

From the **Grove**

The Latest News from the California Avocado Industry

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From the Grove

Volume 13, Number 3

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The articles, opinions and advertisements presented in this magazine are designed to offer information and provoke thought. Inclusion in this publication does not presume an endorsement or recommendation by the California Avocado Commission for any particular product or cultural practice.

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Rob Grether



With well-leached soil from this past wet winter, a hurricane-powered shot of rain in August, no major heat events this summer or fall, and an El Niño forecast for this coming winter, it would *seem* that Mother Nature has set up California avocado growers for a great crop in 2024. With unemployment below 4%, a growing consensus among economists that we will not enter a recession, and inflation forecast to fall to 2.4% next year, it would *seem* that the economic climate also will be favorable for California's avocado growers. And finally, with U.S. per capita avocado consumption still climbing, broad recognition of avoca-

dos as a nutritious food to be consumed at any meal, and evidence from our latest consumer tracking study that there is still a strong preference in California for our fruit, it would *seem* that demand for California's avocados next year will be robust.

And yet, the outlook for many of California's avocado growers is dim.

While some groves are carrying heavy crops into next season, many groves across the state are bearing little to no crop following a very poor fruit set this past spring. As such, many industry experts are projecting next year's total state crop to be even lighter than this year. And while we can all feel

some relief that the Federal Reserve Board is increasingly likely to achieve a soft landing for the U.S. economy, most growers are feeling no relief from the farming costs that have swelled over the past two years. Our labor, fertilizer, energy and water costs have all climbed and remained stubbornly high. Lastly, while there is clearly strong demand for avocados in the U.S. and data showing that the market will pay a premium for California fruit, there is sufficient global supply to generally keep prices from soaring to levels that for some growers would mean healthier margins and for other growers would simply mean a chance to get in the black.



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Productivity, cost and price are the key drivers of profitability in any business, and for California avocado growers – in the near term – there is adverse pressure on all three. We cannot control Mother Nature, and as farmers we know to expect years when the weather is benign, but the fruit doesn't set and years when a heavy set is later dropped by a heatwave or Santa Anas. We cannot expect wages to fall—they don't. But at some point, we can expect energy demand to wane and diesel prices to drop and perhaps someday, Ukrainian potash exports will recover, and fertilizer prices will fall. And we cannot stop farmers around the globe from planting more avocado trees, nor can we stop foreign packers from seeking sales in the U.S. market where there is concentrated buying, program pricing, a reliable cold chain, PACA protections, year-round avocado promotion, and profits paid in U.S. dollars.

So, what can we control? What can we expect? What can we stop? What can we do?

We can control our farming prac-

tices. We can invest in replanting trees with the most suitable rootstock for our soil type, salinity and topography. We can plant Lamb Hass if we want to try for larger sizes and a later harvest, or we can plant GEMs if we want earlier and higher yields and we believe demand for the variety will pace with the coming supply. We can berm, train, girdle and prune our trees to drive higher productivity. We can measure our nutrients more closely and fertilize more precisely. We can monitor our ET and soil moisture levels more closely to better strike the delicate balance between irrigating enough to maximize fruit set and size and not irrigating so much that we waste money on surplus extraction or delivery. We can watch our costs more closely and benchmark with our neighbors to keep pressure on contractors' margins.

We can control the initiatives of the California Avocado Commission. We can continue to elect directors who work tirelessly to improve the productivity, transparency and effectiveness of the Commission. We can run to be directors ourselves and bring a unique

perspective and constructive approach to the boardroom. We can volunteer our time on a committee, send our best ideas to the Production Research Committee, or donate part of our grove to a researcher in need of a test plot. We can attend field days at Pine Tree Ranch, educational seminars and the annual meetings to learn firsthand from the CAC team about the work they do—some of which is highly visible and much more or which is behind the scenes—to support the California avocado growers and the entire industry.

What can we expect? We can expect the current team at CAC to drive results. Over the past 16 months, we have reduced our headcount from 11 to 8, and over the past seven months, we have welcomed two new employees. A year ago, we restructured the organization, shifting all administrative and operational responsibilities to Ken Melban. Now our Vice President of Industry Affairs and Operations, Ken has demonstrated exemplary leadership over the past year and we expect more to come. We can expect his team of four to continue to support our industry



through legislative action, targeted advocacy and key initiatives to help keep water costs down and recover fire-damage losses. We also can expect his team to run the operation efficiently, manage our finances responsibly and keep the board informed and focused.

We also can expect innovative, impactful and cost-effective work from our marketing department. Vice President of Marketing Terry Splane took the helm of the marketing team this past spring. Early this fall, after months of work, Terry announced CAC's partnership with a new lead ad agency, Curious Plot. The CAC marketing team and Curious Plot are now working together diligently to develop a new campaign for this coming season. We can expect the new campaign to introduce fresh ideas, striking creative and some novel activations without abandoning the strong foundation built by our previous campaigns. We also can expect our new marketing program to be more targeted and more efficient. Terry is striving for the CAC marketing program to be highly metric-based and demonstrably effective, all with a budget 30% lower than last year.

What can we stop? We can stop *focusing on fanciful fixes for foreign fruit flow*. More precisely (and without alliteration), we can stop advocating for CAC to pursue trade policies to shut down or limit the importation of avocados from Mexico and other foreign producers. We can stop pretending that advocacy such as this would have any viability under USMCA, that advocacy such as this wouldn't be opposed by our best retail and foodservice partners, that advocacy such as this shouldn't draw condemnation from consumers envisaging \$10 avocados in the summer and no availability in the winter. We can stop ignoring the prevailing trade law and the popular political philosophy that free trade is good. We can stop stir-



ring up California growers who in turn i) barrage the board and the staff, keeping each from pursuing more important projects, and ii) maintain false hope in a trade remedy instead of focusing their energy on what they can control.

What can we do? We can do our best. We can do our best to recognize that there is a lot of headwind facing our industry and some of it may last for some time. We can do our best to improve our farming practices to improve our productivity, improve our size curve and minimize our costs. We can do our best to recognize that while the CAC assessment is also a cost, for an unprofitable grower the CAC assessment is not the key driver of their loss. By way of example, for a grower producing 10,000 pounds, at \$1.30 per pound their total CAC assessment would be less than \$300. On its own, \$300 can't buy much on a farm, but pooled with the assessments of all California growers, it is money very well spent. This coming year, about \$200 of it will go towards marketing. It's marketing California avocados to retailers and foodservice buyers so they continue to carry California fruit, even when it costs them

a premium over imported fruit, and it's marketing to our target consumers to reinforce their positive impression of California fruit and drive increased purchasing when our fruit is in season. Approximately \$50 will go toward industry affairs, part of which supports ongoing initiatives and part of which is available to immediately deploy against new challenges. And around \$50 goes towards keeping the operation running, which contemplated one way is a relatively small expense to support the continuation of the only institution in place to exclusively serve the interests of California avocado growers.

Thank you for your support and patience with the Commission as it has evolved over the past two years. While I'm concerned about the challenges California avocado growers will face in the coming years, I am comforted knowing that the Commission is now well-positioned to support us. 🥑

Commission Appoints Government Affairs Taskforce

By Ken Melban

Vice President, Industry Affairs & Operations

As California avocado growers entered the 2023 season, field pricing was under a dollar. Understandably, industry frustration was high and California Avocado Commission Board Members and staff heard increasing grower concern. As the abysmal field pricing lingered, a few growers contended import volumes were creating an oversupply resulting in a depressed market. These growers were asking the Commission to explore actions they believed may provide relief to the downward pressure on grower revenue.

At the Commission's June 8 Board meeting, a discussion ensued regarding possible efforts the Commission could undertake in pursuit of a remedy to low field pricing. After some discussion, Jason Cole, Commission Treasurer, recommended the formation of a Government Affairs Taskforce, which received unanimous Board support.

Acting in urgency, Chair Rob Grether appointed the following members to the Taskforce:

Robert Jackson (Chair)
Board Alternate, District 1

Michael Perricone
Board Member, District 1

Al Stehly
Grower, District 1

Ohannes Karaoghlanian
Board Member, District 2

Joanne Robles
Grower, District 2

Jamie Shafer
Board Alternate, District 3

Jason Cole
Board Member, District 4

Megan Shanley Warren
Grower, District 5

Maddie Cook
Board Public Member Alternate

The appointment of these individuals to the Taskforce was intended to provide balanced representation of the California avocado industry in terms of geography and scale of operation. Both small- and large-scale growers have a seat and voice at the table.

The Taskforce convened their first meeting on June 16 with the following Scope of Work:

1. Research existing federal/state government programs, primarily with a focus on trade, to determine potential utilization of existing programs to benefit growers.
2. Explore the potential for creation of other non-existing remedies to benefit growers.

The Taskforce's Goal:

1. Identify and recommend (if available) potential pathway(s) to support grower viability. The Taskforce analysis and recommendation will include assessing the likelihood for success(es) and potential costs.
 - a. To best inform the Taskforce's research and subsequent recommendations experts are to be utilized (e.g., trade attorneys, lobbyists, researchers, federal/state agency personnel, elected officials, etc.) throughout the process.

Members were asked to provide ideas at the first meeting and the following list was put forward:

- Tariffs
- Quotas
- Subsidies
- Possible remedies under the United States/Mexico/Canada Free Trade Agreement (USMCA)
- Crop insurance: modify to include market performance conditions.
- Assembly Bill 865: "Sale of agricultural products: requirements for sale"
- White House Competition Council
- Minimum Risk Levels: MRLs are more stringent in the European Union. Could the United States or California create similar more stringent requirements?



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- HAB assessment: the HAB assessment has remained \$0.025 per pound since its inception, although the HAB board has authority to increase it up to \$0.05 per pound. If HAB's assessment were increased, CAC's assessment could be reduced to maintain the same combined cost to growers.

The Taskforce utilized three attorneys: Carolyn Gleason, McDermott Will & Emery; Ed Ruckert LLC; and, George Soares, Kahn, Soares & Conway. After listening to the members' suggestions, the attorneys reviewed and researched the ideas and provided both a policy and political overview analysis for the Taskforce to consider at their next meeting.

The Taskforce met on August 3 and the attorneys provided specific responses to the potential remedies that had been suggested for consideration. The suggested ideas within the trade remedy arena (e.g. Section 201; Section 301; tariffs; quotas; etc.) would first require conducting a feasibility study. The purpose of a feasibility study is to determine if the industry can demonstrate the level of injury necessary for a successful outcome should one of these options be pursued. The estimated cost of such a feasibility study ranges from \$100,000 to \$200,000. In addition, information from as many growers as possible would be necessary to ensure the study accurately reflects the aggregate industry.

Legal counsel, based on their experience in federal trade issues, reported pursuit of any existing trade remedy at the federal level will face significant challenges at a significant cost to the industry. In addition, the general consensus was that the industry would have a significant uphill battle based on legal requirements along with the Administration's current stance – with likely limited opportunity for success.

A third meeting was held September 19 and the Taskforce met with California Department of Food and Agriculture personnel to learn about possible programs or efforts CDFA provides that may be of help to growers. In addition, discussion about creating new legislation or program(s) was discussed. CDFA staff are reviewing the input they received from the Taskforce and will provide an update in the future.

As of this writing, based on the aforementioned information, the Taskforce has not made any recommendation to the Board for possible action. Below is more detailed information provided by legal counsel to the Taskforce on specific items:

Trade Enforcement Actions that Authorize the Imposition of Tariffs, Quotas, or Related Restrictions on Imports if They Result in Affirmative Determinations

1. Antidumping (AD) Actions

Legal standard

AD cases are the most common import relief action. They are targeted at a specific supplying country, or countries, and broadly require proof of both “dumping” and injury to the U.S. industry in order to prevail. The dumping component of an AD case requires a showing that the imported product is being sold in the U.S. market at prices that are “less than normal value.” The “normal value” of the imported product at issue is determined, in order of priority, by the price the exporter sells the product in the home market; if there are too few home market sales, by the price at which the exporter sells the product in third countries; or if home market and third-country prices cannot be determined or if those prices are below the cost of production, by a “constructed value.” The amount by which the exporter's U.S. price falls below normal value establishes the “dumping margin.” The injury component of an AD case requires a showing that the dumped goods are causing or threatening “material injury” to the U.S. industry. Material injury is defined as injury that is “not inconsequential.” The issue of whether the domestic industry is or is not materially injured turns on a careful analysis of import levels and shares, price effects in the U.S. market, and the impact the imports are having on the domestic industry.

Initiation and proceedings

AD actions may be initiated by a petition filed by an eligible interested party or be self-initiated by the Department of Commerce (Commerce). Two agencies conduct AD investigations: Commerce investigates the dumping issues, and the International Trade Commission (ITC) investigates the injury issues. Commerce and the ITC conduct their investigations in two stages, leading to the issuance of preliminary and final determinations by both agencies. If an AD action clears the required legal hurdles at Commerce and the ITC, AD duties are imposed on the covered imports in an amount sufficient to offset the dumping margin.

In a few AD cases, if certain requirements have been met, Commerce has pursued (with the U.S. industry's consent) a “suspension agreement” in lieu of AD duties. AD suspension agreements suspend the pending AD case in exchange for a commitment by the foreign exporters of the product at issue to sell the covered goods in the U.S. market at or above one or more established reference prices.

Comments

Over the past few decades there have been several AD actions against Mexican agricultural products (e.g., fresh toma-

toes, sugar, lemon juice, table grapes, cattle, cut flowers). Some of these actions have succeeded in bringing relief to the petitioning U.S. industries and others have not. The AD case against fresh tomatoes from Mexico, filed in the mid-90s, resulted in a suspension agreement that has been amended five times over the years to try to curb unfair pricing by the Mexican shippers. In June of this year, faced with continued unfair pricing by Mexican exporters, the Florida tomato industry requested that Commerce terminate the suspension agreement and resume normal AD procedures.



AD cases are resource-intensive and should not be pursued unless the U.S. industry has conducted a feasibility study to determine whether filing an AD action has a reasonable likelihood of resulting in satisfactory AD duties for the industry.

2. Countervailing Duty (CVD) Actions

Legal standard

CVD cases are the next most common import relief action. They are targeted at a specific supplying country, or countries, and broadly require proof of both actionable government subsidies and injury to the U.S. industry in order to prevail. In general terms, there are two types of countervailable subsidies: export subsidies and domestic subsidies. All export subsidies are actionable. Domestic subsidies to a country's agricultural sector are only actionable if they are deemed to be "specific." If a foreign industry is determined in a CVD action to be receiving countervailable subsidies, the "CVD margin" is the percentage those subsidies represent of the exporter's sales impacted by the subsidies. The injury standard in CVD actions is the same as the one that applies in AD actions-- i.e., the U.S. industry must show that the unfairly subsidized imports are causing or threatening "material injury" to the U.S. industry.

Initiation and proceedings

CVD actions may be filed alone or in conjunction with an AD action. They may be initiated by a petition filed by an eligible interested party or be self-initiated by Commerce. As in AD actions, Commerce investigates the unfair trade elements (here, the subsidy issues), and the ITC investigates the injury issues. If a CVD action clears the required legal hurdles at the ITC and Commerce, CVD duties are imposed to offset

the margin of subsidization benefiting the foreign exporters. If a CVD case is filed together with an AD action, and margins are found in both cases, the AD and CVD duties are totaled and applied to imports of the covered product.

As in AD cases, Commerce in a few cases has pursued (with the U.S. industry's consent) suspension agreements in lieu of CVD duties. CVD suspension agreements suspend the pending CVD case in exchange for a commitment by the foreign government to apply and enforce specified export quotas on the product of concern.

Comments

In recent decades, there has only been one CVD action against Mexican agriculture -- the 2014 combined AD/CVD petition against sugar from Mexico, which resulted in AD and CVD suspension agreements. Those suspension agreements have been modified once and remain in effect.

Like AD cases, CVD actions are resource-intensive and should not be pursued until the U.S. industry has first conducted a feasibility study to determine whether filing a CVD petition has a reasonable likelihood of resulting in satisfactory CVD duties for the industry.

3. Sec. 201 Actions

Legal standard

Unlike AD and CVD cases, actions brought under Sec. 201 are not pegged to unfair trade practices or to any specific country. Sec. 201 actions, also called "global safeguard" actions, are brought against imports of a covered product from all foreign-supplying countries and, to be successful, must demonstrate that the covered goods are being imported in such



increased quantities as to be “a substantial cause” of “serious injury” to the U.S. industry. This injury standard is more rigorous than the one applicable in AD and CVD actions.

Initiation and proceedings

Sec. 201 cases may be lodged by an eligible interested party filing a petition or be self-initiated by the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), ITC, or trade committees in Congress. The ITC is responsible for investigating Sec. 201 cases. If, after filings and hearings, the ITC affirms that imports are a substantial cause of serious injury to the domestic industry, it will then assemble recommendations on the measures that should be taken to help the domestic industry adjust to the import levels at issue. The ITC’s remedy recommendations may include increased duties, tariff rate quotas, and other domestic adjustment measures. Its recommendations are sent to the President, who has final authority to determine what, if any, relief to provide the impacted industry. If the President determines to impose Sec. 201 relief, any approved measures will typically apply for four years but may be extended for a maximum of eight years.

Comments

Like AD and CVD actions, Sec. 201 cases are resource-intensive. They are difficult to win and should only be filed if the industry has first undertaken a feasibility study to determine whether it has a reasonable likelihood of prevailing. In 2020, when USTR self-initiated a Sec. 201 blueberry action without first undertaking a feasibility study, the ITC voted 5-0 against the U.S. industry, leaving the U.S. industry with substantial

legal fees and import levels that accelerated after the Sec. 201 action failed.

4. Sec. 301 Actions

Legal standard

Sec. 301 authorizes cases to investigate foreign trade practices that violate U.S. trade rights or, in the absence of a trade violation, that may nevertheless be considered “unreasonable” and “burdensome and restrictive” on U.S. commerce. The latter terms are expansively defined under Sec. 301 but in the past have generally been deemed to apply to significant trade measures that fall into gray areas not squarely covered by existing trade rules and obligations (e.g., intellectual property theft, currency manipulation, digital taxes). Sec. 301 is a highly discretionary trade remedy that USTR, as the lead agency, can elect to pursue, or decline to pursue, for wide-ranging reasons.

Initiation and proceedings

Sec. 301 cases may be initiated by any interested party filing a petition or be self-initiated by USTR. If a case is accepted for review, USTR and others in the U.S. Government will either investigate the matter on their own authority or pursue the Sec. 301 case under the dispute settlement mechanism of the World Trade Organization (WTO) or U.S. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) (see below). If USTR makes a determination at the end of a Sec. 301 investigation that the practices at issue are in violation of U.S. trade rights, or are unreasonable and burden and restrict U.S. commerce, Sec. 301 authorizes USTR to impose retaliatory measures against the offending country. Retaliation generally takes the form of additional U.S. tariffs, but Sec. 301 grants USTR broad scope to apply a diverse range of measures.

Until 2016, Sec. 301 was used almost entirely as a platform for USTR to prepare cases for WTO dispute settlement. The Trump Administration departed from that practice by self-initiating Sec. 301 investigations six times on country practices that were investigated solely by the U.S. Government. The largest of these self-initiated investigations was a case against China, which resulted in \$360 billion dollars of retaliatory U.S. tariffs on imports from China that are still in place today. To date, the Biden Administration has not initiated any new investigations under Sec. 301 but continues to maintain several of the actions begun during the Trump years.

Comments

In August of 2022, most of the Florida Congressional delegation filed a Sec. 301 petition asking USTR to investigate a pattern of “export targeting” by the Government of Mexico involving decades of subsidy benefits to its “protected” fruit and vegetable sectors exported to the U.S. market. USTR determined that it could not make a determination on whether to accept the petition in the 45-day petition review period but committed to establishing an Advisory Panel to determine how best to assist producers of seasonal and perishable fruits and vegetables in the Southeast to overcome the trade measures raised in the petition. The Federal Register Notice announcing the creation of that Advisory Panel is expected to be issued in the near future and is expected to be specific to produce sectors in the Southeast.

5. United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) Dispute Settlement Actions

Legal standard

USMCA, like NAFTA (the predecessor agreement to USMCA) and other U.S. FTAs, is aimed at eliminating barriers to trade and investment, and facilitating stronger trade and commercial ties between the participating countries. It has 34 chapters and numerous side letters, and retains most of the market-opening commitments established under NAFTA. In the agricultural sector, USMCA, like NAFTA, requires duty-free market access treatment on most products (including on fresh avocados, HS 0804.40). It also prohibits the use of export subsidies, unjustifiable sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, technical barriers to trade, and certain Geographical Indications, and lays down certain rules for tariff rate quotas that were grandfathered into USMCA on dairy. The countries participating in USMCA may invoke the agreement’s dispute settlement mechanism if they believe that one of their USMCA partners has failed to carry out a USMCA obligation.

Initiation and proceedings

USMCA dispute settlement is initiated and litigated government-to-government. The dispute settlement procedures begin with consultations to explore whether a mutually agreeable negotiated solution can be found. If no solution is reached, the case proceeds to litigation before a USMCA, arbitral panel. After filings are submitted and hearings held, the panel rules on whether the respondent country has violated its USMCA obligations. If a violation has occurred, and the offending country refuses to bring its violation into compliance, the complaining country is authorized under USMCA to impose increased tariffs on goods from the offending country.

Comments

To date, the Biden Administration has initiated only a few USMCA dispute settlement procedures. It has twice taken Canada to USMCA dispute settlement over its tariff quota allocations on dairy, but has yet to obtain an acceptable solution to that dispute. It has also begun dispute settlement procedures against Mexico’s biotech corn policies, which the U.S. Government alleges are a violation of Mexico’s SPS obligations under that agreement. Mexico has recently compounded U.S. concerns in the corn dispute by imposing additional tariffs on white corn. The Biden Administration has said that while these new tariffs will not impact 97% of U.S. corn shipments to Mexico, the United States nevertheless intends to address these tariffs in the USMCA corn dispute settlement procedures.

6. WTO Dispute Settlement Actions

Legal standard

The WTO is a multilateral trade agreement covering 60 different agreements and hundreds of commitments governing trade in goods, subsidies, SPS measures, technical barriers to trade, and numerous other trade issues. The United States, Mexico, and 162 other countries are WTO members, all of which have the right to invoke dispute settlement procedures if their WTO rights have been breached.

Initiation and proceedings

As with USMCA dispute settlement, WTO cases are initiated and litigated government-to-government and are generally confidential. They are typically filed by a government to address export concerns, not import concerns. Once a government initiates WTO dispute settlement, the WTO contemplates an initial review and decision by an arbitral panel, followed by the right to an appeal. If a complainant country wins a WTO dispute settlement action, and the offending country fails to come into compliance, the WTO may authorize the winning country to take retaliatory measures, typically in the form of increased tariffs on the offending country’s goods.

Comments

For years, WTO dispute settlement was USTR’s primary trade recourse, including against countries that have established FTAs with the United States. A great many of USTR’s actions in the WTO have been against unfair foreign agricultural practices, including, e.g., foreign agricultural subsidies, food safety standards, and market access violations. Those U.S. cases have occasionally led the United States to impose retaliatory tariffs on foreign goods.

Since 2020, however, the United States has been block-

ing the WTO appellate process from functioning, which has impaired the entire WTO dispute settlement process. The Biden Administration's systemic concerns about the WTO have prevented it from taking any new cases to WTO dispute settlement.

7. Sec. 307/Withhold Release Orders (WROs)

Legal standard

Sec. 307 of the Tariff Act authorizes U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to issue WROs to prevent goods produced in whole or in part in a foreign country using forced labor from entering the U.S. market. U.S. law defines forced labor as any work or service exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty for non-performance and for which the worker does not offer work or service voluntarily.

Initiation and proceedings

Allegations of forced labor, preferably with supporting documentation, may be submitted by interested parties or anonymously on the CBP website platform established for these actions. CBP will investigate any allegations made and will thereafter issue its findings together with a WRO if it confirms the use of forced labor.

Comments

In October 2021, CBP issued a WRO on fresh tomatoes produced on two Mexican tomato farms, Agropecuarios Tom S.A. de C.V., and Horticola Tom S.A. de C.V.

8. Sec. 232 National Security Actions

Legal standard

In Sec. 232 actions, if specific goods are being imported in such "increased quantities or under such circumstances" as to impair U.S. "national security" interests, import restrictions and non-trade related actions may be taken to "adjust" those imports.

Initiation and proceedings

Sec. 232 investigations may be initiated by a petition from an interested party or be self-initiated by the U.S. Government. Commerce investigates these actions and sends its conclusions to the President along with recommendations on what, if any, measures should be taken. The President then has full discretion to decide what measures, if any, to take on the covered imports.

Comments

In 2018, Sec. 232 actions led to additional tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from most foreign countries, which tariffs are still in effect. In prior years, Sec. 232 authority has also led to oil imports from certain countries being embargoed. Sec. 232 has never been applied to imports in the food or agribusiness sectors. 🥑



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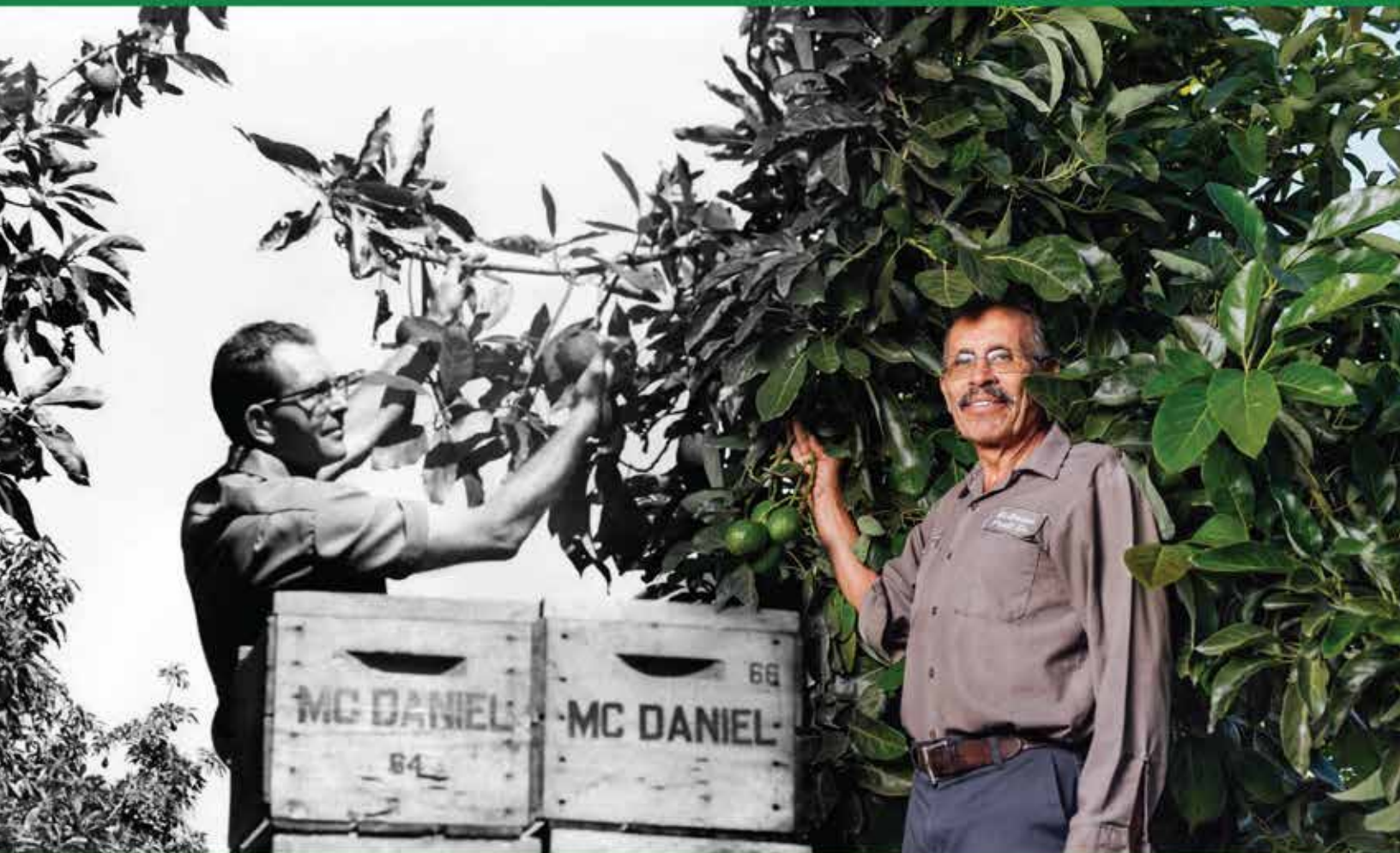
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The Splane Perspective

Since joining the California Avocado Commission in mid-March, I have been immersing myself into learning about the avocado category, the price-less growers, retail and foodservice customers, AMRIC handlers and of course internal staff and various supporting agencies. Despite my vast background in various marketing leadership positions with Consumer Packaged Goods companies primarily focused in the foodservice channel, there has been a lot to learn and absorb. You might ask, why the change to the California Avocado Commission and transition to the produce category? Two primary reasons – a love for farming and a belief in plant-forward whole food healthy eating.

My love for farming comes from a family heritage of wheat and barley farming in eastern Washington where my mom grew up and my grandparents owned several thousand acres of land. Many fond childhood memories on the farm ultimately allowed me to be a hired hand during harvest time working long but rewarding days supporting the family business. Experiences few have and that I'll never forget.

A common thread I have observed from the produce industry overall, and especially with those supporting the California avocado business, is a culture of passion, commitment, and an authentic drive to deliver the absolute best avocados to the consumer.

One of the areas the marketing team has been focusing on is fine tuning our messaging hierarchy. There are so many great messages surrounding avocados, but we need to get manically focused on messaging that elevates and differentiates California avocados. Why is this so important? By establishing a clear messaging hierarchy, a brand can convey a unified identity, build trust and establish a differentiated emotional connection with consumers and a motivating one with the trade that ultimately drives demand, loyalty and premium positioning.

Three of our go-forward messages have been a part of our marketing mix for quite some time. They are: premium quality and preference, locally grown and now in season. While these are not new, there will be an intense focus on ensuring these are the differentiating messages included in all consumer touch points. We identified these messages by utilizing consumer insights to determine what drives consumer purchase behavior and brand loyalty.

What's being strategically added to California avocado messaging for incremental brand value is sustainability. No new practices are necessary in the grove; we are simply getting



Terry Splane

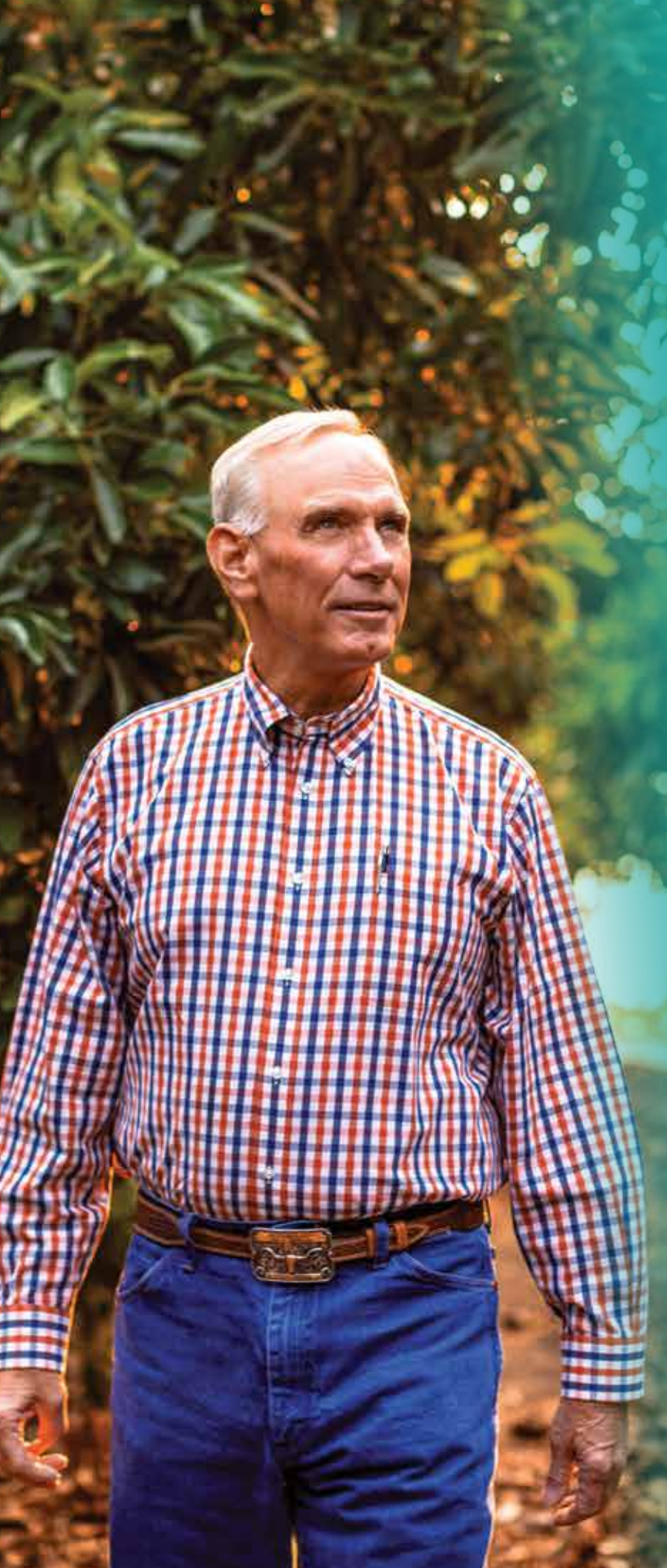
credit for and leveraging the great and conscientious work California growers are keenly focused on already. Sustainability as a brand purchase driver continues to pick up momentum every year. This is true with all consumer demographics, but especially with younger consumers who are making this messaging important today and also well into the future. A recent report shows that 71% of Millennials and 75% of Gen Z state that sustainability is more important when making purchase decisions than actual product brand names.

The depth of our sustainability messaging is well rounded and can be adjusted to a particular communication objective and audience. The following points showcase the copy direction that has been approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for all communications.

California avocados; grown locally, farmed responsibly:

- Sustainably grown
- Environmentally friendly farming
- Locally grown = less transport = fewer carbon emissions
- Ensured worker safety and well-being
- Ethically sourced

While we have begun to include these powerful messages in some of our communications this year, we will amplify their presence even more as we build out our communications strategy for next year. 🍷



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New Entomology Advisor Joins UCANR

By Tim Spann, Ph.D.
Spann Ag Research & Consulting, LLC

In June, Dr. Hamutahl Cohen joined University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources as an entomology advisor for Ventura and Los Angeles Counties. I recently had the chance to speak with Dr. Cohen to learn about her background and what she has been observing in avocado groves in the few months since joining UCANR.

Dr. Cohen is originally from Los Angeles. She attended UC Berkeley for her undergraduate degree where she majored in Environmental Science, Policy, and Management with a specialization in entomology. While at Berkeley she had the opportunity to study under insect chemical ecologists, agroecologists and pollinator ecologists working in agriculture.

One experience that stands out to her was working as a research assistant for Dr. Houston Wilson on a project studying vineyard management and the western grape leafhopper. From that experience she fell in love with the research process and saw the impact that agricultural research can have on the local community.

Upon graduation from Berkeley, Dr. Cohen knew she wanted to work with insects but with no farming background she knew she needed to learn more about agriculture. Thus, she took a position as a farming apprentice at the Center for

Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS) at UC Santa Cruz. There she gained experience with crop planning, soil management, crop rotations, cover cropping, composting and greenhouse production with a variety of annual and perennial crops.

Following her apprenticeship with CASFS, Dr. Cohen began her Ph.D. program at UC Santa Cruz, where she studied the role of cul-

tural practices in urban agriculture on the three Ps – pollinators, predators and parasitoids. Her research took a broad landscape ecology approach to understanding insect population dynamics and how processes such as urbanization and agricultural intensification impact beneficial insects. Following



Dr. Hamutahl Cohen, UCANR Entomology Advisor.

her Ph.D., Dr. Cohen worked as a postdoctoral researcher in the Entomology Department at UC Riverside on pollinator conservation in almonds, peppers and sunflowers.

She then accepted a position with the University of Florida Cooperative Extension as a commercial horticulture agent working on pest control in the ornamental horticulture industry. Florida is home to a lot of insects and is constantly under threat from invasive exotic pests. Her work there focused on pests on palm trees, ornamental hedge plants and turf grass, primarily focusing on pest identification, monitoring, pesticide application safety and developing and promoting integrated pest management strategies.

Dr. Cohen said taking the position with UCANR was like coming home. She was drawn to the position because of “the community of advisors and researchers here, who are known for sparking innovation, conducting rigorous research and enhancing California agriculture in their local communities.” Dr. Cohen went on, stating “I grew up in California and have always been amazed by the diversity of agricultural crops and products our state puts out. I’m also keenly aware about how vulnerable our environments are. From the coast to the

mountains, our farms are embedded in unique landscapes and ecosystems, so how we farm in California matters for issues like pollution, biodiversity and climate change. When it comes to pest control, I am excited to work with UCANR because of its focus on addressing pest problems with minimal impacts to the environment through the development of integrated pest management programs.”

As an entomology advisor, Dr. Cohen’s responsibilities include developing an education and research program focusing on insect pest management in agricultural and natural ecosystems in Ventura and Los Angeles counties. She noted the challenge of a position like hers, and what makes it exciting, is the opportunity to work with different Southern California crops – berries, citrus, avocados – and the myriad pest issues that comes with them, such as pest population monitoring, pest biology, pesticide resistance monitoring, application technology and evaluating biological and cultural control IPM methods. Partnering with the diversity of stakeholders – PCAs, small and large growers, land stewards, regulatory bodies, the general public – associated with each crop will be a key to her success. She added, “I really want to work on increasing



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communication and relationships between these groups, particularly between growers and the public, to increase knowledge and education about what our agricultural communities are doing to sustainably advance pest control.”

I finished our conversation by asking Dr. Cohen about the *Coloptilia* moth that was first reported on avocados in California in July 2020. The larvae of this moth species undergo hyper-metamorphosis. The early larval stages are leaf miners before emerging to become a leaf roller. Since 2020, there have been varying reports about this insect pest with a few PCAs reporting the need to spray. However, in 2023 reports of this pest and its damage seem to have skyrocketed with it being quite widespread in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

Dr. Cohen told me that we still don't know much about this new pest, including whether it is an exotic pest or a local insect that has adapted to avocados. It's part of a family of moths called Gracillariidae, which has 105 genera and 2,000 species.

It's likely the impact of this pest will be variable and its presence may vary from season to season. It is most attracted to young leaf flush and its threat is probably greatest to young trees where it could negatively impact photosynthesis. Currently, it is only known to damage leaves and not fruit.

Dr. Cohen told me that she has been working to learn more about how widespread this pest is in Ventura and surrounding



An avocado leaf showing damage from the miner stage of the *Coloptilia* moth as well as the leaf roller phase of development.

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counties. She has seen some growers with the pest present on a significant portion of their young flush, and other growers who are not affected at all. The unusual weather this year has affected pest populations, and it's too early to know if this will become a major avocado pest so it's something she is keeping an eye on. "I've been keeping track of where I've seen the pest, curating a reference collection of larvae and adults to help with identification, and working with CDFG to catalog the insect in their records," she said.

She recommended CAC consider some research funding to better understand this pest's biology and to develop effective control strategies. "We like to promote Bt [*Bacillus thuringiensis*, a soil-dwelling bacterium toxic to certain insect larvae] and Spinosad for caterpillars, but this insect hides underneath the waxy leaves of avocados, so these controls aren't super effective as they don't come into contact with the insect



An avocado leaf with leaf roller larva stage of the Coloptilia moth.

or the tissue it's eating. We need to figure out more about its life history, when it is present, for how long and how many generations, and that can tell us more about the most effective time to apply any type of treatment."

She also noted research would be useful to understand the wasp parasite — which we know virtually nothing about — that has been associated with this pest. Assassin bugs, lacewings and minute prate bugs also are natural enemies, but we

don't know if these will be effective at keeping populations of the *Coloptilia* moth in check. Lastly, it would be good to understand how cultural practices, such as pruning and weed management, may affect this pest's and its natural enemies' populations. 🍌

** Images in this article courtesy of Dr. Hamutahl Cohen*



The CA GROWN license plate art is used in consumer programs and often in retail programs such as displays and feature ads.

CA Grown Partnership Generates More Than 46 Million Impressions

The California Avocado Commission partnered with the Buy California Marketing Agreement/CA GROWN program to secure additional exposure through online, social media and retailer campaigns that helped drive home the association between California and avocados. The CA GROWN program provided the Commission with a range of opportunities to promote the availability of California avocados and participate in multi-California-product retail promotions during peak season.

As part of the CA GROWN program, the Buy California organization staged and took photos of California avocados in a variety of retail settings for use in digital and print advertising campaigns. To ensure customers and consumers associate California avocados with locally grown crops, California avocados were featured in multi-product in-store and digital programs with local retailers in 2022 and 2023, including Albertson's, Bristol Farms, Costco, Gelson's, Ralphs, Save Mart and Stater Bros. The CA GROWN nutrition program also produced a retail nutrition kit specifically featuring the Golden State fruit. Due to the success of the 2022 CA Grown program in their stores, several retailers — Gelson's, Raley's, Save Mart and others — committed to year-round promotions in 2023.

To broaden consumer awareness, California avocados were

featured in the program's iconic California Recipes program in partnership with Visit California and California Wines. The CA GROWN program also hosted a tour for its 50+ influencer partners to educate them about agriculture throughout the state. As part of the tour, the influencers visited Fairfield Farms, an organic blueberry and avocado ranch located in Pauma Valley, California. CA GROWN influencers — who showcased California avocados across their social and digital channels — generated 15 million impressions.

On CA GROWN's social channels — Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube — the program generated more than 26 million impressions, 471,000 engagements and 62,000 link clicks. Posts on Pinterest also generated significant consumer interest with more than 20 million impressions. As K.C. Cornwell, digital and social director for CA GROWN noted, "Our content team uses several tools to discover which recipes consumers are searching for online and any questions consumers are asking about our member commodities, so we can be certain the content we're sharing on the CA GROWN website, social channels, via influencers and in retail campaigns is as effective as possible." 🥑

** Images in this article courtesy of CA Grown*

Research Trial Report:

Safety and Efficacy of Herbicides in Bearing Avocados

By Tim Spann, PhD
Spann Ag Research & Consulting, LLC

In 2019, the California Avocado Commission funded a research project led by Dr. Travis Bean at the University of California Riverside to conduct efficacy trials on herbicides for use in bearing avocado groves. Tragically, less than a year into the project, Dr. Bean passed away unexpectedly. Dr. Peggy Mauk agreed to take over the project and see it through to completion and has recently submitted the final project report, which is summarized here.

Currently, only 10 herbicide active ingredients are registered for use on bearing avocados in California. Of these, paraquat is a restricted use chemical with high human toxicity that most growers prefer not to use. Also, glyphosate's (Roundup®) registration is under increasing scrutiny and many weeds are developing some level of resistance to it. Thus, trials were conducted with products containing active ingredients that are currently registered for use on citrus in California, to evaluate their efficacy and potential for phytotoxicity to avocados.

To account for differences in soil type and climate, research trials were established in two distinct growing regions (Ventura and Riverside Counties). Herbicides were applied in spring and fall to test efficacy in controlling different seasonal weed populations and to evaluate phytotoxicity during different seasonal phenological stages in avocado groves. Special atten-

tion was paid to immediate and cumulative phytotoxic effects. The study was repeated in two consecutive years at each site to address inter-year variations in weather and other factors, especially rainfall. Special consideration was given to products that can be applied with backpack or handheld sprayers, herbicides with suitable restricted-entry and preharvest intervals, herbicide product cost, duration of efficacy and effectiveness for control of priority management weed species. The major weed species present at both sites were tumble pigweed, common purslane, sow thistle, cheeseweed/mallow, stinging nettle and hairy fleabane.

Both pre- and post-emergence herbicides were selected for the trials. Products currently labeled for use on citrus in California have the advantage of being registered for use on another subtropical crop in the state and have known weed control spectra. The active ingredients selected for testing were: indaziflam (Alion®), pendimethalin (Prowl H2O®), rimsulfuron (Matrix®), S-metolachlor (Pennant Magnum®), saflufenacil (TreeVix®), isoxaben (Gallery®) and glufosinate-ammonium (Forfeit®). All these products were compared to currently registered active ingredients, which include oxyfluorfen (Goal®), flumioxazin (Chateau®), simazine (Princep®), glyphosate (Roundup®), prodiamine (Proclipse®), carfentrazone-ethyl (Shark®) and caprylic

Table 1. Rates and application timing for herbicides tested in avocado groves in Santa Paula and Riverside in 2019-2021.

Treatment #	Pre/Post emergent	Product	Active Ingredient	Rate
1		Untreated Control		
2	Post	Forfeit 280	Glufosinate	56 oz/acre
3	Post	Roundup	Glyphosate	3.8 lbs a.i./acre, 7%
4	Post	Suppress	Caprylic Acid	9%
5	Post	Shadow 3EC	Clethodim	16 oz/acre
6	Pre/Post	Treevix	Saflufenacil	1 oz/acre
7	Pre/Post	Chateau EZ	Flumioxazin	12 oz/acre
8	Pre/Post	Goaltender	Oxyfluorfen	3 pt/acre
9	Pre	Alion	Indaziflam	6.5 oz/acre
10	Pre	Matrix SB	Rimsulfuron	4 oz/acre
11	Pre	Princep 4L	Simazine	4.4 lb/acre
12	Pre	Pennant Magnum	S-metolachlor	2 pt/acre
13	Pre	Prowl H2O	Pendimethalin	6.3 qt/acre
14	Pre	Gallery	Isoxaben	1.33 lb/acre

acid (Suppress®). Table 1 lists all the products, their type of activity (pre- or post-emergence) and the rates tested.

In Ventura County, the test site was at the UC Hansen Research and Extension Center (HREC) in Santa Paula on a 15-year-old Hass block. In Riverside County, the test site was at the Agricultural Experiment Station on the UC Riverside campus in a 2-year-old Hass block. A total of four applications were made at each site, two spring and two fall applications, and data was collected for eight to 10 weeks after treatment to evaluate weed suppression and phytotoxicity symptoms. Applications were made to test plots of approximately 40 to 60 square feet on the grove floor adjacent to the tree skirts to evaluate efficacy under typical grove conditions and to evaluate potential phytotoxicity from uptake by shallow avocado roots. Additionally, tree foliage was sprayed directly to simulate spray drift and determine direct phytotoxic effects. All applications were made using a backpack

sprayer. Following treatment applications, herbicides were incorporated with simulated rainfall using a portable sprinkler to apply ½-inch of water. At all applications, weeds were 2-4 inches tall when treated. Treatments were made in October and November 2019, February and May 2020, November and December 2020, and March and April 2021.

In 2022, with the goal of submitting some herbicides for registration, an additional trial was conducted to further test the efficacy of the best performing herbicides from the previous trials and to test common tank mixes used in citrus. The trials were conducted at the HREC in Ventura County and at UCR in Riverside County using 19-year-old and 4-year-old trees, respectively. These treatments were made in June 2022, to test plots that were 20 feet long by 3.3 feet wide, parallel to the tree row and adjacent to the tree skirts. The herbicide rates and tank mixes used for the 2022 trials are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Rates and tank mixtures used for the 2022 herbicide tests on avocado groves in Santa Paula and Riverside.

Treatment #	Treatment	Rate	Surfactant*
1	Untreated Control		
2	Saflufenacil	1 oz/acre	5.2 lb/acre ammonium sulfate (AMS) and 1% methalated seed oil (MSO)
3	Glufosinate	56 oz/acre	5.2 lb/acre AMS and 1% MSO
4	Glufosinate + Saflufenacil	56 oz/acre + 1 oz/acre	5.2 lb/acre AMS and 1% MSO
5	Glyphosate	3.8 lb a.i./acre, 7%	5.2 lb/acre AMS and 1% MSO

*Surfactants were used in the test plots in Riverside but not in Santa Paula.

Results

For the first set of trials there was a significant interaction between season and treatments at the UCR location, thus data are presented for spring and fall treatments separately. However, at the HREC location there was no interaction so data were pooled across seasons. An example of some of these data are shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Percent weed control in Fall 2020/2021 at 1, 2, 4 and 8 weeks after treatment (WAT) at UCR.

Treatment	Rate	Percent Control			
		1 WAT	2 WAT	4 WAT	8 WAT
S-metolachlor	2 pt/A	1.3 e*	18.8 def	43.8 de	57.8 bcde
Flumioxazin	12 oz/A	7.0 cde	12.5 ef	26.3 ef	54.8 bcde
Simazine	4 lb/A	11.3 bcd	25.0 de	52.5 cde	75.8 abc
Rimsulfuron	4 oz/A	72.0 a	83.5 ab	92.3 a	75.0 abcd
Oxyfluorfen	3 pt/A	11.3 cde	31.3 de	38.8 def	52.5 cde
Indaziflam	6.5 oz/A	80.8 a	89.5 a	77.5 abc	68.3 bcd
Pendimethalin	6.3 qt/A	31.3 b	40.0 cd	48.3 cde	42.5 def
Isoxaben	1.33 lb/A	15.0 bcd	40.0 cd	44.5 de	56.3 bcde
Saflufenacil	1 oz/A	23.0 b	33.0 d	60.0 bcd	67.5 bcd
Clethodim	16 oz/A	3.3 de	6.3 fg	8.8 fg	16.3 fg
Caprylic Acid	9%	19.5 bc	28.3 de	32.5 def	26.3 ef
Glufosinate	56 oz/A	30.0 b	61.3 bc	79.3 ab	97.3 a
Glyphosate	3.8 lbs a.i./A, 7%	57.5 a	71.3 ab	81.3 ab	84.3 ab
Untreated		0.0 e	0.0 g	0.0 g	0.0 g
	P-value	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001

* Means within a column followed by the same letter are not significantly different.

During spring and fall at the UCR location, glyphosate and glufosinate provided the best weed control through eight weeks after treatment. Saflufenacil, simazine, and indaziflam were the next best performing products in the fall. Phytotoxicity from glyphosate and glufosinate was observed for the

Table 4. Phytotoxicity of the herbicide treatments on the avocado trees expressed in Fall 2020/2021 at 1, 2, 4 and 8 weeks after treatment (WAT) at UCR.

Treatment	Rate	Phytotoxicity Rating*			
		1 WAT	2 WAT	4 WAT	8 WAT
S-metolachlor	2 pt/A	0.0 c**	0.0 d	0.0 d	1.3 bc
Flumioxazin	12 oz/A	0.0 c	0.0 d	0.1 d	0.0 c
Simazine	4 lb/A	0.0 c	0.0 d	0.0 d	1.3 bc
Rimsulfuron	4 oz/A	0.0 c	0.1 d	0.1 d	0.0 c
Oxyfluorfen	3 pt/A	0.0 c	0.0 d	0.0 d	0.1 c
Indaziflam	6.5 oz/A	0.7 bc	1.0 cd	1.0 cd	1.0 bc
Pendimethalin	6.3 qt/A	0.1 c	1.8 abc	0.0 d	0.1 c
Isoxaben	1.33 lb/A	0.4 bc	1.6 bc	1.7 bc	0.8 bc
Saflufenacil	1 oz/A	1.0 b	2.3 ab	2.5 ab	2.3 ab
Clethodim	16 oz/A	0.0 c	0.0 d	0.0 d	0.1 c
Caprylic Acid	9%	0.0 c	0.8 cd	2.1 abc	1.1 bc
Glufosinate	56 oz/A	1.1 b	2.5 ab	3.3 a	3.1 a
Glyphosate	3.8 lbs a.i./A, 7%	2.8 a	3.0 a	3.0 ab	4.0 a
Untreated		0.0 c	0.0 d	0.0 d	0.0 c
	P-value	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001

* Phytotoxicity was visually rated on a scale of 0 (no phytotoxicity) to 10 (dead tissue).
 ** Means within a column followed by the same letter are not significantly different at the 0.05 level.

entire eight weeks of observation. However, with glufosinate, the damaged buds remained viable and eventually produced new growth.

At the HREC location, glyphosate and glufosinate also provided the best weed control through eight weeks after treatment. Phytotoxicity and regrowth was observed at HREC similar to what was observed at UCR.

A consistent result that was observed at both locations was that protoporphyrinogen oxidase (PPO) inhibitor herbicides, such as oxyfluorfen and flumioxazin, provided good control of germinating and recently germinated weeds, but were not effective on established weeds. Thus, these products would not be good as stand-alone herbicides, but may have a role as a component in an integrated weed control program.

Results from the 2022 trials showed little to no phytotoxicity from glyphosate, glufosinate or saflufenacil alone, but the combination of glufosinate+saflufenacil caused significantly more phytotoxicity. Although the phytotoxicity ratings were higher with the combination treatment, buds were not killed, and the trees eventually grew out of the damage.

Conclusions

Based on the results of these trials, a request was made for registration of saflufenacil. However, because of issues with phytotoxicity observed on avocados in South America, BASF, the registrant for saflufenacil, declined to support a registration.

The products rimsulfuron (Matrix® a pre-emergence grass and broadleaf herbicide) and clethodim (Shadow® a post-emergence grass herbicide) were both supported for registration by their respective registrants and have entered the IR-4 program. The first residue trials for both these products were conducted in 2023 at UCR and the products are moving through the registration process.

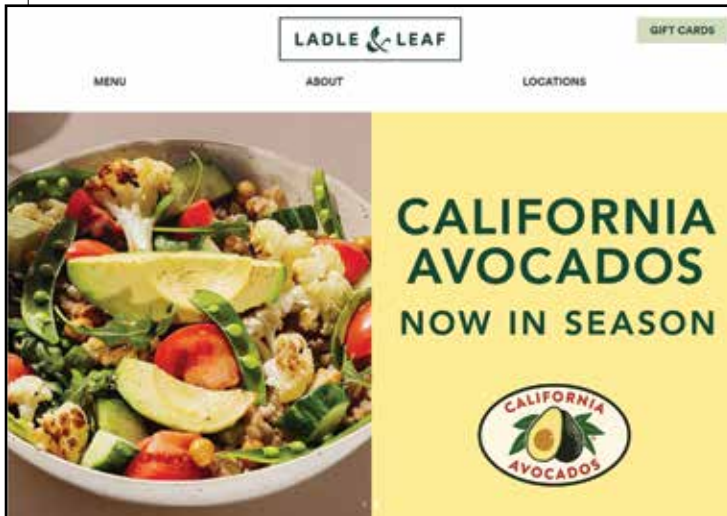
Glufosinate was already in the IR-4 program when this research was conducted and a registration for avocados was anticipated. Recently a Section 24C Special Local Needs registration for the use of glufosinate on avocados was issued; however, *California is NOT INCLUDED in this registration*. CAC is working with the California Department of Pesticide Registration to understand this exclusion and to determine what can be done to make this tool available for California avocado growers.

Dr. Mauk stresses that as an industry, we need to shift our weed control focus to be proactive rather than reactive. We need to apply pre-emergent and early post-emergent PPO herbicides [oxyfluorfen (Goal®) and flumioxazin (Chateau®)] rather than react to established weeds. Glyphosate and/or glufosinate (when it becomes available) are important tools to treat weeds but should be used in addition to the other tools we have available. 🍌

Fall 2023 Foodservice Mid-Late Season Promotions

Regional California-based foodservice operators are critical partners in helping to maintain awareness of California avocados during the season. With over 70% of diners perusing restaurant websites before selecting where to eat, the California Avocados brand logo on websites, digital menus and in-store point-of-sale materials reinforces awareness and generates interest in the menu item featuring California avocados.

The following are examples of 2023 California avocado foodservice promotions that started in June or later. (The summer edition of *From the Grove* highlighted promotions in May and earlier.)



Ladle & Leaf chain announced seasonal California avocados were in season and on the menu.



Super Duper supported and promoted California avocados during the season with grower videos on social media.

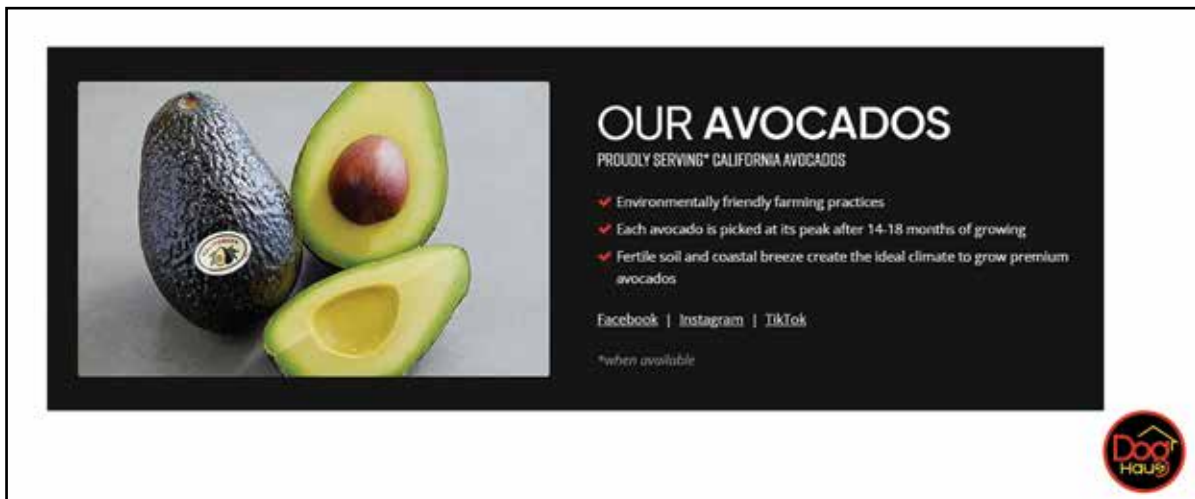


Del Taco leveraged its popular Carnitas line to promote California avocados on the website menu banner.



Robek's showcased California avocados on its Toasts menu page.

Northern California-based restaurant chain, Mixt, proudly touted locally sourced California avocados on its social media platforms.



New chain partner, Dog Haus, announced it was proudly serving California avocados – an environmentally friendly fruit.

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NORMS restaurant's Limited Time Offer eblast with the Cali-Cado Benny.

Jimboy's Tacos

June 30

Normalize fresh, made-to-order food that looks good AND tastes good.

(Also smells good, feels good, gives good hugs, and loves you back).

Try our Stuffed Quesadilla filled with locally grown and responsibly farmed California Avocados, grilled chicken, bacon, cheese, pico and chipotle cream sauce! Served with a side of sour cream and dusted with parm.



Jimboy's Tacos promoted California avocados in its Stuffed Quesadilla on social media.



THE AVOS WITH THE MOST COME FROM THE WEST COAST



@CaliforniaAvocados

Denny's (Arizona, California and Nevada) social media post example.

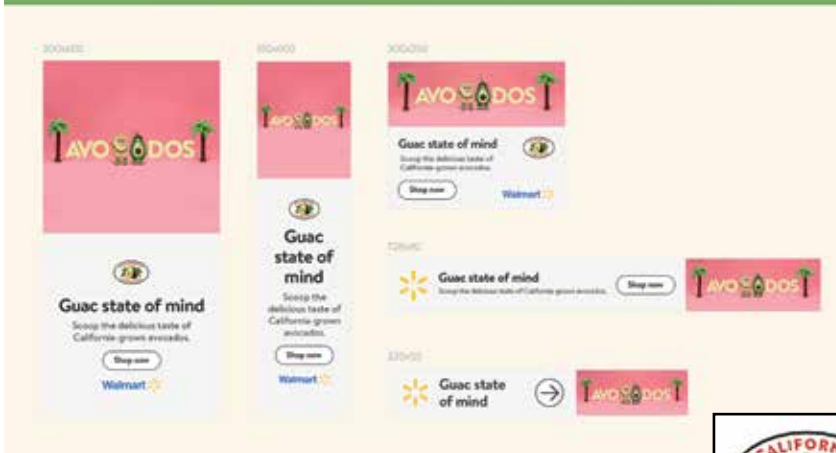
2023 Peak Season Retail Promotion Highlights

The summer edition of *From the Grove* highlighted California avocado retail promotions that began before June 2023. The following are examples of promotions that occurred from May through August, along with samples of the creative assets one account has been using this season in their Western division.



The Fresh Market retail chain, with stores in 13 states ranging from Florida to Illinois, showcased California avocados and the brand logo in their feature ads as they merchandised the fruit in-store.

A sampling of Walmart digital ads this California avocado season



Walmart's Western division stores used a set of digital ads to announce the availability of California avocados and promote their delicious taste. The ads used creative from the Commission's consumer advertising campaign "the best avocados have California in them."

California avocados were promoted in Albertsons/Safeway stores located in Oregon as early as May and well into July.





California Avocado Time

From sandwiches and salads to tacos, toast and more, take almost any meal from meh to marvelous with California Avocados! Make the most of these amazing avocados while they're still in season with these avo-centric recipes. Happy cooking!

Veggie Eggs Benedict

FILED UNDER: [Breakfast & Brunch](#), [Eggs & Dairy](#)



Fish Tacos with Avocado & Roasted Poblano Salsa

FILED UNDER: [Main Course](#), [Fish & Seafood](#)



PCC Community Markets in Seattle, Washington promoted California avocados in May and June with custom signage from CAC and their in-store sign specialty team. The signage prominently called out the California origin of the fruit.

Nugget Markets in Northern California spotlighted the locally grown benefits of California avocados in weekly ads and featured CAC recipes on their landing page. When a consumer searched “avocados” on the retail website – California avocado recipes popped up every time.

Raley’s loves local California avocados and promoted various sizes from May to July. This digital promotion featuring CAC’s advertising creative is targeted to younger shoppers who are key to building and sustaining future demand.



Lunds & Byerlys in Minnesota featured California GEM avocados with prominent point-of-purchase signage from May through June.

Fall 2023 Recipes

For this edition of *From the Grove* the California Avocado Commission is highlighting two recipes. The first recipe, *Spider Avocado Deviled Eggs*, is a fun idea for Halloween and was developed by Southern California recipe blogger and photographer Jen Nikolaus at Yummy Healthy Easy. This appetizer and snack idea is an example of the type of recipes the Commission features in email and social media communications in the fall and winter months when California avocados are not in peak season. Maintaining a regular cadence with California avocado fans year-round helps maintain brand loyalty.

The second recipe, *California Avocado Ice Cream on the Half Shell*, was developed and promoted this season by trusted influencers and California Avocado Brand Advocates Ewa and

Jeromy Huang of NomLife. This no churn, dairy-free ice cream recipe reached over 334,000 of their followers and garnered more than 600,000 engagements on *Instagram Reels*.

The Commission encourages growers to visit CaliforniaAvocado.com/recipes/ where more than 1,000 recipes are posted. You can explore recipes created by other growers, Brand Advocates, chefs and fans, as well as search by category for types of dishes or dietary preferences. 🥑

***Large avocados are recommended for these recipes. A large avocado averages about 8 ounces. If using smaller or larger size avocados adjust the quantity accordingly. As with all fruits and vegetables, wash avocados before cutting.*

Spider Avocado Deviled Eggs Recipe

Serves: 6

Time: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

6 hard-boiled eggs, cooled
½ ripe, Fresh California Avocado, seeded, peeled and diced
½ tsp. salt,
¼ tsp. dry mustard
½ tsp. pepper
9 black olives, or more as needed

Instructions:

1. Peel eggshells and slice each peeled egg in half lengthwise.
2. Put the egg yolk halves in the bowl of a food processor. Mix in avocado, salt, mustard, pepper and mayonnaise. Pureé until creamy.
3. Fill the egg centers with the creamy avocado/egg yolk mixture.
4. Slice three olives in half lengthwise. Place on the top of the avocado mixture for the spider body.
5. Slice the remaining olives in half lengthwise, then slice into small slivers for the spider legs. Push into the side of the spider body.
6. Serve and enjoy!



This cute and spooky treat features avocados, hard boiled eggs and olives.

California Avocado Ice Cream on the Half Shell

Serves: 4

Time: Prep time 20 minutes; freeze time 4 hours

This creamy vegetarian California avocado ice cream is made with coconut milk and honey. For a unique and elevated presentation, the ice cream is served in the avocado shell and topped with a chocolate mousse ball to represent the “seed.” It’s an impressive, restaurant-worthy dessert, perfect for date nights and dinner parties or simply a fun treat to make at home.

Ingredients:

Ice Cream Ingredients

2 ripe, Fresh California Avocados, halved and seeded
200 ml (about ½ (13.5-fl. oz.) can) coconut milk
2 Tbsp. honey (or use maple syrup for a vegan ice cream)

Mousse Seed Ingredients

¼ cup semi-sweet chocolate baking chips
¾ cup vegan heavy whipping cream

Instructions:

Ice Cream

1. Remove avocado from peel taking care to not break the peel to utilize as the serving bowls.
2. Add the avocados, coconut milk and honey into a blender or food processor and blend until smooth.
3. Spoon the creamy mixture back into the avocado peels and smooth the surface. Freeze for 3 hours or overnight.

Mousse Seed

1. To make the chocolate mousse seed, add chocolate and vegan heavy whipping cream into a bowl, microwave for 1 minute and whisk together. Store this in the fridge to chill until solid.
2. After the avocado ice cream has chilled, use a small ice cream scoop to remove a scoop of the ice cream in the center to create room for the chocolate “seed.”
3. Clean the scoop then use it to scoop balls from the chocolate mousse.
Place the scoops in the hollows made in the ice cream to look like avocado seeds.
4. Serve immediately.



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World Avocado Market Projection Up to the Year 2030 Version 2.0

A bigger production surge than originally forecast

By Eric Imbert, Cirad
eric.imbert@cirad.fr

(Editor's Note: This article appeared in the May-June 2023 issue of FruiTrop, a European agricultural publication. The Commission is grateful to Mr. Imbert and FruiTrop for their willingness to share this important global avocado prospective with the California avocado industry stakeholders.)

The results emerging from version 2.0 of our projection of the world market up to 2030 confirm the idea of an imbalance between supply and demand, with the latter being possibly stronger than expected. Nonetheless, the avocado market has major reservoirs for growth, which this structured industry can harness if the upstream and downstream segments rally together to focus on product promotion. The most competitive players in economic terms, but also sustainability terms, will be the best placed to withstand this coming period, which in any event will be harder-fought.



An ambitious project, though greater transparency required for this attractive, rapidly developing industry

In 2021, FruiTrop initiated a work aimed at describing the world avocado market's potential orientation in the medium term. Quite an undertaking, such is the complexity of producing high-quality projection work in this field! The world avocado trade is based on no fewer than twenty countries with different pedoclimatic conditions and production systems. Furthermore, even when present, the basic information (cultivation areas, yields, etc.) required to produce a work of this sort is not always top-quality. As a final difficulty, this developing industry has shifting contours which are hard to track. The excellent economic results achieved by Hass for most of the 2010s were very encouraging, in a global economic context more favourable to investment in the agricultural field. Hence there was a wave of planting, impressive in terms of magnitude and geographic extent. This is an unavoidable impression from any field visit. And it was to provide a snapshot of the consequences of these rapid changes that we decided to take the risk of embarking on a project of this kind. We deemed it vital to attempt to give potential investors, who are often in addition medium or small producers in this industry, an idea of how the market could evolve in such a changeable context. The need for projection is especially great in the case of arboriculture, an activity with high production facility set-up costs, and no immediate economic returns.

**SEE THE
PROJECTION VERSION 1.0
IN FRUITROP 277
SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER 2021
PAGE 70**

**WORLD MARKET PROSPECTS
FOR THE MEDIUM/LONG TERM
(2021–2028)
PARADIGM SHIFT**

Field-based methodology, to obtain high quality basic data

If the question of “why conduct this analysis?” was self-evident, we also had to answer the question of how to make it a success. There too, we were presented with a natural choice, given the poor-quality studies already published, based on trend extensions, themselves constructed without any critical analysis of the data used, which were of indeterminate, often poor quality.

We opted to adopt a field methodology for the upstream segment, going out to meet growers from the major countries operating on the world market. This surveying work conducted in Latin America, the USA and Mediterranean enabled us to better understand the production systems, identify the strong points and challenges that could affect the future development of their industries, and select the basic input parameters for our model (cultivation area, planting rate and yield). Furthermore, the data used for some countries were completely original and drawn from these visits. Much of this collection task enjoyed the support of the Hass Avocado Board. This surveying work is ongoing, both to cover the production zones not yet visited (some of Africa, Oceania), and to update the data.

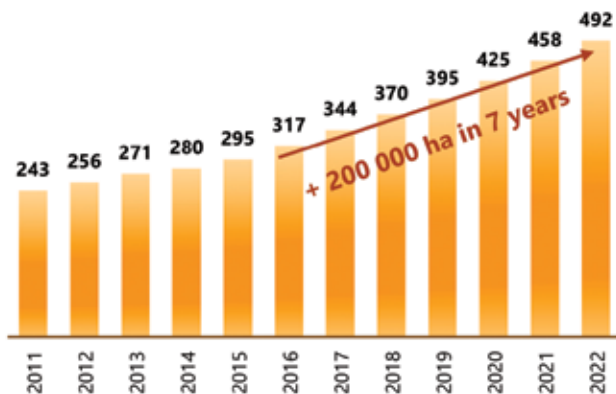




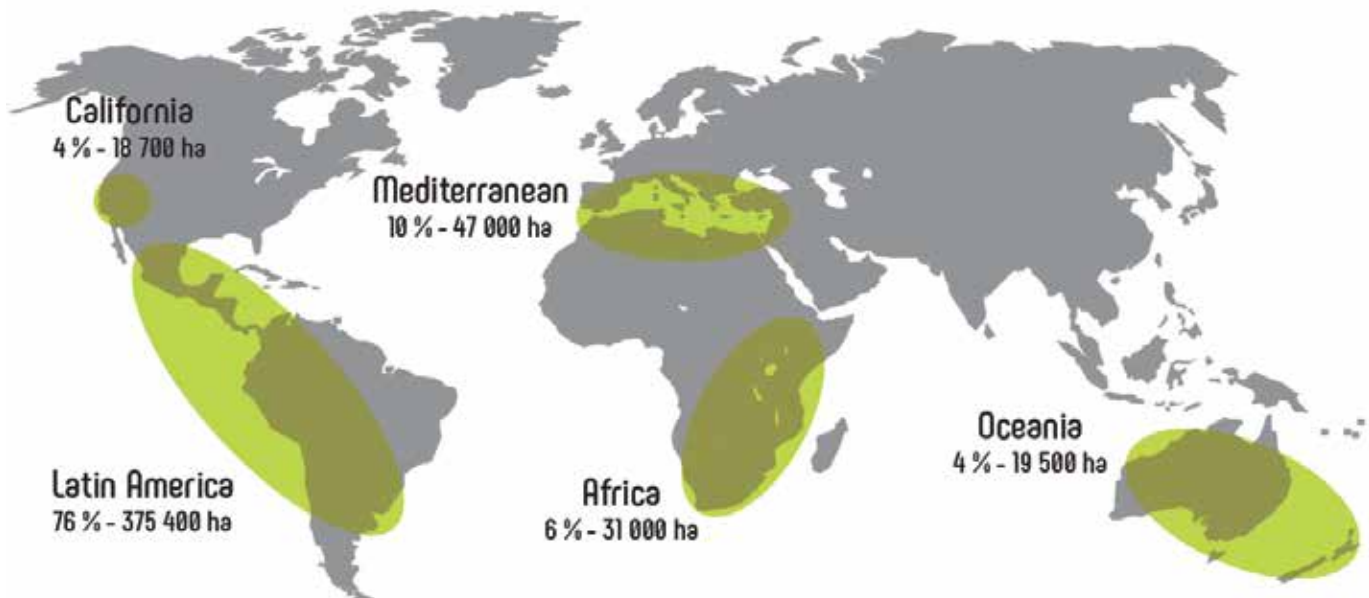
More refined basic data and a more advanced model for the production side

With these new data, we were able to build a version 2.0 of our world avocado development model. Several elements were added onto the version 1.0. First of all, Prohass issued a new estimate of Peru's planted area, more refined thanks to a new methodology better able to survey "small orchards" (+ 10 000 ha between 2021 and 2022, incorporating both new planting carried out during this one-year period, and the methodological change). On the other hand, we fully reviewed the data we had for some countries, following the field inquiries conducted over the past two years (Colombia, Spain, Morocco and Portugal). We also integrated into the model some small exporter countries not previously counted: Greece, Ecuador and Guatemala, whose combined surface areas are far from negligible, representing nearly 10 000 ha in 2022. Finally, the planting rate was higher than we had predicted in 2021, and to a lesser degree in 2022 for some production zones, despite less encouraging market prospects (Michoacán, Peru in 2021). Besides these basic parameter changes, we also refined the calculation, considering a specific young orchard production progression model for each country, instead of the simplifying global model used in version 1.0. This distinguishes regions where trees reach their full potential in 5, 6 or 7 years.

Avocado - World planted areas of export varieties
(in 000 hectares | sources: Cirad, professionals)



AVOCADO - World planted areas of export varieties* : 491 600 hectares



*Mainly Hass and Hass like, Fuerte, Pinkerton, Ettinger, Nabel, Zutano, Reed, Hardit, Bacon

Professional sources, Cirad

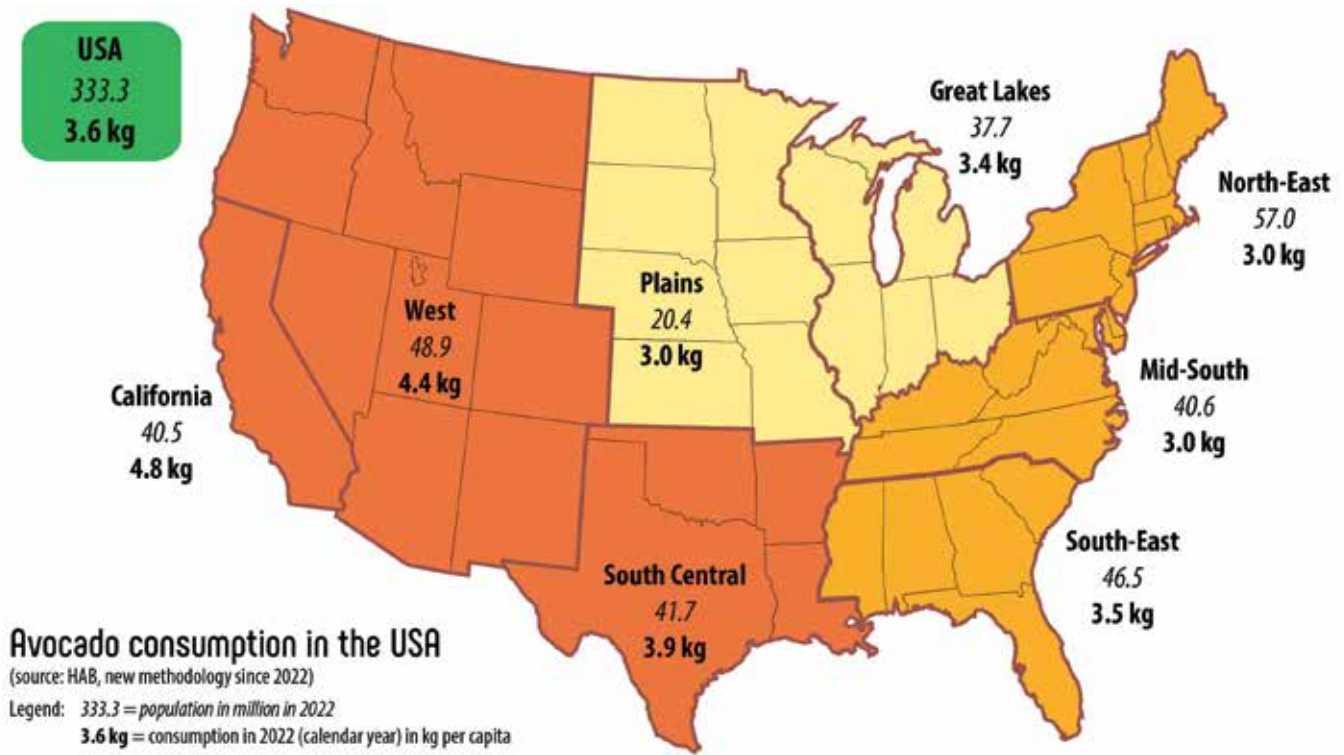


Demand growth hypotheses retained for the USA

The downstream part of this projection is still based on intelligent extension of the consumption trends on the main markets (evolution over the last 4 normal supply years). More precisely, the results of this slightly simplistic calculation are critically analysed, according to the population projections, the actions implemented to stimulate demand (impact of any promotion campaigns) and possibly phenomena observed on the most advanced markets in terms of consumption (e.g. in Europe, a levelling-off trend due to the lack of a very substantial promotion budget, for now).

The return of inflation is a new point to consider in relation to version 1.0. However, we do not yet have the perspective to measure its consequences. Furthermore, the intensity of this global price increase trend should gradually ease off to a large degree, according to the forecasts of the main economic analysis bodies. Hence, we retained the growth figure of 70 000 tonnes chosen in version 1.0 for the USA. While consumption has seemed a bit less dynamic since Mexican fruit regained a good availability level in the second half of 2022, the market still has some serious assets up its sleeve. The promotion budget remains huge (approximately \$75 million in 2023) and intelligently employed, there remains a significant demographic surge (more than 2 million inhabitants per year up to 2030, largely within the super-consuming Hispano-American group), while the East Coast is still under-consuming in a big way (3.0 to 3.5 kg per capita as opposed to 3.6 kg nationally, and as much as 4.4-4.8 kg in the West).

Avocado - USA + Canada - Evolution of imports (July to June) (in 000 tonnes) | source: US Customs

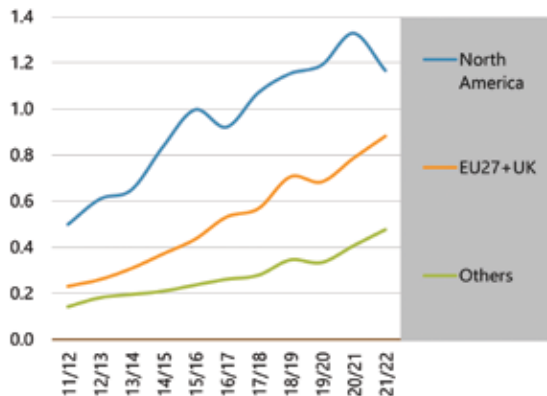


VERY DYNAMIC WORLD AVOCADO IMPORTS

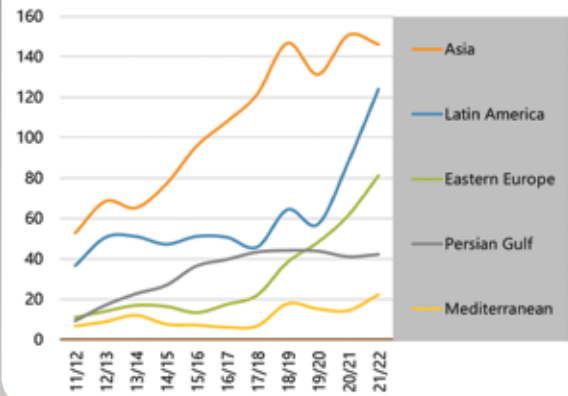
Avocado - World - Evolution of imports
(in 000 tonnes | sources: Comtrade, Eurostat)



Avocado - World - Main markets imports
(in million tonnes | source: Customs)



Avocado - World - Imports - Other markets in details
(in 000 tonnes | source: Customs)

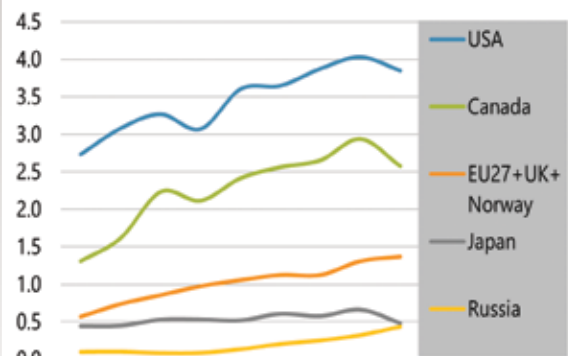


Avocado – Average annual growth in volume*

Markets	in tonnes
USA	67,000
EU27+UK	71,000
Canada	7,000
Japan	2,400
China	2,500
Latin America	10,000
Eastern Europe	13,000
Other Asia	3,500
Persian Gulf	-
Others	7,000
Total	183,400

*2016-2018/2020-2022 or 2015-2017/2019-2021 Source: Customs

Avocado - Consumption on main import markets
(in kg/capita | sources: Customs, professionals)

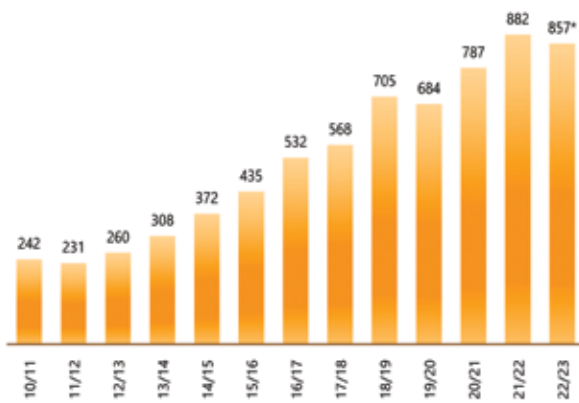




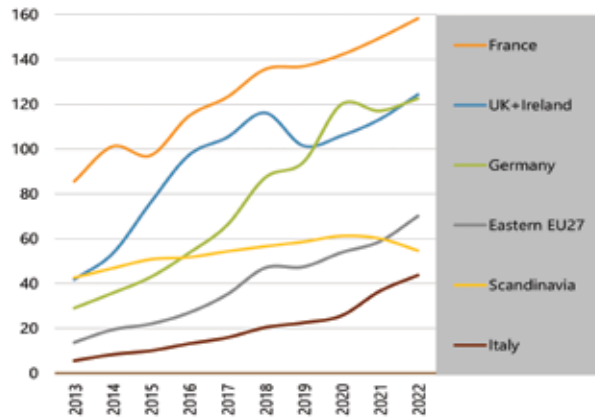
A slightly more marked growth slowdown in the EU27+UK

For the EU27+UK, in version 1.0 we reckoned on slightly less lively growth in the coming years, due to the levelling-off phenomenon in terms of consumption observed in the most developed markets in Northern Europe. For version 2.0, we opted to slightly boost this trajectory in the short term. Inflation is considerably higher than in the USA, and the promotion budget remains infinitely more limited, despite good growth prospects with the probable arrival of new contributor countries to the WAO. Furthermore, the consumption figures from 2021 and 2022 show that some markets, Germany chief among them, are no longer playing their driving role to the same degree in this inflationary context. The panel data, unfortunately available for France and Germany only, show a deterioration in certain underlying indicators since 2020: a big fall in the product's penetration among the less well-off social classes, and in the case of France, a big loss of interest in the avocado among young people. Hence we factored this in by reducing growth from its current 70 000 tonnes per year to 55 000-65 000 tonnes per year in 2023 and 2024, with a bounce-back expected in 2025.

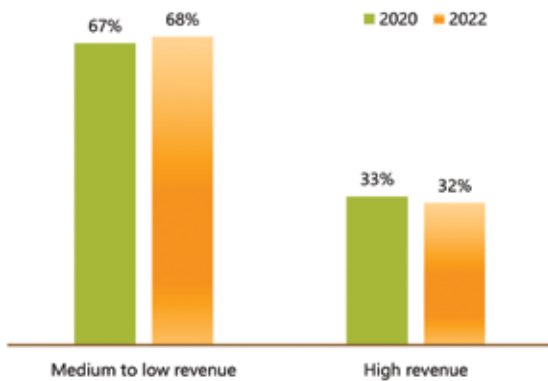
Avocado - EU27+UK+Norway+Switzerland - Imports
(* estimate | in 000 tonnes | source: Customs)



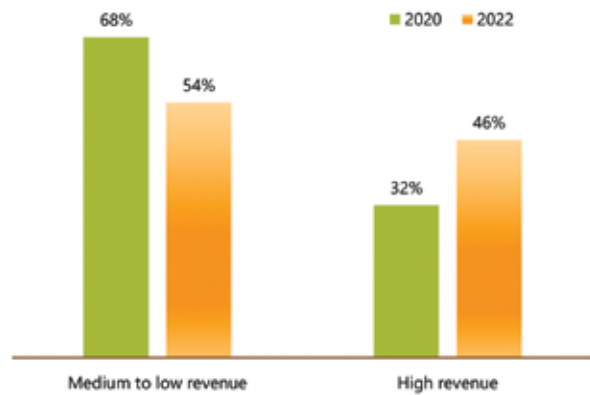
Avocado - EU27+UK - Evolution of consumption
(in 000 tonnes | source: Customs)



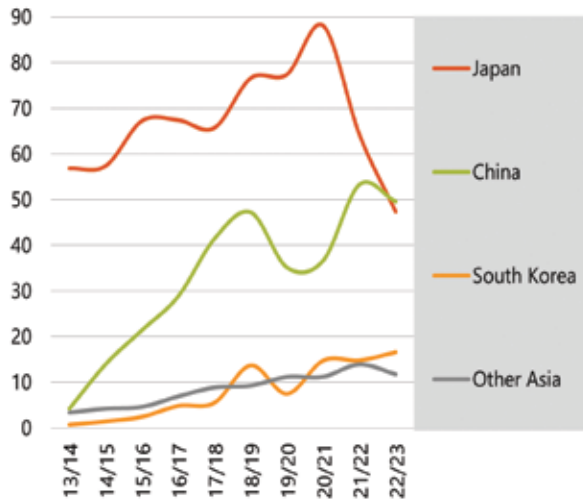
Avocado - France - Sales according to household income
(in % of total sales | source: panel)



Avocado - Germany - Sales according to household income
(in % of total sales | source: panel)

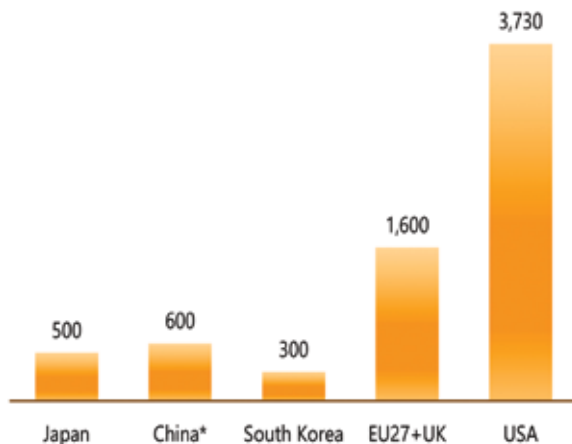


Avocado - Asia - Imports
(in 000 tonnes | sources: Trademap, national Customs)

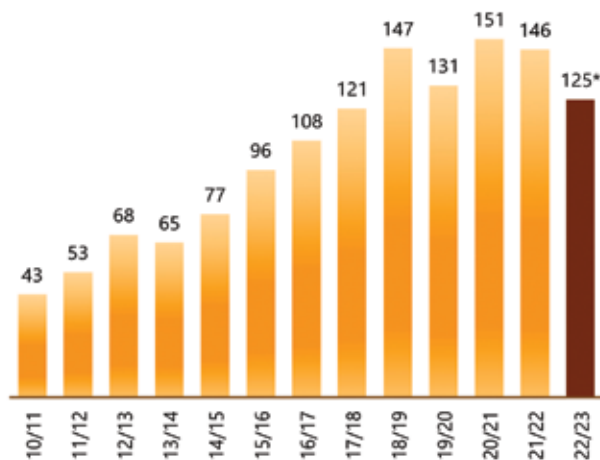


Avocado - Asia and main markets - Consumption in 2022

(* China: households with annual income >34 000 US\$ = 100 million inhabitants | in g per capita | source: Customs)



Avocado - Asia - Imports
(* estimate | in 000 tonnes | source: Customs)



Slightly more optimistic hypotheses for Asia

In version 1.0, we had wanted to assume that the enormous potential represented by the Asian markets would start to show through over the period 2023-2030, despite nearly flat-lining completely in recent years. The inhabitants of this continent, though representing 60 % of the world's population, currently take in just 5 % of the world avocado trade (imports of 140 000 t in 2020-21). We have retained this take-off hypothesis in version 2.0, and even revised it slightly upward. On the one hand, while China remains a marginal player, imports regained a bit more vitality in 2022, though the last severe Covid-related restrictions had barely been lifted. Furthermore, the medium-sized markets (South Korea, with probably 17 000 t in 2022-23) and small-sized markets (Malaysia and Singapore, with 4 000 t to 5 500 t apiece) are continuing to show modest yet steady growth, while new consumer countries are starting to discover the avocado (Thailand and most recently India). Hass consumption remains very under-developed in these countries, ranging for the most advanced from 300 g/capita in South Korea to 600 g in China (taking into account only the 100 million inhabitants with an income of over \$34 000/year). There remains the issue of Japan, where conversely, consumption has been distinctly on the slide since 2021 (imports going from nearly 90 000 t in 2020-21 to probably less than 50 000 t in 2022-23). We regarded this to be a temporary downturn, assuming that the market would regain its previous growth tempo in the short term.



A production surge and greater imbalance than expected

The main lesson to draw from this version 2.0 is that world production growth will be stronger than previously expected. According to our calculations, the exportable potential should rise by approximately 400 000 tonnes per year between 2023 and 2025, i.e. 2.5 to 3 times more than the tempo seen during the latter part of the 2010s. It could then decline between 2025 and 2030, to reach a level of between 210 000 and 260 000 tonnes. This boom is due to both cultivation area expansion (approximately 30 000 ha entering “full production equivalent” per year between 2023 and 2026, as opposed to at most 10 000 to 12 000 ha until 2019) and to the productivity gains (technical improvements implemented on existing orchards, and new plantations generally set up on high production standards). Despite a slightly more favourable demand projection than in version 1.0 (higher growth hypothesis on Asian markets), the imbalance with production is even more marked, with in particular an annual surplus over the period 2023-2027 of between 100 000 and 200 000 tonnes. Overall, the model predicts supply to exceed demand by approximately 25 to 30 % over the period 2025 to 2030. Unlike in recent years, the growth in supply should be greater during the winter season period than the summer season period.

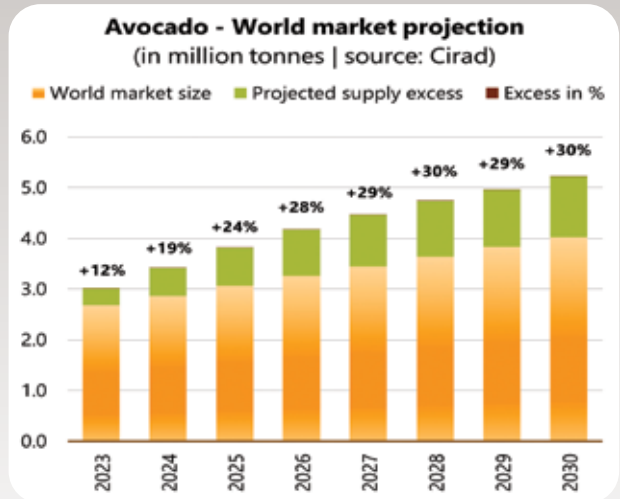
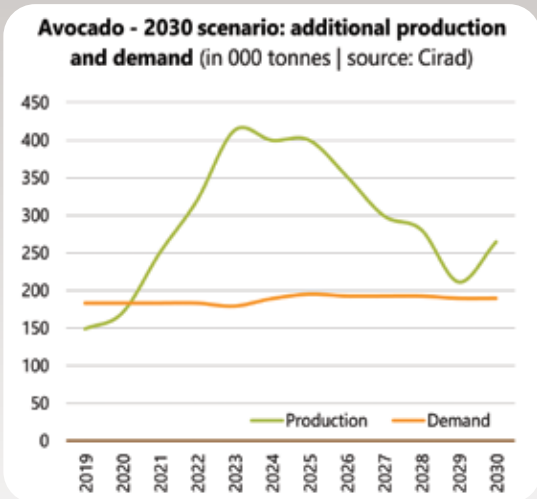
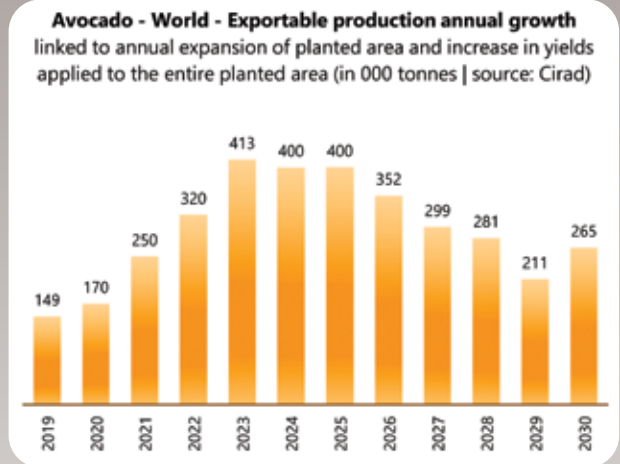
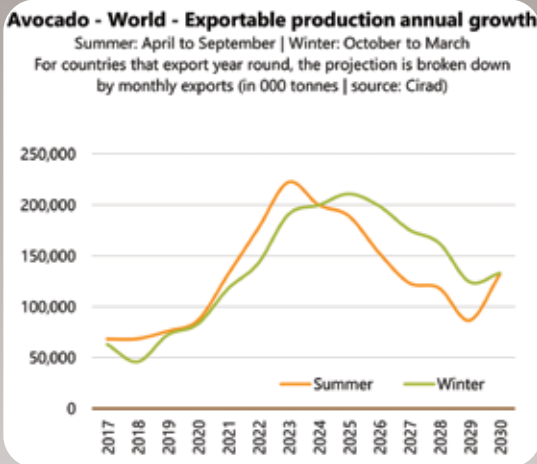
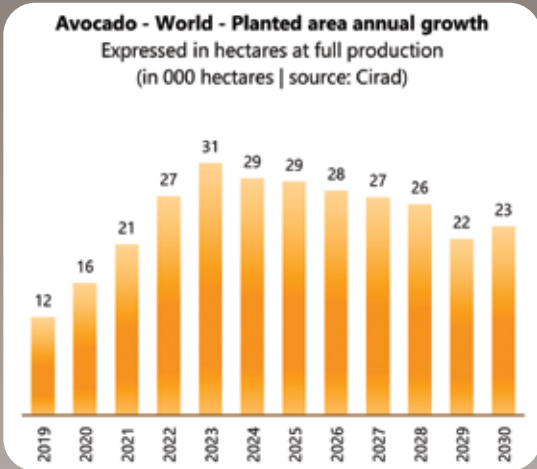


Some uncertainties to be highlighted

While the results presented in this version 2.0 have been refined from version 1.0, it should be highlighted that the margin for error intrinsic to this type of prospective exercise remains high. This study's sole claim is to show a direction of travel. Some parameters, impossible to factor in, could moderate the extent of the production increase. These can only be mentioned, but their effects cannot be quantified. Climate change is of course a key factor, the adverse effects of which on production have been observed, particularly in certain Mediterranean climate zones becoming increasingly dry (Chile, Spain, etc.), or conversely in regions becoming very wet such as Colombia. Outside of these zones, the frequency of extreme climate events (hail, winds, etc.) could also increase. In the downstream segment, what will be the medium-term impact on demand of the new consumer expectations for more local food? And what about the bad press given to the avocado, especially in Europe, which is harming the product's image even though most of the time it is not based on any serious rationale?

PROJECTION UP TO THE YEAR 2030

ENTERING A PERIOD OF STRONG TURBULENCE





A market rich in resources

Nonetheless, in any event, the difference between supply and demand appears to be distinctly beyond the margin for error. While this study is an alarm signal, it in no way points to a crash. The avocado market is rich in resources, unlike many others in the fruit trade world. Thanks to its taste and nutritional qualities, the avocado has an enormous potential appeal. In addition, and again unlike many fruit industries, the avocado industry can rely on structures such as the Hass Avocado Board and the World Avocado Organization to communicate and continue to further build its development and its future.

Furthermore, while the market imbalance seems more marked than two years ago, the industry has made progress during this period. A general awareness of the increasing market difficulties has been established, and the planting tempo has started to fall – true, this is a very recent shift, but it is present nonetheless in major countries such as Peru, Colombia or South Africa. In addition, the WAO has been strengthened with the effective or forthcoming entry of new producer countries. This is a double positive in terms of strengthening the European market dynamic. The promotion campaigns will be powered up thanks to bigger budgets, and the product's defence work will be improved thanks to the efforts initiated to develop a better-supported rationale. This is a fundamental avenue during the period covered by this projection, when the EU27+UK as a whole will for the medium term remain one of the two mainstays of the international trade, alongside the USA. The upstream and downstream segments must continue to strengthen the WAO, which reaches out to more than 500 million consumers in Europe alone, to enable this body to become a powerful tool like the HAB.

Some other world markets are showing interesting dynamics. This applies to Eastern Europe or regions operating with a regional supply such as the southern tip of Latin America (Chile, with vagaries due to changes to its local production, or Argentina), or more recently the Mediterranean (Morocco, Turkey, Jordan). The domestic markets of producer countries are also major areas for development. We can mention in particular Brazil, Colombia or Peru which, via promotion efforts, could start to follow the path beaten by Chile or Mexico, which also have big margins for progress. Finally, we must not forget the processing sector, with in particular growing consumer interest in easy-to-use products (e.g. HPP guacamole), and the rapidly developing avocado oil market for food or cosmetic use.

Competitiveness in the broad sense to the forefront over the coming years

Nonetheless, it is clear that the period covered by this projection will not be a golden age, but it may instead be an age of reason. In this more difficult context of more abundant production, competition will increase and competitiveness will return to the forefront. In the broad sense of the term, where economic criteria, though still central, will no longer be the only ones considered by the downstream sector from its position of strength. Sustainability will also be a key to entering certain markets, with environmental and social indicators increasingly taken into account in suppliers' choices. The main avenues for progress have already been sketched out, in particular cutting carbon emissions, reducing pesticide use, combating loss of biodiversity (deforestation) or water use, a topic apparently hogging the limelight with the increasingly marked effects of climate change. Many of these criteria are already an integral part of the distributors' specifications and of the main certification systems. By way of example, Rain Forest Alliance has banned herbicides and Lidl insecticides and synthetic post-harvest products, as well as a blacklist of prohibited pesticides.

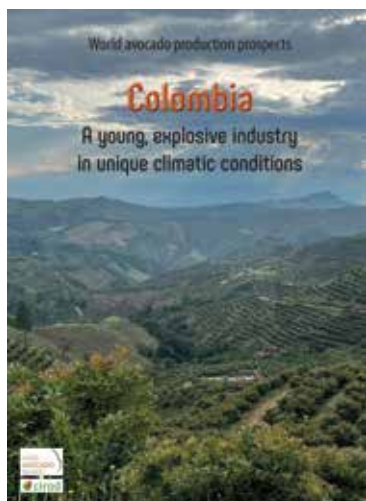
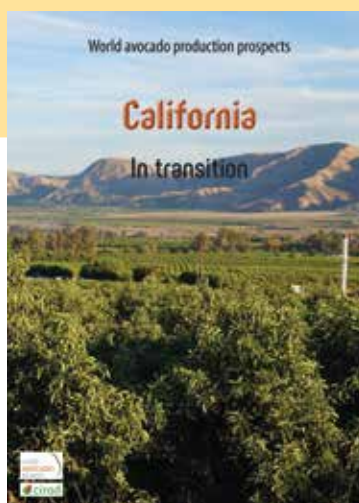
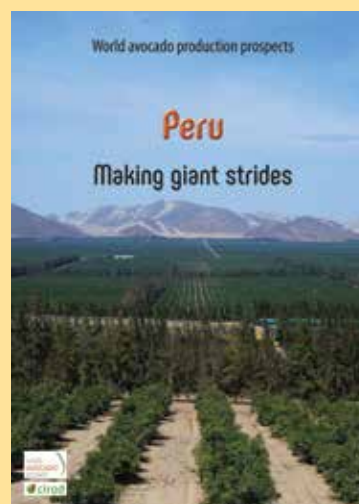
Regulations are not to be left out, with the rapidly evolving European framework being tightened up. In the environmental aspect, besides the already-established pathway to reducing pesticide use, France is setting the tone, with in particular a near-completed "environmental information" bill. Specifically, each product will be allocated an overall summary score for sustainability, like the "nutriscore" already in place for the nutritional quality of foods. This score will be based on assessment via the life cycle analysis (LCA) method of the main sustainability criteria. Regarding social aspects, it is Germany which is at the cutting edge, strengthening its Act on "due diligence", which stipulates that businesses must identify the potential risks of human rights violations (child labour, etc.), in addition to those linked to environmental damage. This initiative could go further in this same country, with a bill under examination for the banana industry – acting as guinea pig – aimed at upholding a "decent minimum wage": though its methodological calculation bases are still under discussion. All or some of these initiatives have already or will be reproduced in EC regulations (the PEV initiative (Product Environmental Footprint), etc.), to strengthen the overall framework of the "green deal". Reciprocity conditions, aimed at stipulating alignment in production conditions of imported fruit with those in force in the EC, are also under study.

So avocado growers must make concerted progress in two subjects: greener and more virtuous production practices, and reducing costs alongside increasing productivity. First, businesses must be able to measure their performance in terms of sustainability, and to draw on recognised indicators based on LCA for environmental aspects, and on the Neighbour method for social aspects (see FruiTrop 285). These are priority points in preparation for the new requirements on certain essential markets such as the European Union, before they quite possibly become conditions for access ■

HASS AVOCADO BOARD AND CIRAD PRESENT...

The Hass Avocado Board and Cirad have published complete and updated descriptions of the avocado industries of the major world exporter countries. In each of these original documents, drawn up based on numerous field visits and contacts with the most representative professionals, you will find key agricultural and trade information: history of the industry, extension and geographic breakdown of the cultivation area, production system and structure, varieties present and harvest calendar, outlets with plenty of details on exports, logistics and finally prospects. The countries or geographic zones covered so far are Peru, Mexico (Michoacán and Jalisco), Chile, California, Colombia, Spain and Portugal). The new releases for 2023 include Morocco and an updated version of the Mexico file.

These documents are available to download for free on: the HAB website www.hassavocadoboard.com or from the FruiTrop magazine www.fruittrop.com



By Tim Linden

Difficult Season Had Ups and Downs

Although when a grower harvests his California avocado crop is always a key factor, it's possible that it has never been as crucial as it was for this 2023 season.

"Timing was the key to this season," said Gery Clevinger, managing member, Freska Produce International, Oxnard, CA. "We finally hit a good market in June and July that lasted through the end of the season. Unfortunately, many growers hit the market when it wasn't so good in the spring."

He added that forecasting volume from the many different sources of supply is a very difficult proposition and he said it is that information that California growers need to make their harvest decisions. "It seems like we are not getting an accurate picture until the fruit is at the (Mexican/U.S.) border and by then it's too late."

It's no secret that the FOB price for avocados was below \$20 for the smaller sizes for most of the first half of the calendar year. Most growers delayed picking as long as they could, but each grower faces their own pressure to get their fruit off the trees, including the notion that they don't want to compromise next year's crop by stressing the trees. So, while there were far fewer pounds harvested in the first four months of the year than in 2022, growers still harvested more than 50% of their total supplies before the market began to strengthen in mid-June. And even then, the improved market was mostly limited to larger fruit.

Peter Shore, vice president of product management for Calavo Grow-

ers, Santa Paula, CA, agreed that it was an entirely different season depending upon when a grower went to market with their fruit. "Prices were uncharacteristically low through the winter and spring, and didn't hit a favorable position until mid to late June with more than half the crop already harvested."

He did say that when California hit its peak in July the market was strong and growers lucky enough to hit that market did pretty well.

But Shore said the volume for 2024 appears to be down again. He noted that in 2022, California growers marketed 275 million pounds and this year's total will finalize at about 233 million pounds. "For next year, some people are predicting a crop below 200 million," he said. "Calavo does not think it's going to be that low but it will almost certainly be lower than this year."

With a volume near the 200-million-pound mark, Shore said the crop will not be marketed broadly. "This year about 90% of the volume was sold in California, Oregon, Washington and Arizona and next year, it is shaping up to be the same."

Another handler representative who asked not to be identified took a more optimistic view of the 2024 crop. "It does appear there is going to be a small crop next year but scarcity can be



a good thing if you market it correctly," he said.

This veteran avocado industry player said the small crop could produce high returns and growers with fruit could end up having a good season. However, he also lamented that 2023 was a difficult year for growers who had to pick early and they may have trouble surviving another down year if their trees are among the many with below average volume.

Clevinger of Freska has heard the talk of a smaller crop but he was hesitant to agree with that forecast. "I've talked to a number of growers that say they have a good crop on their trees," he said. "For them it could be an alternate bearing year with an increase in volume."

He noted in mid-September that the preliminary crop estimate survey was in the process of being filled out and so a better estimate would soon be available. 🍷



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Our community depends on agriculture and we're committed to financing each operation, one field at a time.



SCAN ME



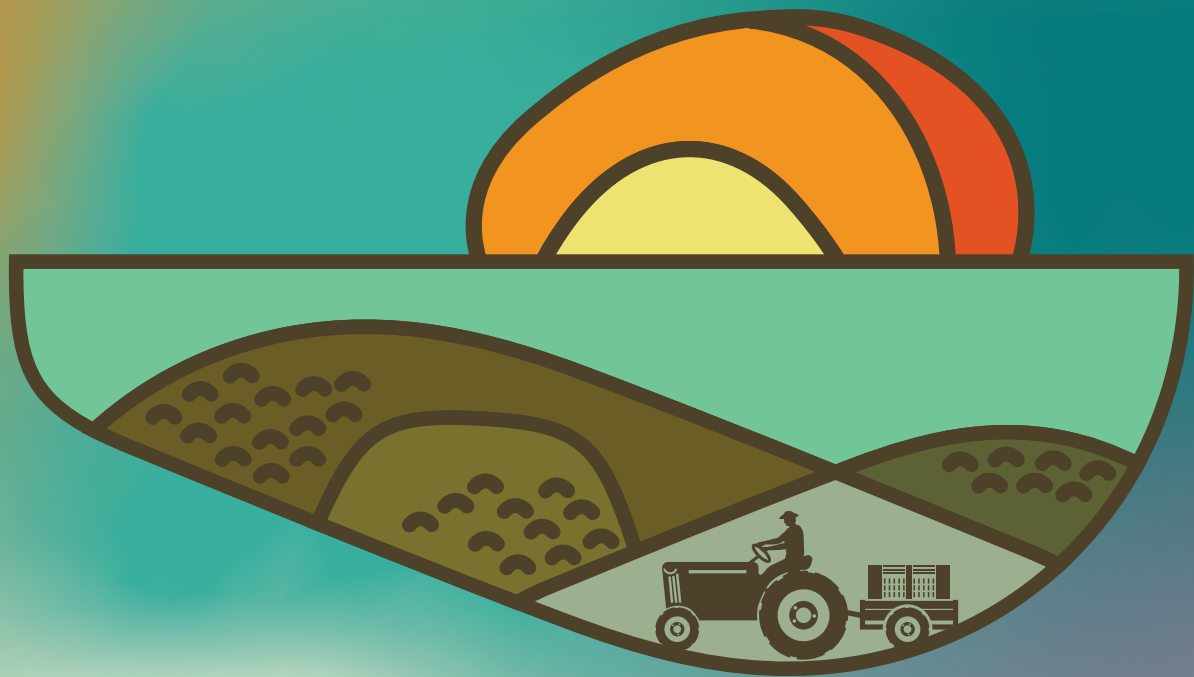
WE ARE FARM CREDIT

A network of customer-owned associations supporting California's rural communities and agriculture with reliable, consistent credit and financial services.



Delicious is in season

When it comes to avocados, the California variety may only be in season for a limited time each year, but the wait is well worth it!



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