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CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION GETS A JUMP ON FSMA IMPLEMENTATION AS SEASON HARVEST GETS UNDERWAY

IRVINE, Calif. (March 16, 2016) – With California avocado harvesting underway, hundreds of California avocado growers gathered to learn about the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and implications for the industry growing and harvesting practices. California Avocado Commission (CAC) and avocado handler representatives summarized FSMA and described upcoming enhancements to its Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) program.

Nearly 300 California avocado growers attended CAC's FSMA seminars on March 1, 2 and 3 in growing regions in Southern California and coastal Central California. The Commission provided attendees with GAP manuals and a guide to the new food safety regulations.



“For California avocado growers, compliance with FSMA regulations is mostly about documenting practices they already have in place,” said CAC vice president of industry affairs Ken Melban. “There will be a few changes to CAC’s GAP manual to align with FSMA, principally around water testing, and our objective is to help the growers prepare for compliance.”

CAC Vice President of Industry Affairs Ken Melban addresses crowd of California Avocado growers at FSMA seminar in Ventura, Calif.



Many growers who attended the seminars reported that their 2016 harvesting volume has accelerated. While El Niño predictions haven't materialized the way many had hoped, the recent rains in California avocado growing regions provided welcome refreshment for the trees, and estimates of the California crop volume indicate it will be 30 to 40 percent larger than in 2015.

From left, California avocado grower Bob Schaar, CAC President Tom Bellamore and growers Jeff Dillman and Kim Dillman at CAC FSMA seminar in Fallbrook, Calif.

CAC Vice President Marketing Jan DeLyser reported that foodservice promotions with California avocados are underway and many retailers in the Commission's advertised markets have made or soon will make the transition to the California crop.

"There are many promotional opportunities this month and retailers are hungry for reliable quality to showcase", said DeLyser. "With St. Patrick's Day, March Madness, and Easter we're looking at a total avocado category forecast for an 18-day period in March that may even exceed a comparable Cinco de Mayo period this year."

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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