

Highlights from the 2019 California Avocado Tracking Study

The California Avocado Commission (CAC) has conducted a consumer tracking study annually or biannually since 1996 to evaluate changes in consumer attitudes toward California avocados and avocados of other origins; this information informs marketing plans. In 2019, respondents were recruited from a nationally representative online consumer panel, with large enough sample sizes to evaluate California, other western states, regions and the total United States. There were 1,828 participants who completed the study.

“The 2019 tracking study shows that consumers in our key markets continue to rate California avocados the highest of all origins,” said Jan DeLyser, CAC vice president marketing. “We also saw that competitive brands with far-reaching marketing programs have made inroads with consumer awareness, so it is very important to continue California avocado marketing support.”

Key observations from the 2019 California Avocado Tracking Study, among avocado purchasers in California, include:

- California avocados are perceived as more

PRODUCT PERCEPTIONS: QUALITY

In California

California Avocados continue to stand out as the best quality, by a large margin.

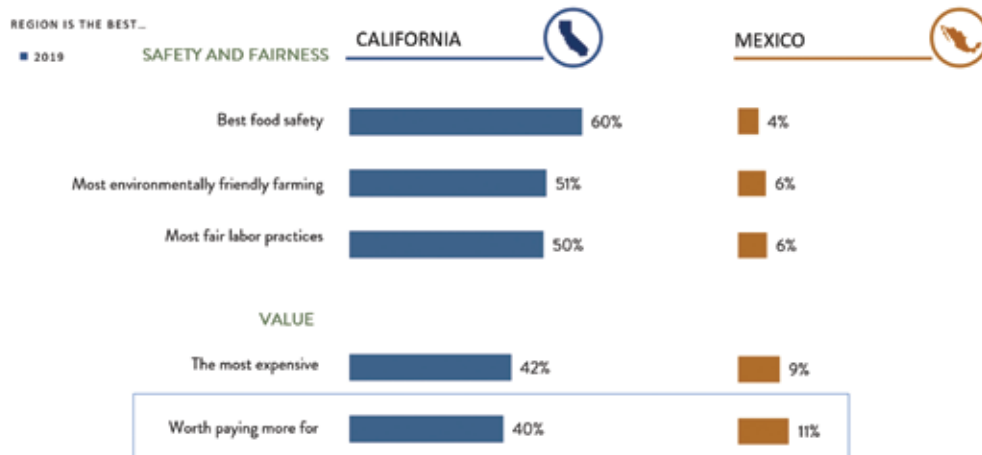


Base: Aware of at least two regions, 2019 (n=434)
Q10. For each phrase below, please choose the region that most describes the phrase.

PRODUCT PERCEPTIONS CONT.

In California

California Avocados are perceived as more expensive, but worth paying more for.

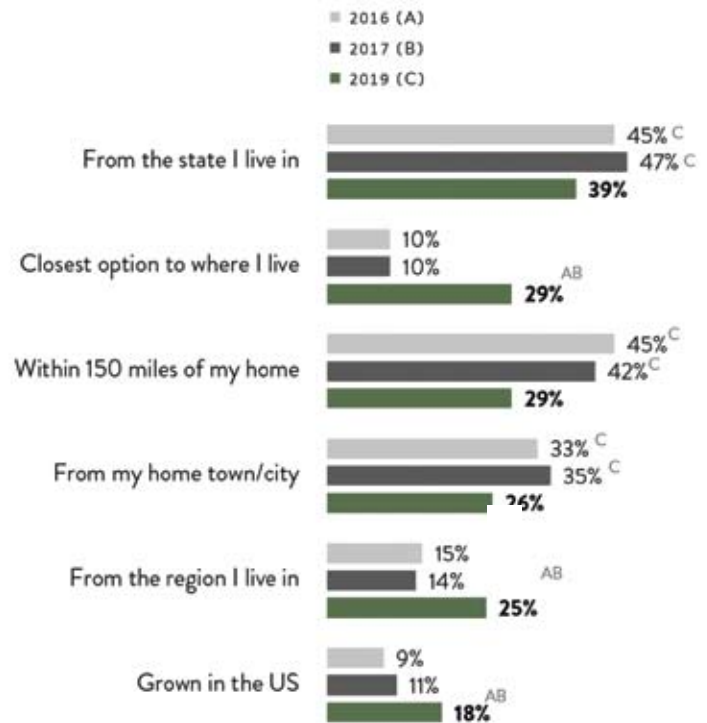


Base: Aware of at least two regions, 2017 (n=697), 2019 (n=434)
Q10. For each phrase below, please choose the region that most describes the phrase.

LOCALLY GROWN

In California

There also has been a shift in how consumers define “local” – closer to home.



Base: Total California, 2016 (n=541), 2017 (n=933), 2019 (n=607)
 Q36. When you think of “locally grown” fruits and vegetables, what do you consider “local” to be?
 Statistical significance: capital letters indicate statistically significant difference at 95% level of confidence or higher

premium than imports

- California avocados continue to stand out from the competition for being high quality (see top chart on page 8), including high marks for “freshness” and “best tasting”
- California avocados also rate the highest for safety and fairness (see bottom chart on page 8)
- California avocados are perceived by 42 percent of consumers surveyed as being the most expensive, yet encouragingly, 40 percent say they are “worth paying more for”
- The majority (61 percent) say that it is very or somewhat important to them that the avocados they buy are grown in the United States; however, compared to prior years, fewer feel that way

CAC asked a new question this year designed to help the marketing team understand what messages are most compelling to avocado consumers, particularly in California and other western states where most California avocados are marketed. Three attributes rose to the top: “they have a uniquely delicious taste,” “they are grown in safe environmental conditions” and “they are in season.”

Many sources report that locally grown is a key consumer

concern. The 2019 research showed that there has been a shift since 2017 in how consumers define “local”, with a big increase in people saying local is “the closest option to where I live” (see above chart).

This marketing research project was conducted by Temra Wald Consulting, Inc., which also analyzed the data and presented a summary to the California Avocado Commission Board at its November meeting. Data collection took place via a 10-minute online survey from August 14 through September 11, 2019. Respondents were recruited to meet the following qualifications: ages 18+, 60 percent female/40 percent male, primary or shared grocery shopping responsibility and must have purchased at least one avocado in the last 12 months.

The California Avocado Tracking Study information helps the Commission Board and management evaluate brand performance as well as assists with media planning and evaluation. Also, key observations from the Tracking Study are used to demonstrate to retailers the value of merchandising California avocados. In 2018, in lieu of the traditional tracking study, CAC conducted a different type of research aimed at measuring efficacy of its digital advertising campaign. The California Avocado Tracking Study is slated again for 2020. 🥑