

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES  
July 24, 2025**

A meeting of the Finance Committee of the California Avocado Commission (CAC) was held on July 24, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. with the following people present:

**Members Present**

Maureen Cottingham, Chair  
John Haskett  
Jamie Shafer  
Jason Cole, *Ex-officio*

**Staff Present**

April Aymami  
Ken Melban  
Terry Splane

**Members Absent**

Al Stehly

**Officially Present**

Vickie Carpenter, *USDA*

**Guests Present**

John Berns  
Will Carleton  
Rob Grether

**Item #1 Call to Order**

**Roll Call/Quorum – Item 1.a.**

Maureen Cottingham, Finance Committee chair, called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m. with a quorum present.

**Introductions – Item 1.b.**

April Aymami, CAC director of industry affairs and operations, introduced the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) representative, CAC staff and known guests participating in the meeting. She asked for all other guests to announce themselves and recorded all participants in attendance.

**Item #2 Opportunity for Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Item #3 Consent Calendar**

**Consider approval of Finance Committee meeting minutes of May 6, 2025 – Item 3.a**

Ms. Cottingham asked for a motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

**Motion:**

***The Finance Committee approves the Consent Calendar as presented.***

***(Haskett/Shافر) MSC Unanimous***

**MOTION 25-7-24-1**

The Consent Calendar is included in the July 2025 Finance Committee Packet and is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A, Item 3.a and Item 3.b.

**Item #4 Discussion and Possible Action Items**

**Update on transition to Western Alliance Bank – Item 4.a.**

Ms. Aymami provided an update on the transition to Western Alliance Bank, stating that all accounts, including investment sweep and money market, and lockboxes had been set up and were functioning properly. She noted that with the current level of reserves, CAC was expecting over 20,000 a month in interest income.

**Cash Disbursements Audit – Item 4.b.**

The Committee reviewed the cash disbursement listings for the months of March through April 2025. There was a question regarding the vendor McDermott, Will & Emery, which management

confirmed was CAC's legal counsel, Carolyn Gleason, on trade issues in Washington D.C. There were no additional questions or comments from the Committee.

The Cash Disbursement Audit, March through April 2025 is included in the July 2025 Finance Committee Packet and identified as EXHIBIT A, Item 4.b.

Review of contracts over \$25,000 – Item 4.c.

The Committee reviewed the listing of CAC contracts over \$25,000. Ms. Aymami provided an explanation of CAC's management of the Avocado Inspection Program, noting that AIP did not have its own EIN/TIN, therefore all contracts entered into on behalf of AIP were CAC contracts and reported on the contract listing with an "AIP" notation.

The Listing of CAC Contracts over \$25,000 is included in the July 2025 Finance Committee Packet and identified as EXHIBIT A, Item 4.c.

2024-25 Financial & Crop Updates – Item 4.d.

Ms. Cottingham reviewed the financials provided in the Committee packet, which covered year-to-date activity through April 2025.

Ms. Aymami provided an update on the current crop volume, reporting the expected crop size was closer to 320 million pounds. She presented the financial implications resulting from the reduction in expected volume, along with anticipated year-end unspent funds, resulting in an estimated year-end reserve balance of \$10.6 million.

The 2024-25 Financial Updates – Period Ending April 2025 are included in the July 2025 Finance Committee Packet and is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A, Item 4.d.

The CAC 2024-24 Reserve Projections worksheet is included in the July 2025 Finance Committee Packet and is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT B.

2025-26 Budget & Assessment Rate discussion – Item 4.e.

Management and the Committee discussed historical CAC budgets and total marketing spend, as well as the historical consumer vs. trade distribution of the marketing budget. In response to discussion regarding consumer vs. trade distribution, Terry Splane, CAC vice president of marketing, stated that CAC can scale spending with trade based on crop size, but when spending is scaled back from consumer marketing, CAC has seen preference slide. He commented that he felt that CAC was well positioned with trade with the current spend, however he was more concerned with consumer preference and protecting the California Avocado brand.

Ken Melban, CAC president, asked the Committee to consider CAC's historical marketing spend, which had ranged from 2.8-3.4 cents per pound, and discuss how much CAC should be spending on marketing. He noted that CAC receives approximately 2.125 cents per pound from the Hass Avocado Board 85% rebate, which must be used solely for marketing, so any amount for marketing above this would directly impact the CAC assessment rate.

The Committee discussed the value of CAC's marketing programs, return on investment and potential damage to the brand by limiting the marketing investment. There was a recommendation that CAC take a longer range view and consider a different measure of success through alpha/beta testing. Mr. Splane stated he would explore how this testing could work and felt the information gathered from this type of testing could be very valuable for CAC.

At the conclusion of discussion, Mr. Melban stated that at this point in time, CAC would move forward with development of a draft marketing budget based on 3 cents per pound. There also was consensus from the Committee that it was difficult to make a recommendation to increase the CAC assessment until further information was available regarding CAC's year-end financial position. Ms. Cottingham stated that the Committee would have the opportunity to discuss this further at the next meeting in September.

**ADJOURN**

Ms. Cottingham adjourned the meeting at 3:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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April Aymami, Director of Industry Affairs and Operations

**EXHIBITS ATTACHED TO THE PERMANENT COPY OF THESE MINUTES**

- Exhibit A July 2025 Finance Committee Packet
- Exhibit B CAC 2024-24 Reserve Projections Worksheet
- Exhibit C July 24, 2025 Finance Committee Meeting AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary



**EXHIBIT C**

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION**

**AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary**

*To be attached to the Meeting Minutes*

<b>Meeting Name:</b> <i>Finance Committee Meeting</i>	<b>Meeting Location:</b> <i>Hybrid Meeting In-person (Oxnard) Online (Zoom)</i>	<b>Meeting Date:</b> <i>July 24, 2025</i>
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<b><i>Attendees Who Voted</i></b>	<b><i>MOTION 25-7-24-1</i></b>
Maureen Cottingham	Did Not Vote
John Haskett	Yea
Jamie Shafer	Yea

<i>Outcome</i>	<b>Unanimous</b>
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