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HARVESTING OF CALIFORNIA AVOCADOS RAMPS UP *Commission Plans St. Patrick's Day Activity*

IRVINE, Calif. (March 6, 2017) – California avocado growers are happy about the recent rains in the region, which have significantly reduced drought conditions in much of the state. A combination of factors – a break in the weather, availability of harvesting crews and a strong market – are contributing to the start of the California avocado harvest in March.



“Harvesting is ramping up a little earlier than expected for this year’s California avocado crop,” said CAC Vice President Marketing Jan DeLyser. “As a result of the rainy winter we’ve had in California, avocado fruit is sizing, and growers have the opportunity to take advantage of strong demand for the local fruit.”

The Commission has initiated customer-specific marketing where there is distribution of California avocados. Market-level programs will begin in April, with the focus on California. For the last several years the period around St. Patrick’s Day, which overlaps March Madness, has ranked as a top consumption event for avocados with volume approaching or surpassing Cinco de Mayo levels. The estimate for this year is more than 119 million pounds of avocados. CAC will encourage purchases of California avocados for the Irish celebration with digital and social media activity, including an

email newsletter, Twitter and Facebook with green-themed-recipe ideas directed to more than 300,000 fans.



“Now is great time to display avocados in the produce department,” said DeLyser. “Shoppers entertaining for March Madness and St. Patrick’s Day contribute to an uptick in demand, especially when signage clearly calls out that local California avocados are available.”

Demand continues to be strong for avocados, and while CAC’s crop projection of 200 million pounds for 2017 is about half of last year’s crop volume from

California, optimism prevails. According to the Commission, California avocado trees are looking better than they have in several years. The precipitation has helped to leach accumulated salts from the soil, providing the trees with much needed clean water and large quantities of it. The benefits of these rains should help to improve tree health for 2017 and 2018, regardless of the how wet the 2017-18 winter is.

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 4,000 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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