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CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION PROMOTES KEN MELBAN TO VICE PRESIDENT OF INDUSTRY AFFAIRS

IRVINE, Calif. (May 13, 2015) – The California Avocado Commission (CAC) announced the promotion of Ken Melban to Vice President of Industry Affairs. In this new position Melban will lead the Commission’s industry advocacy activities, including issues management, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) program, production research and grower communications.

“Ken’s leadership of the California avocado GAP program and advocacy for California avocado growers in areas such as water availability and pest management is worthy of recognition,” said Tom Bellamore, president of CAC. “In his new role Ken will continue these initiatives and lead others to help California avocado growers sustainably produce top-quality avocados with a fresh-to-market advantage.”



Melban, who joined the Commission in 2011 as Director Issues Management, worked with industry members to create and evolve CAC’s GAP program. In just a few years nearly half of California avocado acreage is GAP-certified. With upcoming Food and Safety Modernization Act requirements Melban anticipates that number to grow.

In this fourth year of California’s drought, water availability and affordability are other challenges for California Avocado growers. Melban has been very involved with local water boards as well as advancing best practices in irrigation and water conservation. He also championed international industry activities to identify pests and research solutions to pest issues including the polyphagous shot hole borer and fusarium dieback.

With two decades agricultural leadership experience, including working with California commodity boards and with the Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Pesticide Regulation, researchers, growers, and chemical manufacturers in the identification

and registration of effective crop protection materials for California agriculture, Melban is well-suited to his role. His prior experience included work with the National Grape & Wine Initiative and manager of the Statewide *Spray Safe* program. Melban was instrumental in the development of the California Potato Pest Management Strategic Plan, and also served as Director of Crop Protection Services for the California Pepper Commission.

Melban served as an adjunct professor at Fresno Pacific University where he received a Bachelor of Arts as well a Master of Arts degree in leadership and organizational studies. Throughout his career he has served with numerous community service organizations as well as with the California Department of Food and Agriculture Climate Change Adaptation Consortium and Ventura AG Futures Alliance.

About the California Avocado Commission

Created in 1978, the California Avocado Commission strives to increase demand for California avocados through advertising, promotion and public relations, and engages in related industry activities that benefit the state's nearly 5,000 avocado growers. The California Avocado Commission serves as the official information source for California avocados and the California avocado industry. For nutrition information and recipes visit CaliforniaAvocado.com, or join us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaAvocados) at Facebook.com/CaliforniaAvocados and @CA_Avocados on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/CA_Avocados), [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com/CA_Avocados) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/CA_Avocados) for updates.

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