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**Calavo offering fruit from multiple sources**

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By

Tim Linden

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With summer in full swing, [Calavo Growers Inc.](#) is offering its customers fresh avocados from California, Mexico, Peru and Colombia, and will continue with that four-source opportunity into September.

Peter Shore, vice president of product management for the Santa Paula, CA-based company, said while shipments from Mexico and Colombia — to a far lesser extent — will continue to increase through the summer and into the fall, California and Peru are churning toward the end of their respective 2023 seasons.

“We will be shipping California fruit through the first part of September,” he said. “Peru will also go into September, but I expect that Peru’s season will end for us sooner than expected.”

Shore said the 2023 season has been a challenging one as the lack of large sized fruit and the abundance of small fruit from Mexico has created a two-tier market. The most popular 48s and larger were commanding a very strong FOB price near \$70 per carton in early August, while 70s and smaller were at a bargain basement FOB price in the \$20s.

“There is a great opportunity to promote 70s,” he said. “As an industry, that is what this year is giving us.”

Though it might seem relatively easy to quickly switch promotional efforts to the smaller sized fruit, Shore said it is more difficult than it sounds. He noted that many retailers are geared toward offering much larger fruit to their customers and are reluctant to alter their normal merchandising scheme. He expects a more normal size curve to emerge as Mexico moves into its main bloom season in September.

Shore said the strong market for larger fruit has helped California growers turn their season around a bit. A big supply of Mexican avocados was in the U.S. market throughout spring, driving prices down to a low level. That caused many California growers to delay their harvest and start their picking a bit later than usual. However, the poor market conditions persisted and a significant portion of the crop was picked, packed and shipped with a low in-the-grove price to growers.

Shore said California has had a normal size curve so many growers were able to take advantage of the higher prices for their large fruit during the second half of their season. On the other hand, the smaller fruit continues to be sold at below cost prices.

From a company standpoint, Calavo is enjoying a solid season of shipments from the state of Jalisco in Mexico. The company built a state-of-the-art facility in Jalisco a half dozen years ago and had to wait far too long before the region was approved to ship to the United States. “Things are going well

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in our Jalisco operation,” Shore said. “We are packing there on a daily basis and getting good quality fruit with a little bit better mix of sizes (than fruit coming from the state of Michoacan).”

That fruit is being sold to the United States as well as Asia and Europe, markets developed for Jalisco’s production when its avocados couldn’t be sent to the U.S. market.

[Tim Linden](#)

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Tim Linden grew up in a produce family as both his father and grandfather spent their business careers on the wholesale terminal markets in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Tim graduated from San Diego State University in 1974 with a degree in journalism. Shortly thereafter he began his career at The Packer where he stayed for eight years, leaving in 1983 to join Western Growers as editor of its monthly magazine. In 1986, Tim launched Champ Publishing as an agricultural publishing specialty company.

Today he is a contract publisher for several trade associations and writes extensively on all aspects of the produce business. He began writing for The Produce News in 1997, and currently wears the title of Editor at Large.

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