



AGENDA

California Avocado Commission
Marketing Committee Meeting

Meeting Information

Date: May 13, 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Hybrid Meeting

Physical Meeting Location:

UC ANR South Coast Field Station

Annex Building Conference Room

7601 Irvine Blvd.

Irvine, CA, 92618

Web/Teleconference URL:

<https://californiaavocado.zoom.us/j/86353427695?pwd=HzPlaVNbVxNcqaPzXPMYHn0ZLHGZg2.1>

Conference Call Number: (669) 900-6833

Meeting ID: 863 5342 7695

Passcode: 607407

Meeting materials will be posted online at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at:

<https://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/commission/industry-calendar>

Committee Member Attendance

Committee members, please contact Zac Benedict at zbenedict@avocado.org to confirm attendance no later than Friday, May 8, 2026.

Time	Item
9:00 a.m.	1. Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Roll Call/Quorumb. Introductions
	2. Opportunity for Public Comment <p>Persons may address the Committee on subjects within the jurisdiction of the Commission.</p>
	3. Approval of Marketing Committee minutes of March 19, 2026
	4. Crop Update
	5. 2026-27 Planning Discussion
	6. The Avocado Conference 2026
10:00 a.m.	7. Adjourn Meeting

Disclosures

All meetings of the Commission are open to the public and subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. All agenda items are subject to discussion and possible action.

For information or a request regarding disability-related modification or accommodation for the meeting, please contact Zac Benedict at 949-341-1955 via email at zbenedict@avocado.org. Such requests should be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

This meeting schedule notice and agenda is available on the internet at <https://www.californiaavocadogrowers.com/commission/meeting-agendas-minutes> and <http://it.cdfa.ca.gov/igov/postings/detail.aspx?type=Notices>.

Contact Zac Benedict at 949-341-1955 or via email at zbenedict@avocado.org if you have any questions.

Summary Definition of Conflict of Interest

Committee members are responsible to determine whether they have a conflict of interest.

A member has a conflict of interest in a decision of the Committee if it is reasonably foreseeable that the decision will have a material effect, financial or otherwise, on the member or an immediate family member that is distinguishable from its effect on all persons subject to the Committee's jurisdiction.

No Committee member shall make, or participate in making, any decision in which they know or should know they have a conflict of interest.

No Committee member shall, in any way, use their position to influence any decision in which they know or should know they have a conflict of interest.

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION
MARKETING COMMITTEE MINUTES
March 19, 2026**

A meeting of the California Avocado Commission (CAC) Marketing Committee was held on March 19, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. with the following people present:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Doug O’Hara, *Chair*
Stephen Sheldon
Jessica Hunter
Marty Ordman
Peter Shore
Rachael Laenen, *CAC Chair Ex-officio*

STAFF PRESENT

April Aymami
Ken Melban
Zac Benedict
Alya Hijazi
Lori Small
Cristina Wede
Stacia Kierulff

GUESTS PRESENT

Danny Klittich
Gerardo Huerta
John Berns
Josie Curtis
Lecia Rdzak
Lorena D
Matt Schraut
Steven Muro

OFFICIALLY PRESENT

Carolyn Becker, *CL Marketing LLC*
David Anderson, *Anderson Food Sales & Marketing*

Item #1 Call to Order

Roll Call/Quorum – Item 1.a.

Doug O’Hara, CAC Marketing Committee chair, called the meeting to order 9:04 a.m. and established a quorum.

Introductions – Item 1.b.

Zac Benedict, CAC marketing director, introduced CAC staff participating in the meeting.

Item # 2 Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Item # 3 Approval of Marketing Committee minutes of February 22, 2026

Mr. O’Hara asked for a motion to approve the Marketing Committee meeting minutes of February 22, 2026 as included in the meeting materials.

Motion:

The Marketing Committee approves the February 22, 2026 meeting minutes as presented.

(Hunter/Ordman) MSC Unanimous

MOTION 26-3-19-1

The *February 22, 2026 Meeting Minutes* are included in the March 2026 Marketing Committee Packet and are attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A, Item 3.

Item # 4 Retail Budget Reallocation Update

Ken Melban, CAC president, notified Committee members that the Board received and approved their recommendation to reallocate \$750,000 of the consumer marketing budget to retail marketing in their March 2026 meeting; the Board also designated an extra \$450,000 from Reserves that the Committee didn’t get the opportunity to discuss during the February 2026 Committee meeting.

Item # 5 Marketing Update

Retail Program Check-in - Item 5.a.

Carolyn Becker and David Anderson, CAC retail marketing directors, presented on the volume movement with national chain retailers. Both have been on the road to get a pulse on the market conditions and how retailers plan to include California Avocados in their stores. Mr. Anderson said that they are seeing more

aggressive movement from the trade, with a positive-looking trend based on timing and competitive positioning.

Marty Ordman asked if the reallocated budget is split between the Retail Marketing Directors, which Ms. Becker confirmed.

Mr. O'Hara, based on growers he has talked to and from the Hass Avocado Board's recent meeting, predicted that growers will need to pick fruit soon because of the heat and to protect the health of the tree. Jessica Hunter said that bin counts are expected to increase in the next few weeks, but most growers will still hold out because of pricing. Rachael Laenen said that pickers are sitting around right now, so growers holding until May might cause a labor strain. Peter Shore suggested that Mexico's production will decline a bit based on its current harvest since it is not sustainable for the foreseeable future, but Mr. O'Hara disagreed and said that bigger fruit from Mexico is coming. Stephen Sheldon added that the trees seem ahead of schedule for California.

Mr. Ordman asked if retailers disclose how many avocados get thrown away, which Mr. Anderson answered that generally retailers don't report this metric. Ms. Becker said that some retailers have fresh guacamole programs to account for this.

Ms. Hunter posed a question to the Committee about the size curve, with Mr. Shore answering that 48's still dominate. Mr. Sheldon echoed this but is worried about there being a hole in the market with the increased sizes coming in.

Marketing Program Nuts and Bolts – Item 5.b.

Mr. Benedict presented on the media and program timing, with Mr. Ordman asking if CAC does co-promotions with other brands; Ms. Becker confirmed so.

Media Targeting and Timing – Item 5.c.

Mr. Benedict continued the presentation with an overview of the key channels and activities during the peak months and the general target audience.

Brand Evolution – Item 5.d.

Mr. Benedict showcased the 2026 campaign with a 60-second advertisement that's expected to run on Connected TV, with 30- and 15-second versions on YouTube and other channels; Ms. Becker said she is already sharing these ads in her retail meetings. Additionally, Mr. Benedict revealed the newest creative assets for retail support.

Public Relations – Item 5.e.

Lori Small, CAC senior marketing manager, presented on the public relations bursts that are happening and upcoming in targeted markets. She mentioned how CAC has been leveraging growers and trade media in the region to get information out in front of retailers. All market activations are expected to include a customized activity to amplify California avocado messaging such as sponsored television segments, consumer influencer activations and press releases.

Item # 7 Business Planning Cycle

Mr. Melban requested to speak to Item # 7 about the Business Planning Cycle ahead of Item # 6 Marketing KPI Discussion.

Mr. Melban reviewed the marketing objectives as laid out in CAC's 2025-2026 Business Plan, noting that Objective # 2 and Objective # 3 are consumer-specific and Objective # 4 is retailer-specific. Mr. Ordman stated that all the objectives support one another, that by focusing on Objective # 4, CAC is already hitting Objectives # 2 and # 3. Ms. Laenen suggested adding "trade customers" to the end of Objective # 2.

Mr. Melban added that the Board is tasked with making funding decisions in June, and that if the Committee wants to continue CAC's current marketing efforts at the level they are currently at, then the assessment rate would need to go up,

The Marketing Update presentation is attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT B.

Item # 6 Marketing KPI Discussion

The Committee reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Marketing Committee as defined in CAC's bylaws. Ms. Laenen stated that she would like the Committee to provide their recommendations for updated objectives ahead of the Board's June strategic planning meeting. Mr. Benedict suggested setting the next meeting date for strategic planning and an update on Cinco de Mayo retail results before the June Board meeting.

Item # 8 The Avocado Conference 2026

Mr. O'Hara opened by stating that the Hass Avocado Board is asking CAC to sponsor their multi-day conference in November, noting that it makes sense for CAC to attend since other countries of origin and retailers will be present. Ms. Laenen asked if there would be an additional cost on top of the sponsorship amount, which Mr. Melban answered that CAC Staff would use already existing booth materials. Mr. O'Hara asked for a motion to recommend to the Board that CAC sponsor the conference.

Motion:

***The Marketing Committee recommends that CAC sponsor the Avocado Conference.
(Ordman/No second)***

Mr. Sheldon questioned the viability and duration of the event, so Mr. O'Hara suggested that a Hass Avocado Board representative attend the next committee meeting to give more information.

ADJOURN MEETING

Mr. O'Hara adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alya Hijazi, CAC Marketing Coordinator

EXHIBITS ATTACHED TO THE PERMANENT COPY OF THESE MINUTES

Exhibit A	March 2026 Marketing Committee Packet
Exhibit B	Marketing Update Presentation
Exhibit C	March 19, 2026 Marketing Committee Meeting AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary



CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION
AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary
To be attached to the Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name: <i>Marketing Committee Meeting</i>	Meeting Location: <i>Hybrid Meeting In-person (Irvine) Online (Zoom)</i>	Meeting Date: <i>March 19, 2026</i>
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Attendees Who Voted	<u><i>MOTION 26-3-19-1</i></u>
Doug O’Hara	Yea
Stephen Sheldon	Yea
Jessica Hunter	Yea
Marty Ordman	Yea
Peter Shore	Yea
Outcome	Unanimous



February 2, 2026

Dear Member Organizations:

Following the success of the 2024 Avocado Forum and in alignment with HAB's strategic plan for industry engagement, we are excited to announce The Avocado Conference, a landmark event designed to bring together industry stakeholders for networking, education, and collaboration on November 18 to 20, 2026 at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront.

The Avocado Conference 2026 will be the power summit of the U.S. avocado industry—where producers, importers, exporters, marketers, customers, and industry leaders converge to set the agenda for crop volume, research, marketing, demand creation, and long-term growth. It's the only event unapologetically dedicated to propelling the U.S. avocado market forward across every link of the value chain.

New and exciting this year is our partnership with Farm Journal's *The Packer*—America's most trusted and widely recognized produce trade media company, for the financing, planning, and execution of the conference. By joining forces with Farm Journal, we're pairing industry convening power with media reach, so that attendance is strong and broad and the ideas shared at The Avocado Conference scale across the supply chain.

In addition to partnering with a well-known media company, we have designed a framework with USDA's approval, whereby Farm Journal has agreed to assume the financial risk necessary to make the conference and exhibit a success for the industry.

The Hass Avocado Board has provided Farm Journal with \$100,000 in seed funding to support the conference, and we are seeking Member Organizations under HAPRIO to support the event with a \$15,000 sponsorship. Enclosed is additional information about the conference and a prospectus tailored for your organization, which provides all details included in the sponsorship package.

We hope you will join us in supporting the first and only event of its kind in the United States. Thank you, as always, for your partnership.

Sincerely,

Emiliano Escobedo
Executive Director



Attendance and Registration Fees

Attendance will be open to anyone in the industry, with registration fees at different levels depending on industry segment. The affordable \$200 fee for producers will maximize participation and broaden industry impact. The fee covers full access to education sessions and the exhibition floor plus the opening reception, breakfast and lunch for all days of the conference (four meals in total). As a sponsor, your association will receive six (6) complimentary registrations for the conference. Additionally, we plan to host retailers across key accounts and provide reduced registration fees for customers. For more information, visit [the registration information page](#).

Exhibition/Trade Show

In addition to education sessions, an adjacent exhibition floor will feature 8 x 10 booths on November 19 and 20. As an association, you are driving the industry forward and we want to make sure you can tell your story by providing you with a premium position on the floor and an exclusive 8 X 20 booth to highlight your work and connect with attendees.

Content and Program

Similar to the Avocado Forum in 2024, the conference will feature keynote speakers, panels, and opportunities for countries of origin to highlight their crop outlooks and their role in driving industry growth. The conference content will be carefully crafted, with input from avocado producers, exporters, and importers/marketers. Your sponsorship provides you with an exclusive 20-minute presentation on the main stage for your association to give a country/crop/commercial outlook report. In addition, you'll have the opportunity to showcase a 2-3-minute video highlighting your marketing efforts, which will be played in the general session between speakers.

Brand Exposure in Communication Materials and Onsite Marketing

Logo exposure will be featured on the website, onsite, and other channels including the pre and post-show marketing package. Please refer to the association prospectus for details.

Closing Gala

To close and celebrate everything we've built over the three days of the conference, the closing gala (separate fee applies) will allow attendees to further network and celebrate with industry colleagues and peers on the last evening of the conference. As a sponsor, you'll receive four (4) complimentary tickets.

Hotel Information

We have negotiated a nightly hotel rate of \$219 plus taxes, ensuring the event remains affordable and accessible in a beautiful, conveniently located setting.



THE

AVOCADO CONFERENCE 2026

November 18–20, 2026 | Hilton San Diego Bayfront

Brought to you by:

THE PACKER

HASS
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BOARD



TheAvocadoConference.com

ASSOCIATION SPONSORSHIP PROSPECTUS

The Avocado Conference 2026

Association Sponsor Package

As part of our partnership with your association, we have a special event package for you ... Join us at The Avocado Conference designed to connect industry leaders, innovators, and enthusiasts in the world of avocados. This year, our focus is on fostering invaluable connections, developing forward-thinking strategies, and unlocking new levels of knowledge to drive the future of the Hass avocado industry.

2026 Sponsorship Package* \$15,000

Exhibitor Booth	
8x20 Booth with Premier End Cap Placement	✓
Standard Booth Furnishings (table, chairs, wastebasket)	✓
Company Listing on Website	✓
Company Listing on Show Guide	✓
Expo Floor Sticker	✓
Complimentary Registrations	6
Logo Exposure	
Logo on Website	✓
Logo on Post Show Thank You Ad	✓
Logo on Sponsor Thank You Signage at Show	✓
Logo on Rotation During Sessions	✓
Logo Recognition on all Expo Print Advertising, Emails and Eblasts Pre- and Post-Show	✓
Show Guide Marketing Package	
Complimentary Show Guide Ad	Full Page
Enhanced Listing in Show Guide	✓
Pre- and Post-Show Marketing Package	
Early Attendee List in October 2026	✓
Attendee List in November 2026	✓
Social Media Asset Provided by The Packer	✓
Logo/Listing on Mobile App	✓
On-Site Marketing Package	
20 min. with Q&A presentation the main stage	✓
2-3 minute video highlighting your marketing efforts played in general session between speakers	✓
Giveaway Item in Attendee Bags (sponsor provided, no literature)	✓
Other Items	
Gala Dinner Complimentary Tickets	4
Gala Dinner Reserved Table	✓

*Custom sponsorship packages are available. Please discuss with your account representative.