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## **CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION ESTABLISHES DEMONSTRATION GROVE** *Pine Tree Ranch Inaugural Field Day Draws Large Audience*

**IRVINE, Calif. (February 7, 2014)** –More than 100 California avocado growers and industry stakeholders attended the California Avocado Commission’s (CAC’s) inaugural field day at Pine Tree Ranch Demonstration Grove in Santa Paula, California on January 23. Following presentations by researchers from the University of California, Riverside, attendees toured the new grove and experienced in-field demonstrations of different pruning practices.



“The Commission is committed to doing everything possible to keep the California avocado industry vibrant, progressive and prosperous for California avocado growers,” said Tom Bellamore, CAC president. “Pine Tree Ranch will give CAC an opportunity to test different planting and management techniques, and will add to the toolbox of vital information that we provide.”



Bellamore and Valerie Mellano, chair of the Plant Science Department at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona welcomed attendees to the field day. Researchers from the University of California, Riverside presented to the attendees. Dr. Carol Lovatt from the Botany and Plant Sciences Department discussed fertilizer strategies and how to make the best management decisions based on the previous year’s crop load, current crop and bloom potential. Dr. Akif Eskalen from the Plant Pathology Department discussed orchard sanitation for disease control.

Following the presentations CAC’s Research Project Manager, Dr. Tim Spann, and CAC Board members Doug O’Hara and Bradley Miles led in-grove pruning demonstrations and discussions. During the in-grove demonstrations Eskalen emphasized the importance of sanitizing pruning equipment.



Spann noted that the demonstration grove is one part of a much bigger production research program lead by the Commission. “CAC has been working hard to increase our outreach efforts to growers and Pine Tree Ranch is a huge part of that effort,” said Spann. “We now require all CAC-funded research projects to have an outreach component, and Pine Tree Ranch provides us with the venue to make our outreach goals a reality. This project is 100 percent grower-need driven.”

The Commission’s Pine Tree Ranch Demonstration Grove project commenced in 2013, in partnership with California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Cal Poly representatives provided guidance for the development plan along with an advisory group of California avocado growers and grove managers. Located in Ventura County, California, the 11-acre demonstration grove contained two acres of existing avocado trees and nine acres of lemon trees that were removed for avocado plantings. The development plan calls for plantings of different densities, rootstocks and varieties to show California avocado growers how different options can affect tree growth, yield, fruit quality and grove management.

### **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](http://CaliforniaAvocado.com), or join us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaAvocados) at [Facebook.com/CaliforniaAvocados](https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaAvocados) and [@CA\\_Avocados](https://twitter.com/CA_Avocados) on [Twitter](https://www.pinterest.com/CaliforniaAvocado), [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com/CaliforniaAvocado) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/CaliforniaAvocado) for updates.

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