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## **CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION CALLS ON USDA TO MAINTAIN DIRECT OVERSIGHT OF MEXICO AVOCADO EXPORT PROGRAM**

**IRVINE, Calif. (June 26, 2024)** – The California Avocado Commission (Commission) represents California’s roughly 3,000 avocado growers who produce avocados on more than 50,000 acres in California, with an annual average farm-gate value of \$367,000,000 (based on 2018-2023 crop values). It is the Commission’s position that the continuation of the current U.S./Mexico Operational Work Plan (OWP) is essential. The OWP requires the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to provide direct inspection of all harvesting and packing of Hass avocados for export to the U.S. Maintaining USDA’s direct oversight ensures the integrity of the avocado inspection program in Mexico, critical to preventing the introduction of invasive pests to the U.S.

“As reports of corruption and violence in Mexico continue, including regions authorized for avocado exports to the U.S., it’s unimaginable the U.S. government would consider abdicating inspection responsibilities to Mexico,” said Commission Vice President of Industry Affairs and Operations Ken Melban. “U.S. farmers will not be protected under such a program, one intended and designed specifically to protect U.S. farmers’ economic interests.”

California avocado growers produce a premium quality, locally grown, highly nutritious food supply. They typically are multi-generational growers caring for and investing in their local farms, to earn a living and build a legacy. While growers control what happens on their farm, other factors like weather and pricing remain outside of their control. However, the threat of an invasive pest being introduced is something that is under USDA’s control and must be prevented by utilizing the agreed upon and necessary levels of oversight found in the OWP.

“The Commission calls on USDA to uphold their mission and retain control of the Mexico avocado inspections as agreed upon under the current OWP,” said Melban.

### **About the California Avocado Commission**

Created in 1978, the California Avocado Commission strives to enhance the premium positioning of California avocados through advertising, promotion and public relations, and engages in related industry activities. Ethically sourced California avocados are sustainably grown and locally farmed for exceptional quality and freshness, by about 3,000 growers in the Golden State. The California Avocado Commission serves as the official information source for the California avocado industry. Visit [CaliforniaAvocado.com](https://CaliforniaAvocado.com).

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