu and YouTube and services such as Tremor video. Audio advertising on iHeart radio, Spotify and Pandora also features visual components. Digital advertising using services such as GUMGUM reaches CAC’s targeted consumers, as does custom content on providers such as The Kitchn and Food52.

The commission is also utilizing the mobile directions app Waze to direct avocado shoppers to retail store locations on their routes where California avocados are in distribution.

Outdoor advertising in California from May through July will feature billboards and wallboards in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego and San Francisco, and 155 Volta charging stations in high-traffic locations, including some in the parking lots of supermarkets that merchandise California avocados, will remind shoppers on their way in to stores to add the fruit to their shopping carts.

Social media marketing continues on CAC’s Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube channels, and to reach younger avocado shoppers CAC now has a presence on TikTok. The Commission’s influencer marketing program, which works with influential content creators, recipe developers and dietitians, complements the California avocado creative media plan and social outreach.

releases for the trade media audience on a variety of topics. Some of those included announcements that built anticipation for the California avocado season; updates concerning crop projections and harvest timings; and information about the Commission and its staff. In addition, CAC shared news about key consumer programs to demonstrate how the Commission provides support for the product. Topics included the consumer advertising program, the 10th anniversary of California Avocado Month and CAC’s social media program.

A key part of the Commission’s retail and industry PR program involved editors’ and writers’ interviews with Jan DeLyser. This year articles showcased Cinco de Mayo, Fourth of July, avocado bag sales, locally grown programs and seasonal marketing. Some of the articles featured California avocados exclusively and others were “round-up” articles including information from multiple sources. The Commission also provided publications with topical images to extend California avocado coverage. It is worth noting most publications greatly appreciated photos of California avocado growers in their groves.

In both press releases and interviews, the Commission also wove in information that differentiates California avocados from those of other origins, subtly reinforcing advertising messages and CAC’s retail marketing directors’ efforts to position the fruit as the premium choice.

To round out its retail and industry PR efforts, the Commission also invited representatives of select publications to in-person events where they could speak directly with CAC staff, growers and chef partners. This season trade publication members participated in CAC’s virtual cooking class and grove open house, resulting in significant press coverage that built interest in the California Avocados brand. 🥑

A CAC press release adapted by a retail trade publication described the Commission’s consumer marketing plans and featured California avocado outdoor advertising. Reprint courtesy of Supermarket Perimeter.