



Doug O'Hara

Rain...where is it?

I was hoping that by the time I wrote this article I would be listening to the sound of raindrops outside my office window and be huddled next to my heater, but no such luck. We have all been anxiously awaiting the much-needed El Niño rain season and so far we have only received enough rain to turn off our irrigation systems for a few weeks in 2015. The forecast over the next several weeks is undetermined, but I am still hopeful. Let's all keep our fingers crossed and do whatever dance is needed so we make it through this year and help supplement our future supplies.

On to better news: the avocado market. Looking back at the records, prices are similar to last year for 48s and larger and slightly less for 60s and smaller. Many growers, including myself, are seeing a much better size curve than in the past and have started picking earlier than normal. This is great news if you have a large crop or if you need to start your pruning program. I am hoping that with a similar crop to last year and with Vice President of Marketing Jan DeLyser's early startup of the Commission's marketing programs, we will end up with a good year. The CAC marketing team will be implementing a more targeted approach,



focusing on retailers that are consistently true to the California brand. This type of campaign will benefit all California growers and hopefully keep California avocados in the stores for a longer time. Keep in close contact with your field representative or packer, as we all know things can change fast in this business.

Before I discuss production research, I would like to welcome Tim Spann back to the CAC family. After a short sabbatical, he has decided that the avocado industry is his true calling. We, as an industry, are truly lucky to have him back and I am looking forward to his future with the Commission. With the help of Ken Melban, Tim has been catching up on all pressing issues, especially Shot

Hole Borer. The latest updates are the placement of traps in many areas to assist in early detection, and the ongoing research at Pine Tree Ranch to help find products that can help us fight this pest. CAC staff will be sending updates frequently so please make sure they have your email, mailing address, fax, or any other contact information so you are sure to receive all information.

I think that is enough for now. The new year has just started to pick up and I am excited to see how the season progresses. Rest assured that Tom Bellamore and his staff are hard at work for all of us. I am confident that he is steering the boat in the right direction. Until next time, let's all wish for rain and good returns! 🥑