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REPORT: California Avocado Commission Warns of Critical Threat to U.S. Agriculture, Calls for Immediate Policy Reinstatement

"America cannot allow criminal cartels to dictate the terms of our food safety."

Irvine, Calif. – The California Avocado Commission released a report today titled "The Growing Threat to California Avocados: Why USDA Must Reinstate Inspection Protocols in Mexico." It warns of a severe risk to California's \$1.5 billion avocado industry following the 2024 decision by the Biden administration to withdraw USDA inspectors from Mexican orchards. This move, made in response to cartel violence, shifted critical U.S. agricultural oversight to foreign control, undermining decades of bipartisan efforts to protect U.S. agriculture.

Click here to view and download the report: [CAC-Report-Why-USDA-Must-Reinstate-Inspection-Protocols-in-Mexico](#).

Since the withdrawal, more than 150 pest interceptions have been reported between October 30, 2024, and March 11, 2025. These primarily involve dangerous avocado seed weevils like *Macrocopturus aguacatae* and *Conotrachelus perseae*. These pests are virtually impossible to eradicate once introduced. They threaten over 3,000 family farms, potentially forcing them into costly pesticide use, undermining California's clean-grown avocado status, and jeopardizing international trade.

"The Biden administration's decision to remove USDA inspectors from Mexican orchards represents a dangerous departure from nearly 30 years of successful pest control and agricultural security," said Ken Melban, Vice President of Industry Affairs and Operations at CAC. "America cannot allow criminal cartels to dictate the terms of our food safety. If the agreed-upon inspection requirements cannot be maintained due to safety concerns, that privilege must be suspended."

The report highlights the critical need for swift action to protect U.S. agriculture. It calls for the immediate reinstatement of the USDA's 1997 inspection protocols, which had been in place under Presidents Clinton, Bush, Obama, and Trump's first term. The Commission also urges the Trump administration to enhance security measures for U.S. inspectors and ensure that Mexico upholds phytosanitary standards as required for U.S. market access.

"Our growers are facing unprecedented biological threats because of this policy change," Melban said. "Reinstating the original inspection protocols is the only way to restore confidence in our ability to defend our food systems from foreign threats."

About the California Avocado Commission:

Established in 1978, the California Avocado Commission serves as the official information source for California avocados and the California avocado industry. Representing over 3,000 growers, the Commission is dedicated to enhancing the premium positioning of California avocados through advertising, promotion, and public relations.

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